WARRING SOULS, RECONCILING BELIEFS: UNEARTHING THE COUNTOURS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN IDEOLOGY

DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

Previous studies of African American politics focus on political cohesion in the form of bloc voting, party loyalty and notions of linked fate. This has been detrimental to understanding ideological diversity among African Americans. This project attempts to outline the connection between major tenets in African American political thought—based on degrees of subscription to integrationist and Black nationalist beliefs—and ideological adherence among ordinary citizens. There are three primary findings. First, it finds that this ideological dimension does exist, is methodologically reliable, and is an important ingredient in African American decision-making. It determines levels of internal racial awareness, support for leaders, and other issue positions. Second, like liberalism and conservatism, it is not foremost in ordinary citizens’ political calculus. In the focus groups, for instance, Blacks have clear views about desirability of associations with whites, but for the most part, they do not offer ideological beliefs without prompts. Instead, what is found and echoed by the subsequent statistical analyses is that Blacks are ambivalent about their relationship to America. They fall into a middle ground, sometimes endorsing and embracing their “American-ness” and other times taking a more racially protective stance by developing and maintaining Black social and political structures. Last, the Integrationist-Nationalist Index created to measure this ideology can predict levels of political efficacy as well as support for a Black third party.
For
SANDRA FAYE SPATES PRICE,
The first great thinker I ever met
and greatest intellectual I know
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African American political behavior has been most consistently characterized as highly cohesive. Scholars have focused on high levels of agreement among African Americans on party affiliation, political ideology, and public opinion. Even more compelling evidence for this description has been the demonstration through survey research of the overwhelming belief in a linked fate of individual African Americans with the African American community as a group (Dawson 1994; Gurin, Hatchett, and Jackson 1989; Gurin, Miller, and Gurin 1980; Miller, Gurin, Gurin, and Malanchuk 1981; Tate 1993). Yet, it is arguable that there has been too heavy an emphasis on group solidarity to the detriment of understanding and exploring the political significance of diversity within the group and its impact on internal and external group interactions.¹

Adolph Reed (2002, 28-29) argues that this consistent focus on Blacks as a “corporate racial entity” poses problems for the Black politics subfield because,

“By vesting [a fixed racial identity that exists in greater or lesser degrees] with the appearance of a settled finding of social science, the interaction of

¹ Most notably, Cohen’s (1999) The Boundaries of Blackness, has argued that both popular and scholarly definitions of appropriate Black issues have led to a Black political agenda that privileges the members of the Black community that are middle class, heterosexual, and male. She further suggests that this narrow definition of Blackness has led to the neglect of important social issues such as the AIDS crisis—an epidemic that took its greatest toll on the African American community’s most vulnerable members (i.e. women, children, and homosexuals).
unexamined ideology and approach to inquiry in this case buttresses the perception of Black interests as given and unproblematic.”

This project attempts to move beyond this emphasis on group cohesion to explore group differences. More specifically, it will look for empirical evidence in the mass public of the importance of an historical debate among African American intellectuals—between integrationism and Black nationalism. There are four primary goals of this project:

1) I will talk to ordinary citizens about their views of these ideologies. I will determine whether or not the way survey instruments have attempted to measure these concepts is related at all to the terminology used by my subjects. Using the language of ordinary citizens allows for a better understanding of what these concepts actually mean to citizens or if they mean anything at all.

2) I will explore the differences and similarities between those people who are integrationist, nationalists, or somewhere in between. I will look at differences in demographic characteristics, policy preferences and participation. For instance, a cursory look at gender differences demonstrates that these ideological viewpoints are related to different demographic variables for men than women (Price 1999).

3) I will firmly establish whether mass ideology reflects elite discourse by examining evidence from the 1996 National Black Election Study (NBES). A

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2 It should be noted that as early as 1970, Aberbach and Walker attempted to capture the meaning of the rise of Black nationalism to both whites and Blacks using the Detroit Area Study. One work (1970a) focused on the meaning of the Black Power slogan: the other (1970b) study focused on the relationship between support for “Black Power” and political trust.
measure of integrationism and Black nationalism is created in the form of the Integrationist-Nationalist Index (INI). These relationships will be assessed by analysis of contingency tables that measure the relationship between the INI measure and potentially relevant variables. Lastly, we turn to multivariate analysis of both the sources and consequences of subscription to ideological positions along an integrationist nationalist continuum.

4) After talking to citizens and analyzing survey data, I will conclude with major findings and suggestions for alternative measures and methods for better capturing these ideologies.

**Examining Group Solidarity and Diversity**

African America’s relationship to the Democratic Party is well noted for being intensely loyal. Beck (1997, 144) notes, “There is no major social group more tied to a party than the association of Blacks with the Democrats.” Since the 1950’s the majority of African Americans have self-identified as Democrats. This was due in part to the Democratic Party’s support of social welfare programs and important civil rights legislation (Carmines and Stimson 1989). This transition from the party of Lincoln to the Democratic Party has since been entrenched. In the 1980’s Black loyalty to the Democratic Party was intensified by the candidacies of Jesse Jackson. Jackson was able to mobilize African Americans who previously not come out to the voting booths (Tate 1991). Indeed, the 1984 Democratic presidential candidate, Walter Mondale, and the vice presidential candidate, Geraldine Ferraro, received 91% of the Black vote (Barker,
Tate, and Jones 1999). Recent years have been no different with Gore capturing an even larger percentage of the Black vote in the 2000 Election.  

At one level, strongly cohesive party loyalties should not be surprising considering the high level of issue agreement among African Americans. Blacks can be most aptly characterized as very liberal with respect to racial and social welfare policy. Nearly half (or more) of all Blacks support increased spending on government issues, believe the government should provide jobs and a good standard of living, and support government health insurance (Dawson 1994). All of these issue positions fall in line with the platform of the Democratic Party.

As previously stated, whether examining African American opinion on public policy or social issues, African Americans tend to have a high level of agreement on many issues. However, scholars and activists alike have repeatedly insisted that the African American community is not monolithic—an assumption habitually made by Blacks and whites alike. Additionally, this cohesion may be on the wane for several reasons. First, recent attempts at running deracialized campaigns on the part of the Democratic Party and a push for more outward displays of diversity on the part of the Republican Party may have seriously weakened the seemingly unyielding strength of African American party loyalty. Secondly, there are some important issue incongruities between African American policy preferences and the Democratic Party’s platforms.

Additionally some scholars have suggested that the Jackson campaign represented a watershed period for Blacks and their relationship to the Democratic Party. Tate (1993, 3

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3 In the 2000 presidential election, then Vice President Gore received 90 percent of Black votes, which was greater than the share of the Black vote enjoyed by Clinton. Additionally, Bush received the lowest share of the Black vote that the Republicans had seen in several elections (Bositis 2000).
66-67) suggests that Jackson’s campaign may have even had a “negative impact” on Black Democrats because it “raised Black expectations to a level that many felt was unrealistic” and because “the NBES surveys show that some Blacks did feel that Jesse Jackson had been mistreated by the party in 1984.” Tate (1991) also suggests that many of the Blacks who voted for Jackson in 1984 did not return to the polls in 1988.⁴ Although Blacks may have been discouraged by the results of the Jackson campaign they have remained loyal to the Democratic Party in all presidential elections since. This loyalty endures even though Democratic Party leaders have gone to great lengths to distance the party from Blacks. After laying out the Democratic Party’s systematic attempt to distance itself from racial groups and certain issues that have been racialized, Smith (1996, 274) asserts that:

“For Blacks the 1992 and 1994 elections were emblematic of their irrelevancy in post-civil rights era national politics. In 1992 the party that they have loyally supported for the last twenty-five years decided that it could only recapture the presidency by running a campaign based on a strategy of ignoring them and their policy concerns…”

Strained relations between Blacks and the Democratic Party are especially salient because there is some evidence of important policy differences between Blacks and the party platform that could be easily exploited by another party or other organization. No one can disagree that Blacks are distinctly liberal on policy issues such as affirmative action and welfare. Their homogenous liberalism on social and economic issues, however, is accompanied by strong and widespread views that are morally conservative and more in line with the platforms of the religious right. For example, ninety percent of

⁴ Tate (1993, 1171-72) gives three reasons for this phenomenon: 1) “disaffection with the Democratic party,” 2) the Democratic candidate was less appealing to Blacks, and 3) “white turnout dropped as well, suggesting that neither candidate was especially attractive to voters.”
Blacks believe that homosexuality is always wrong; sixty four percent oppose abortion and nearly half favor capital punishment (Tate 1993, 39).

Republicans have become increasingly aware of these tensions and have made efforts to court Black votes. This was best highlighted in the 2000 Republican National Convention, which was touted as the most diverse and inclusive convention in Republican history. During the election Bush scheduled campaign stops in Black neighborhoods and churches across the country as well as addressing the annual NAACP convention (Zewe 2000). Additionally, with the appointments of Condoleezza Rice and Colin Powell, Bush put African Americans in unprecedented and powerful positions within his administration. “Rice acknowledged that racism existed in the ranks of the GOP, but she insisted that Bush would have no part of it (Tucker 2000).” Despite efforts to overcome the racist image of the Republican Party, many in the media and elsewhere express some doubt about the sincerity of Republican efforts (Tucker 2000). Polls conducted shortly after the convention showed that although, “one in five [Black respondents] came away with a more favorable opinion. Most…still saw the Democratic Party as best representing their interests and values (Benedetto 2000).”

Bush eventually went on to win a lower share of the Black vote than even his father. However, the fact that a concerted effort was made at all signals both the potential weakness of the Democratic hold on Black votes and the growing importance of garnering support from any group that votes cohesively. Clearly no group does this more consistently than African Americans. The record number of offices that African American Republicans were able to win, including several statewide elections, in the 2002 election should similarly encourage Republicans. Republicans boasted more than a
dozen African Americans who were elected under the party name, including two Lieutenant Governors and State Supreme Court Justices (www.rnc.org/newsroom.) Additionally, Black Republicans had strong showings in several other races despite losing very close races in Nevada, Florida, and Mississippi (Richardson 2000).

After examining party loyalty and policy preferences among Blacks more questions emerge than are explained. What accounts for continued support of the Democratic Party even though obvious conflicts exist between policy preferences and the party platform? One concept that has become an important explanatory variable in studying African American political behavior is group consciousness or linked fate. Black politics scholars have used this single variable to explain group political cohesion. 5 This idea of race consciousness has a long theoretical tradition and has been used as the primary determinant of African American political participation. Miller et. al. (1981) makes a distinction between mere group identification and group consciousness. They suggest that group identification merely has to do with perceived membership in a certain social category. Alternatively, group consciousness is a more politicized view of membership in a social group and relative social status of group members. They find that the existence of a group consciousness increases political participation among some groups, specifically Blacks and women. Shingles (1981) further suggests that there is a “missing link” between group consciousness and political participation. He suggests that political mistrust and a high sense of efficacy leads to higher levels of participation

5 Dawson (1994) refers to it as the Black utility heuristic, but it is largely the same concept. Dawson’s concept has more to do with a shared history of oppression and the ability to determine what is the best for the individual by determining what is best for all Black people. Both the Black utility heuristic and linked fate have to do with an individual’s view of the connectivity of the Black community and individual African Americans who are bound together for social and political reasons.
among Blacks. Simpson (1998) has explored the persistence of group consciousness in
the post-Civil Rights generation and finds that, even with enormous political opinion
diversity, students in her study still overwhelmingly felt tied to other Blacks.

There is also a developing body of empirical work in which race consciousness is
viewed as an important variable in explaining Black political decision-making (Allen,
Dawson, and Brown 1989; Reese and Brown 1994). This conception of race
consciousness rests on the idea that Blacks share similar political preferences and
tendencies toward certain political activities because of a belief on their part that their
individual fate is tied to the fate of African Americans as a racial group. Surveys show
that Blacks do see themselves as being tied to the destiny of other Blacks. According to
the 1984 NBES, the overwhelming majority of African Americans had a strong
identification with other Blacks (approximately 75%). Tate (1993. 25) points out that in
the 1984 NBES “only two Blacks out of the sample of 1,150 voluntarily told interviewers
that they never think about their race.” Additionally, in 1996 nearly 86% of Black
respondents in the NBES thought they shared a common fate with other Blacks (Tate
1996). We also know from anecdotal evidence (e.g. media coverage, influential
autobiographies, public discourse) that African Americans tend to view their group
affiliation and the historical relationship of that group to the larger white society as very
important to their personal and political lives.6

6 Much of this has recently come in the form of Black conservatives who want to de-emphasize race and
discuss the impact of negative perceptions of African Americans on their interactions with white
counterparts. See Stephen Carter’s (1991) Reflections of an Affirmative Action Baby and Ellis Cose’s
(1993) Rage of a Privileged Class. For a more comprehensive discussion of this phenomenon see Reuter
As stated above, African Americans share a belief in a common fate and have similar policy orientations; however, it has also been shown that Blacks are distributed across the liberal-conservative continuum and exhibit some policy differences. For example, from the 1996 NBES we know that although 60% of Blacks favor laws to protect homosexuals against job discrimination, nearly a third (26.9%) are opposed to this idea. Second, Blacks are split almost evenly over the death penalty with more (47%) in favor than opposed (40%). One third of Black respondents felt that the number of immigrants allowed into this country should be decreased, and one-third felt the numbers should remain the same. When questioned about perceived policy preferences on federal spending, 68% felt federal spending on health care should be increased as opposed to 27% who felt it should be decreased. Nearly the same number of Blacks favored decreases in military and defense spending as those favoring increase spending. From these statistics we know that large numbers of Blacks tend to agree, but we also see that there is a non-trivial number of Blacks who go against the “norm.” It is the recognition of and interest in explaining this kind of opinion diversity that drives this research. It is an attempt to move beyond simple linked fate as a single item explanation of African American political opinion to an appreciation for the sources of disagreement within the Black community, especially Black nationalism versus integrationism, a dispute that pervades Black intellectual activity.

**Methodology**

I will answer questions raised in this project with a two-pronged approach that includes survey research and focus group analysis. Because survey research in Black
politics is relatively new and limited we are not able to give in-depth attention to each aspect of African American politics.\textsuperscript{8} Much of the attention to ideology went into explaining the continuity (some would say ideological monopoly) of liberal policy adherence and Democratic Party loyalty.\textsuperscript{9} When attempting to move beyond traditional liberal conservative ideology to ideologies specific to racial minorities, the picture we get is not nearly as clear and robust. Thus, analysis of survey results merely represents a first cut at gaining an understanding of the importance and dynamism of integrationism and Black nationalism as tools for African American decision-making.

To gain this understanding, I rely on focus groups. Focus groups will give us the breadth needed to gain a comprehensive understanding of the role of this ideological continuum in African American political decision-making. Although most discussions surrounding the relationship between focus groups and surveys emphasize the usefulness of focus groups in the question formation stage, there is some evidence that focus groups augment exploratory analysis of quantitative data. They allow scholars to understand whether the questions they are asking have the desired meaning or elicit results that inform their research. Also they allow you to get a broad universe of the kinds of thoughts that help formulate respondent’s answers. Additionally, focus groups enable one to see how people formulate thoughts on their own terms. Moreover, we are able to get some sense of motivations and judgmental calculus rather than mere agreement or

\textsuperscript{8} Unlike the American National Election Study (ANES), which has been conducted since the 1950’s, the National Black Election Study has only been conducted three times—1984, 1988, and 1996. Additionally, there has been one similar survey conducted in 1993 called the National Black Political Study. Because of the longevity of the ANES they have been able to focus on particular topics during certain waves of the study (i.e. the 1986 ANES focuses specifically on racial politics). Thus far this has not been possible for surveys targeted solely to Black respondents.

\textsuperscript{9} See Gurin Hatchett and Jackson (1989) for a definitive project based on the earlier waves of the NBES: For a more general overview of survey research in Black politics see McClain and Garcia (1993).
disagreement with pre-set questions (Morgan 1997). I recruited participants from both the university and larger community for my focus groups. I will also use a variation on focus groups employed by Gamson (1992) to conduct his research that he calls peer group conversations.

Using items from the 1996 National Black Election Study, I also have constructed an additive index to measure Black nationalism versus integrationism. This measure will be used in two ways primarily. First, it will be used to construct a portrait of the subgroups within the African American community that hold beliefs along this continuum. This will entail examining the index in relation to traditional measures of liberalism and conservatism, party affiliation, linked fate and various socio-demographic and socioeconomic factors. Second, this measure will also be used in an explanatory capacity to predict African American political behavior and preferences. The available questions are somewhat limited in scope. However, they do provide some insight into whether or not elite discourse surrounding these ideologies translates into mass acceptance and subscription along this ideological continuum. Additionally, it allows me to use available quantitative data to study Blacks—a group that has been limited by the small number of large data sets that cover a diversity of topics.

**Special Contributions**

This line of research can inform current knowledge in the discipline in several ways. It helps us more fully understand differences within the African American community. As a discipline we have continually noted and documented the high level of cohesion among African Americans in comparison to other groups, but scholars have failed to take note of the differences within the group. Thus the idea of the “Black voter”
has been essentialized as a single entity rather than viewing Blacks as diverse and complex subjects. Second, this project also speaks to the public opinion subfield because it attempts to connect mass opinion with elite discourse. Following the path of Converse (1964) and others, I attempt to assess the ideological tools of and the nature of political decision-making among ordinary citizens. The project seeks the connection between the writings and speeches and intellectuals to the everyday terminology and thinking of the mass public. This connection will yield not only a better understanding of these concepts but better questions for implementation in future large scale studies of Black opinion.

This research is also important because we will get a picture of whether subscription to either of these ideological viewpoints leads to different levels or kinds of participation. Are nationalists more likely to opt out of the system as non-voters? Do integrationists score higher on variables associated with popular social capital arguments such as interpersonal trust and civic engagement (Brehm and Rahn 1997; Putnam 2000, 1995a, 1995b)? Are nationalists more supportive of non-traditional forms of political participation such as protests and social movement participation? I hope to answer many of these questions through subsequent analysis. Also, this project may also help us understand the nature of ideological shifts in a particular community. Since I will be examining support for these ideological viewpoints from multiple perspectives; I will be able to offer several interesting insights. I will be able to analyze gender, class, age and other differences to get a better sense of the effects of demographic characteristics on ideological adherence. Last, because this project will rely on focus groups, I am able to learn more about the terminology used by ordinary citizens. I will be able to control certain dynamics in the groups so that we have both homogenous and heterogeneous
groups based on salient characteristics (i.e. age, sex, class). This will allow me to get a sense of whether different subgroups within the Black community talk about these ideologies in different ways. I will also learn whether certain types of appeals, rhetorical styles, leadership characteristics, or other factors impact individual willingness to subscribe to a particular viewpoint.

Finally, this project can expand the way that we, as political scientists, study Black politics, ideology, and public opinion. It will expand the study of Black politics by examining more than group cohesion based on linked fate. We will get a better sense of the diversity within the Black community. It also suggests that there is much to be learned about alternative ideologies used by minority groups in America instead of conventional liberalism-conservatism. These ideologies are important because they may serve as the foundation underlying expressed opinion. Because Blacks and other minorities have had vastly different experiences from whites throughout American histories, there is reason to believe that racial groups use a different calculus or “ideological yardstick” to make political judgments.

**Chapter Outline**

**Chapter 2:** This chapter defines each ideological viewpoint by reviewing literature written by and about major Black political thinkers. Relying on this historical analysis will provide the context for this entire project. It is the beginning of the defining effort that is the overall goal of this project.

**Chapter 3:** This chapter will begin the analysis of data from focus groups. It outlines the method for recruitment of participants and the general characteristics of the sample. Initial findings not directly related to ideology will also be discussed.
Chapter 4: This chapter will include more analysis of the data from the focus group discussions. This chapter will draw conclusions about the way these ideological concepts are expressed in everyday language and in what contexts people are more likely to express one ideological belief over another. It deals with each ideological extreme and a combined group that melds both. Lastly, it presents findings from two parent-child cohorts observed in the focus groups.

Chapter 5: It develops a measure for integrationism and Black nationalism based on items from the National Black Election Study. After running several validity tests, this measure, the Integrationist-Nationalist Index (INI), is further validated by relating it to assessments of African American leaders, important events and any other factors in which showing a preference or a lack of preference would clearly place a respondent in a particular ideological camp.

Chapter 6: I attempt to characterize members of each ideological group by relating the scale to several kinds of factors. The analysis examines this index in relation to ideological determinants (e.g., liberal conservative ideology and common fate), socio-demographic determinants (e.g., age, gender, education level) and beliefs about the status of the African American community (e.g., relative economic status in comparison to whites). This is done first through the analysis of contingency tables. In this chapter a multivariate analysis of sources of integrationism and Black nationalism is used to further specify these results. This will demonstrate which factors predict subscription to a particular ideological viewpoint.
Chapter 7: This chapter moves the INI to the explanatory side of the model to determine its ability to predict political behaviors and attitudes. First, ideology is related to factors that contribute to political alienation by examining levels of trust in government and political efficacy. Second, levels of support for specific and diffuse government efforts are analyzed. Third, ideology is related to partisan strength and support for the formation of a Black third party. Last, the chapter tests the predictive ability of the Integrationist-Nationalist Index and liberalism and conservatism in relation to propensity to engage in various forms of political behaviors.

Chapter 8: Here major findings are summarized and connections made between these findings and how they inform existing literature. This chapter concludes with prescriptions for future research in this area.
CHAPTER 2

RECONCILIATION OR REJECTION: IDEOLOGY AND AFRICAN AMERICAN POLITICAL THOUGHT

As previously stated, African American political scholarship traditionally focuses on community cohesion stemming from an overall belief that individual fate is tied to group fate. Linked fate has been the explanation proffered for concentrated Democratic Party loyalty and policy cohesion on issues such as affirmative action. This cohesion is pervasive when looking at electoral politics and certain policy positions, but there is policy disagreement. We also know from Black political rhetoric that there are disagreements about empowerment strategies based on ideological conflict. This dissertation studies whether there is an ideological continuum along which Blacks array themselves and which they use to make important political decisions. The continuum posited here reflects adherence to integrationism versus Black nationalism. This chapter provides definitions of these ideological viewpoints by offering the major tenets and historical analysis. Before offering definitions of these ideological constructs it is important to discuss the relationship between linked fate and this ideological continuum.

The Shortfalls of Linked Fate

Besides overexposure, there are major shortfalls associated with linked fate. First, this link is not problematized. Rarely, if ever, are respondents asked how they feel or
what they think about being linked to other Blacks. This attachment can presumably be positive or negative; but it is unclear because surveys merely offer one or two close-ended questions that simply measure the presence of linked fate. Ostensibly, some individuals see that link as a tethered anchor around their proverbial political and social necks. For instance, this was seemingly demonstrated repeatedly by the development of a new memoir genre in the 90’s in which successful African Americans discussed how negative perceptions of Blacks are unfairly attached to them and the subsequent impact this has on their personal and professional lives.\textsuperscript{10} Historically, this connection that Blacks have to each other has been complicated and sometimes contentious. For instance, Paula Giddings (1984, 102) points out that participants in the Black Women’s Club Movement saw their goal as racial uplift. This took place primarily in the form of “lifting the burdens of ‘ignorance and immorality’” from the lower ranks of the Black community. For movement activists this was a vital endeavor because the fate of all Blacks was tied to the lowest among their ranks. Alternatively, the fact that Nationalists have to work so diligently to recreate their image of themselves and their racial group indicates that the connection among Blacks is more complicated than has been suggested by the Black politics literature. If this connection were solely perceived as positive, there would be no need to transform or reshape it in any way. Second, our current understanding of linked fate is problematic because it is non-prescriptive. Attachment does not necessarily equal action. Nor is there any logical behavioral end that individuals

\textsuperscript{10} A cursory list could include, Stephen Carter(1993) and Ellis Cose (1991) and, more recently, John McWhorter’s \textit{Losing the Race} (2000); but more broadly, the success of early books spawned other writers (primarily journalists) to write similar books, though not necessarily discontented with Blacks in tone. Examples include Jill Nelson’s \textit{Volunteer Slavery} (1993), Sam Fulwood’s \textit{Waking from the Dream} (1996), and Lorene Cary’s \textit{Black Ice} (1992).
come to simply because they feel attached to other Blacks. Hence, when scholars focus on cohesive behaviors such as bloc voting and party affiliation, the presence of linked fate serves as an excellent explanation for why this occurs. But what about examples provided in the previous chapter of Black actors behaving out of sync with each other. Whereas linked fate does a decent job of explaining cohesion, it falls short when attempting to explain intra-racial ideological and policy diversity.

So how does linked fate relate to integrationism and Black nationalism? Focusing on the “groupness” of Blacks is the underlying theme of decision-making of Blacks who acknowledge their membership in that group. Any time individuals make normative statements about appropriate Black behavior in a possessive manner linked fate comes into play. It is ever present. Integrationists might have a strong desire for racial categorizations of any kind to be rendered useless; nationalists might see their racial group affiliation as the sole filter through which all issues are sorted. But it is not that easy. Like most important political questions simplicity is not a part of the equation. This is because, for integrationists and nationalists, alike, their connection to other Blacks has been both that tethered anchored and a vital lifeline—often separately and sometimes simultaneously. So as the defining process begins, and throughout this project, the presence of linked fate is taken as a given. However, how that connection is shaped, adjusted, hidden, emphasized and otherwise manipulated will be analyzed.

**Origins of a Racialized Ideology**

Both integrationists and nationalists have adopted principles and mobilization strategies that are rooted in the history of African American people. They recognize the historically contentious relationship of African Americans to the political system and the
resulting obstacles that have been faced for generations. The differences emerge when examining their ultimate definitions of African American empowerment and the “repertoires of contention” that result. Tilly (1995) suggests that oppressed or excluded groups develop a toolbox of protest strategies to use in an effort to empower themselves in spite of the state and its actors. We have traditionally looked monolithically at the empowerment tools Blacks have used. Scholars have focused on popular integrationist efforts of the Abolitionists and participants in the Civil Rights Movement for example, yet they have placed very little emphasis on nationalist movements such as maroon communities during slavery (Blassingame 1979) and subsequent separatist movements up to today’s Nation of Islam (Allen 1998; Essien-Udom 1962).

With the approaching abolition of slavery and the eventual delivery of the Emancipation Proclamation, Blacks and whites alike had to deal with the “Negro problem” or what should be done with the newly freed Blacks. Writing in 1894, Frederick Douglass, after many years of anti-slavery and integrationist activism, suggested that the ‘so-called, mis-called, Negro problem is one of the most important and urgent subjects that can now engage public attention.” (340) Inherently assumed and often overtly stated in the proposals of racial segregation offered to these new citizens of the United States was the belief on the part of whites that Blacks were inferior or non-human (Franklin 1956). The remedies for these problems were much more varied than the diagnosis. Blacks and some whites agreed that slavery and oppression of Blacks was morally wrong and a liability to U.S. national interests. From that initial agreement come divergent strategies. A popular remedy during the Reconstruction Era was the colonization or the mass emigration of Blacks to various locations. (Carlisle 1975) Only
a small number of Blacks were ever successfully relocated to other countries and Western territories, and it became apparent that solving racial tensions would entail more than just removing Blacks to some other place. This effort failed for a myriad of reasons. First and probably most importantly, many Blacks did not want to leave. Their “African-ness” had been systematically eliminated, and the only connection the vast majority had to any nation was their connection to the United States. Additionally, other countries did not want to take them. Sympathy for their plight was not an invitation to harbor people who were largely uneducated and poor. (Goodman 1998) The recognition of this resulted in two major strategies—to integrate or separate. These strategies are both competing and overlapping at various times and during various periods in history. Lewis and Hill (1956, 123) describe this dilemma when they suggest that Blacks must ask themselves:

“Which represents the greater ‘need’ for my services, blazing the trail and expanding opportunities for other Negroes in an integrated set-up or the continuing demand for new and more talent in the Negro community from which I have come? And which course offers greater rewards—psychologically or materially?”

This summarizes the major question that members of the Black community have consciously or subconsciously asked themselves throughout history and often on a daily basis. This project examines whether or not ordinary citizens conceptualize and actuate their answers in the way that elites do and have done. To better answer these questions, we first turn to the writings of African American political and social thinkers.

It should be noted that recently, Michael Dawson (2001, 15-23) has published an important work examining ‘the roots of African American ideology”. In this project he suggests that there are six ideological camps that most African Americans fall into.
first ideology is radical egalitarianism which simultaneously criticizes and endorses American democracy. Second, disillusioned liberals are similar to the previous ideology in that they still embrace the principles of American democracy but also believe that “America is fundamentally racist.” A third ideological group, Black Marxism, “adapts the tenets of Marxism to the situation of African American” so that the capitalist critique is coupled with beliefs about the centrality of race and spirituality. Black conservatism represents the fourth category and it emphasizes “reliance on self-help, an attack on the state as a set of institutions that retard societal progress in general and Black progress in particular, and belief in the antidiscriminatory aspects of markets.” Fifth, Black feminism, is a mix of traditional feminism ideology and community focus. In this case Black women emphasize both their gender and racial identities as inextricably intertwined. The last category Dawson identifies is Black nationalism. “Core concepts include support for African American autonomy and various degrees of cultural, social, economic and political separation from white American.”

Dawson’s categories are quite extensive; however, this project is complementary to his efforts in the sense that it is one step removed from his efforts. I argue that before African American begin to conceptualize exactly how their beliefs in integrationism and Black nationalism can be lived out they must first make the choice to integrate or separate. It is at that crucial junction that African Americans begin to formulate strategies for navigating the American political process or developing separate institutions and structures based on racial group membership. From there one can begin to systematically understand how intra-racial coalitions are formed and shaped or how race based institutions are structured similarly or differently from American institutions.
and Dawson makes a great contribution to understanding those efforts. This project focuses, instead, on the political associations and decisions that stem from making the more fundamental choice between American incorporation and African American disconnection.

**Implementing the Dream: Defining Integrationism**

Integrationism is a notion popularized among the mass public by Martin Luther King, Jr. (1986a); however, earlier than the Civil Rights Movement, many African American leaders and organizations espoused this ideology. Frederick Douglass made the full incorporation of Blacks into American society his life work. He suggested that America could not reach its full potential until it granted full citizenship rights to its most marginalized and oppressed groups. Speaking directly to the rampant lynching taking place in the South and more broadly to how to solve the “Negro problem,” Douglass (1894, 366) urges white Americans, especially those in power, to:

> “Put away your race prejudice. Banish the idea that one class must rule over another. Recognize the fact that the rights of the humblest citizens are worthy of protection as are those of the highest.”

In the forward of a special issue of the Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science in 1956, the editor Ira De A. Reid, defines integration as:

> “The situation and the process which exists when men in society are breaking down such barriers while moving toward the full acceptance of all people without reference to their racial, religious or ethnic differences. It is the process of achieving full equality of status conditions.” (ix)

An alternative definition is later put forth by Handlin (1965, 661) defines integration as,
“a condition in which individuals of each racial or ethnic group are randomly distributed through the society so that every realm of activity contains a representative cross section of the population.”

One calls for disregarding or ignoring racial and other categorizations in an effort to alleviate racial inequality; the other focusing more on a conscious distribution of specific groups across social and political arenas. Douglass’ goal was to wholly assimilate Blacks into American society and for him race was “legally, morally and socially irrelevant (McGary 1999).” Not all Integrationists see race as irrelevant. It is not lost on many Blacks that, although racism is often experienced on an individual and personal level, Blacks, as a group, have been an enduring and frequent target of white American ire. Therefore, implicitly, Black Integrationist movements are group-centered efforts to change the status of Blacks as a group. The fallout of that, additionally, has been the inclusion of many other groups such as women, Latinos, and Asians. However, the natural end of integration ideally would be the diminished importance of race in the American psyche.

Integrationism as a guiding principle calls for America to live up to its expressed ideals of having a society in which people are judged by “the content of their character.” Myrdal (1944, 4) suggests that racial integration is based on “ideals of the essential dignity of the individual human being, of the fundamental equality of all, and of certain inalienable rights to freedom, justice and fair opportunity.” In recent history, no one has put forth the ideals and goals of racial integration more comprehensively and eloquently than Martin Luther King Jr. Like his ideological ancestors, King believed that Black Americans should seek to and would be able to have full citizenship rights. Echoing the
earlier ideas of Douglas, King (1986b, 211) cautions, “if we are to implement the American dream we must get rid of the notion once and for all that there are superior and inferior races.” King’s beliefs were essentially two pronged. First, Blacks would gain their rights by appealing to the moral dissonance of whites. Implicit in his assertion is the idea that one must simply expose whites to the plight of Blacks and they would change. For King (1986c, 75), the treatment Blacks had received at the hands of whites would weigh too heavily on white consciences. He suggests that whites will not prevent the integration process initiated by Blacks because:

“In their relation to Negroes, white people discovered that they rejected the very center of their own ethical profession. They could not face the triumph of their lesser instincts and simultaneously have peace within.”

In King’s estimation, whites had rationalized their treatment of Blacks by adopting a belief in Black inferiority. Once this belief was shattered through peaceful demonstrations, whites would have to contend with their own conscience and with the demands of Blacks. This leads to the second part of King’s integrationist strategy: Blacks would adopt the tactic of non-violent direct action. Following the Ghandian model, Blacks would integrate by taking the moral high ground. King (1986d, 86-87) suggests that Black protestors,

“do not seek to defeat or humiliate the opponent, but to win his friendship and understanding. The nonviolent resister must often voice his protests through noncooperation or boycotts, but he realizes that noncooperation and boycotts are not the ends themselves; they are the means to awaken the end of moral shame within the opponent. The end is redemption and reconciliation.”
King goes on to suggest that this process is necessary for “the creation of the beloved community,” which he saw as “an interracial society based on freedom for all.”

For Integrationists, African Americans must recognize their importance and not abandon a country and associated rights they have earned by contributing to the nation building process. DuBois (1995 [1903]) in his earlier works suggested that American Blacks should work to gain their civil rights through planned campaigns and multiracial coalitions. Additionally, Booker T. Washington insisted on “inter-racial harmony and white good will as prerequisites for Negro advancement” (Meier 1991). Integrationists are basically seeking equal access to American institutions, which would allow them equal opportunity to pursue the vision of the framers. Three tenets of integrationism are offered—interracial organizations, non-economic liberalism, and an American based identity (Henderson 1998). Integration is not revolutionary in nature; it simply seeks to change American institutions in a way that includes minorities. Policy preferences might include those initiatives aimed at aiding African Americans in attempts to move into mainstream institutions, both public and private. However, the situation can be more complicated when determining the political goals of this ideological group because its members emphasize alternative or competing identities rather than race and stress individual effort as a mechanism for individual change. This leads them to take factors other than racial group membership and uplift into consideration when making political judgments.

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11DuBois in his early career was a strong Integrationist proponent and activist serving as one of the founders of the NAACP. Ultimately, DuBois would adopt extreme Nationalist beliefs, eventually emigrating from the United States to Ghana, West Africa, and relinquishing his American citizenship shortly before his death.
Ending Sufferings, Creating New Histories: Defining Black Nationalism

The alternative racial ideology is a more race-centered, self-deterministic view of Black politics. Noted scholar, August Meier (1991) has argued that,

“while integration into American society was the expressed ideology of the Reconstruction period, the continued hostility of whites, particularly in the South, encouraged attitudes favoring separatism.” (12)

Supporters of this ideology seek to simply follow the edict of Ture and Hamilton (1992, 32) for the Black community “to redefine itself, set forth new values and goals, and organize around them.” The definition of Black Nationalism used here is put forth by Maulana Karenga (1993, 334) who defines it as,

“a social theory and practice organized around the concept and conviction that Blacks are a distinct historical personality, and they should therefore unite in order to gain the structural capacity to define, defend, and develop their interests.”

In Rodney Carlisle’s (1975, 4) view “Black nationalism opposes [and some might say exposes]\(^{12}\) the myths of American life because it presumes a Black nation unassimilated along side the American nation.” Nationalism stresses Black self-help mostly through Black organizations and a Pan-Africanist identity (Henderson 1998). David Walker, in his famous *Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World* written in 1829, offers clear expressions of a Black nationalist ideology. In this appeal Walker calls for the establishment of a Black nation which would be echoed throughout history. Walker asserts, “our sufferings will come to an end, in spite of all Americans this side of eternity. Then we will want all the learnings and talents among ourselves, and perhaps more to govern ourselves.” For proponents of nationalism, Black independence is a process in

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\(^{12}\) Italics inserted by this author.
which Blacks shed the indoctrination inherent in American society that Blacks are inferior. Similar to a religious conversion, Black nationalist “converts” active in the Black Panther Party expressed a belief that learning about the historical greatness of their African ancestors and the empowerment garnered through helping revitalize and develop their own community was a life changing experience that had a profound impact on their social and political beliefs long after they left the party (Price 1998).

Modern Black nationalism is traditionally associated with Garveyism that stressed decolonization of Africa, racial pride of descendants of Africa, and economic ties with these descendants (Allen 1998). It does not seek to integrate African Americans into American society. Nationalism could range from more of a community centered self-help focus to Black Zionism in the form of a national homeland or emigration from the United States (Essien-Udom 1962). Emigration efforts have frequently focused on Africa, but there have also been proposals for resettlement in South America and the creation of a Black homeland within the borders of the United States. One such organization, the Republic of New Africa, has called for the U.S. government to relinquish five Southern states and pay reparation for slavery since the 1960’s.

The most recent revival of Black nationalism in the latter part of the 1960’s focused somewhat on the formation of a Black nation-state, but primarily focused on the need for a sense of cultural awareness, psychological and social disentanglement from whites, as well as economic independence. Like, earlier Black nationalist movements, it was a reaction to “disillusionment” with whites and slow progress in improving race

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13 Garveyism is the term used to describe the Zionist movement of Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association in the early part of this century.
relations (Carlisle 1975). During this time of increased African independence from Europe, African leaders begin to employ the philosophies of Black scholars like DuBois and Washington. Additionally, Nationalist leaders like Malcolm X (1992) made trips to Africa and engendered friendships with these new leaders. Thus the exchange between Africans and African Americans became more frequent and interactive. Additionally, during this time, frustrated integrationists from the Civil Rights Movement (i.e. Kwame Ture and other members of SNCC) began a renewed call for Blacks to withdraw from the American political systems and make changes within their own community structures and institutions. (For a closer examination see Carson 1981.)

Nationalism attempts look inward as a community and to find solutions to Black problems through internal resources. Brooks (1996) suggests that racial separation (whether limited or total) is juxtaposed with racial segregation, the latter of which is achieved by external imposition and coercion. It is also important to note that at various points in history African American leaders have adopted separatism as a temporary strategy before integration. This was especially predominant in the period from emancipation to the early part of this century, in which some Black leaders argued for internal education and skill-building before integrating into the larger society. For instance, Frederick Douglass supported temporary segregation of certain institutions as a first step to eventual integration (McGary 1996). Additionally, Booker T. Washington (1968) believed that there needed to be concerted efforts by Blacks to become “upstanding” and “worthy” members of the American community before they could be
fully accepted by whites and able to contribute to American advancement.\textsuperscript{15} Policy preferences of this group would focus on those issues that are aimed at more community control and self-determining initiatives for African Americans. Those kinds of initiatives might include community control of schools, cooperative economic efforts such as support of Black-owned businesses, and efforts to transform African America’s individual and group self-image through increased awareness of Black American and African history.

**Summary**

The descriptions of integrationism and Black nationalism offered here are ideal types. Within each ideological perspective there are different degrees of adherence and organization types. These organizations are sometimes religiously based (SCLC, the Pan-African Orthodox Church), culturally based (Jesse Jackson’s Operation PUSH, Marcus Garvey’s Universal Negro Improvement Association) or clearly political (NAACP, Black Panther Party).\textsuperscript{16} As previously stated, individuals adhere to Integrationist or Nationalist sentiments to varying degrees. There is no reason to expect polarization, with concentrations of people at the ends of the spectrum. Indeed, many individuals may simply fall closer to the middle of the continuum accepting parts of each ideology without fully embracing either. For instance, scholars such as V.P. Franklin (1992) have argued that whether pushing for assimilation into the mainstream or the creation of a Black nation, the spirit of self-determination has been a recurring theme for all Black leaders. This is true even for those leaders who have been historically portrayed

\textsuperscript{15}It is should be stressed that the eventual goal for both Douglass and Washington was full racial integration.

\textsuperscript{16}Organizations listed here represent examples of integrationist and Black nationalist organizations respectively.
as diametrically opposed to each other’s philosophy. (e.g. W.E.B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington and Martin Luther King and Malcolm X.) Brooks (1996, 190) has proposed another strategy for Black empowerment that seeks to merge these two ideologies that he calls limited separation. Brooks defines limited separation as “a voluntary racial isolation that serves to support and nurture individuals within the group without unnecessarily trammeling the interests of other individuals or groups.” He suggests that this may be the best strategy because integration has failed and many of the tenets of nationalism are unrealistic. Brooks suggests five reasons that explain the failure of racial integration: 1) it has never been fully instituted, 2) it does not change personal prejudices, 3) civil rights relies on coercion and “coerced equality is a lesser quality equality,” 4) urban decay, and 5) white racism. Additionally, total separation suffers because of “the tendency to romanticize ‘Blackness’ to believe that anything authentically Black…is better for African Americans than anything white or European.”(123) We also know that intellectuals (DuBois, for instance) who embrace a particular strategy over time may move away from their original beliefs. There is no reason to suggest that individuals will not do the same. Beyond individual changes, changes in the socioeconomic status of African Americans as a group may also lead to movement from one position to another across the scale. Recent studies suggest that the experiences of Blacks in the upper income brackets are becoming increasingly different from their poorer counterparts in ways that are potentially very important to their political decisions and policy preferences.\(^{17}\)

\(^{17}\)For an examination of the political behavior of the Black poor, see Hochschild (1995) or Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995); For a similar treatment of the Black middle-class see Feagin and Sikes (1994) and Banner-Haley (1994).
This chapter provides a greater understanding of what prominent Black leaders thought Blacks should do to change their status as the perennial political and social underdogs. How much have these beliefs actually been translated or diffused among ordinary citizens? Efforts to answer this question begin the next chapter, which focuses on their presence in conversations among ordinary African Americans, first on politics and life in general, then specifically on ideological views. Then the analysis turns to the location of ideological content in a national survey of Black Americans in 1996.
CHAPTER 3

REGARDING RACE AND OTHER ISSUES:
FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS EXPRESS THEIR OPINIONS

This project is an exploratory attempt to move beyond the theoretical writings of African American scholars and popular speculation to gather concrete evidence of the existence of integrationism and Black nationalism as ideological tools within the African American community. In any attempt to gather this kind of evidence, it is imperative that scholars listen to discourse surrounding these ideological concepts within the mass publics.

Focus groups are a useful way to experience dialogue. They serve as an important first step in understanding and categorizing important concepts used in social interactions, which includes many spheres but especially political interactions. They offer researchers the chance to hear and analyze how ordinary citizens conceptualize, express, and activate their political opinions. Thus, focus group analysis becomes an important precursor to question formulation, in the sense that it allows scholars to create questions that are in the appropriate jargon and that are relevant to the actual interest of the citizenry. This is especially true in the case of survey construction, in which it is an essential first step because of the length, expense, (and relative rarity in the case of African Americans) and other constraints surrounding large-scale surveys. Lastly, focus
groups are important because they go beyond just interacting with the interviewer in a one-on-one process in which the conversation is constrained by the thoughts and attention span of just two participants. With the introduction of other members, the process becomes multilayered. Thus the qualitative research process becomes a more refined and nuanced experience than simple one-on-one interviews. It is also a process in which single interviewer effects can be overcome and the actual political information gathering and opinion formation processes is simulated. The data accumulation process, like the political process, is based on group interactions and discussions, complicated by interconnected (and often non-political) topics and random distractions, and highly dependent on the actors who have chosen to participate at any given point. Hence, for this project, which is arguing that the way in which we have conceptualized African American’s ideological priorities and political decision-making should be adjusted to the realities of race-specific ideologies, one must start by talking directly to ordinary people.

**Constructing the Focus Groups**

In this study, a series of focused group discussions were conducted with a total of 32 participants. These groups were composed of adults who self-identified as Black or African American, and all took place in Columbus, Ohio. Following the model provided by Gamson (1992) in *Talking Politics* and other projects, these groups were peer discussion groups in which a contact was made with one person, and she was asked to invite friends, families, neighbors, co-workers, etc. into her home for a discussion about Blacks and politics. The initial contacts were recruited in several different ways. First, employees of community centers in predominantly black neighborhoods were asked to recruit from the pool of people who sought services in the center. For instance, in one
group, students from GED classes, soup kitchen workers, neighborhood activists, and an after school program director were all recruited by the director of the GED program.\textsuperscript{18} Participants were also recruited through a summer program for minority undergrads at Ohio State, a neighborhood improvement association, and through a natural hair salon. Lastly, personal contacts were also used. All participants were offered a small prize for participation and entered into a raffle for one large prize. Each session lasted about two hours and respondents were asked to fill out a survey at the conclusion of the discussion. This survey asked questions that both paralleled the National Black Election Study (NBES) and moved beyond the scope of traditional election surveys. Survey questions dealt with levels of African American acculturation, attention to Black media outlets, and direct questions about beliefs in integration and separation. To understand and justify the level of comparison allowed between the participants in these focus groups and respondents in the NBES to be used in later analyses, data for important demographic characteristics for both groups will be reported here.

The focus group sample was quite comparable to the NBES sample in many respects. There were strong similarities in terms of the gender distribution, but there were differences in terms of income, age, and education. There was almost an equal number of males and female in both samples. The focus group and NBES had nearly equal percentages of participants who were in the age ranges of seventeen to thirty-four; however, the ages for the focus group sample topped out at fifty five years old whereas the NBES sample reported respondents who were well into their eighties. Focus group sample was also somewhat more educated. Sixty percent of the NBES participants

\textsuperscript{18} Initially, this group was supposed to be solely composed of GED students; however, others who worked or utilized the services in the center were included when some GED students dropped out.
reported having some college courses or having received college degrees; in contrast, nearly all (more than 90 percent) of the focus group respondents reported the same. The focus group respondents also reported higher income than the NBES sample. It is important to note, however, that steps were taken to make sure that there would be a good distribution across all of these variables by contacting both community centers that catered to the poor and community groups in middle class neighborhoods as well as using an African American beauty salon and a group of college students which would yield a broader set of participants in relation to these variables. There is a possibility that a sample in which participants are members of a particular age group and are more educated than the average population could yield distorted results. Careful attention was paid to incorporating a diverse set of people through wide recruitment using both flyers and peer invitations.

The rest of this chapter will take up the task of painting a portrait of the political views and characteristics of participants within the discussion groups. This will help in providing the context for analyzing the comments and eventual conclusions made from comments about the decision of integrate, separate or navigate a combination of those options. The chapter will identify various political issues discussed in the groups for which Blacks closely mirror the entire population such as attitudes towards voting and trust in government. Next it will take up those political attitudes that are race specific like beliefs about Black unity and linked fate. This will allow for the introduction of these and other opinions to frame the discussion of integrationism and Black nationalism in the next chapter.
The Frustrated American Dilemma

Participants in all of the discussion groups expressed clear frustration with the conflict between their desire to live out the American dream fully and the belief that they are somehow hindered by their race and the social and economic position that Blacks find themselves in as Black Americans. Several participants talked about voting, for example, as a treasured right of all Americans; however, when asked if they thought it was effective they were not enthusiastic because of a lack of accountability of candidates (even African American candidates). This belief is a reflection of opinion dynamics in the larger population. When questions about the responsiveness and level of interest public officials had in their constituents were first asked in the National Election Study during the 1950’s over sixty percent of respondents disagreed with the statement, “I don’t think public officials care much what people like me think?” That number has steadily decreased and now more than half of NES respondents agree with the sentiment that public official don’t care what they think. (NES Guide) Participants in these focus groups are squarely aligned with contemporary beliefs about the level of concern held by public officials.

References to the duty to vote because of the sacrifices made by other African Americans throughout history often were coupled with a profound belief that voting was not resulting in real progress for African Americans as a group. What this all seems to be demonstrating is a sense of historical and emotional (almost nationalistic or patriotic) connectedness to the American political system that is not easily shed even in the face of perceived personal and group discrimination. This is demonstrated through participants’ overwhelming belief in the importance of voting and disagreement with the suggestion
that Blacks should totally separate from American society. What surfaces then is both individual internal conflict and opposing views about the behaviors and future of the group. Thus Black blame becomes an important explanation for Blacks’ failure to progress at least as often as other factors such as systemic failures, racism, government intervention, or negative affect on the part of whites. Another example of this frustration is participants’ suggestions that the government and politicians rarely have the interests of Blacks in mind when they are making policy decisions and that politicians (regardless of race) are tied to whites because of their willingness to financially support the political aspirations of candidates. While the presence of Black candidates did not guarantee that Blacks would vote for them, it seemed to motivate participants to gather information and participate in the political process. Some participants suggested that they would pay more attention if there was a Black candidate in a particular election, and if two candidates running for office seemed to be fairly equal in all other qualification categories, then they would vote for the Black candidate. So race played a part in the decision calculus, but not the central part and not always the way scholars have predicted. The irrelevance of race often echoes in the opinions of younger African Americans who are less likely to make reference to direct racist experiences and systemic causes and more likely to embrace popular beliefs of multiculturalism and color-blind societies.

**In Spite of Blame “American-ness” Still Present: Voting and Candidate Evaluation**

One of the most striking findings in relation to traditional political behavior is the attitude of participants towards participation in the American electoral process. There was almost a universal belief in the power and necessity of the vote. All but one participant felt that the vote was absolutely imperative to the progress of African
Americans. In companion with this belief in the vote, participants were also very effusive when asked to discuss their judgments of Black candidates. Dialogue surrounding both the vote and the evaluation of candidates all originate from the perspective of individuals who see themselves as active members or citizens of America. This becomes more important as the process of defining and framing of integrationism and Black nationalism begins in the next chapter.

In every focus group, the moderator asked participants to discuss their thoughts and opinions of Black candidates. They were asked to talk about whether or not they felt that Black candidates were more attentive to Black constituencies, whether they thought it was important to always vote for Black candidates, and whether it was important for Black candidates to represent Black people. Twenty-five out of thirty-two participants either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement—Blacks should always vote for Black candidates whenever possible. Most participants were opposed to having a rigid standard about choosing candidates. Instead they examined qualities that moved beyond race, which was made possible by gathering information about all candidates without regard to race or party. Participants fell into the following opinion categories.

Some participants demonstrate a special affinity for African American candidates that is different from their attitudes towards white candidates. For some, the mere presence of an African American in elective office was a positive thing. Crystal\(^\text{19}\), for instance admits that,

"...it’s good to see…I love to see Black people running for office because there was a time when we couldn’t do this. You know…so it’s just good to see that…and like when Bill Clinton won…I know he’s not Black … but

\(^{19}\)All names provided are pseudonyms to ensure the privacy and anonymity promised in the informed consent process.
from what I know he helped a lot Black people out, so you know that all
the Black people love Bill Clinton… and besides the point that if it was a
Black person in office…if it was a Black person in office or a white
person in office I would to vote for the Black person, but I would like to
know are they going to help me.”

Other participants argue that using color is a factor in their voting behavior when all other
candidate characteristics are comparable. Cameron asserts,

“I would like to think that the best candidate is the one I selected, but
obviously I have some bias toward a Black person. I’m going to tell the
truth. We have similar lifestyles, history. I’d like to think that I pick
candidates based on skills and abilities. But all things being equal, I am
biased towards the person of color.”

Cassie suggests that expecting special favors from candidates of your own race is a part
of the American ethnic political tradition. Referring to her own experiences, Cassie
shares that,

“…every ethnic group…I know in Buffalo, where I’m from, when the
Italian mayor got elected, my side of town which is predominantly Italian
got our streets plowed. We saw street cleaners. When the Irish guy was
in, the south side and the police department was primarily Irish. I’m not
saying that’s good or bad, but people expect…and Buffalo is more ethnic
than Black or white so you get to see the dynamics of different ethnic
groups. You expect someone who looks like you to somehow share some
of your same values.”

This led the moderator to ask whether or not Black candidates have a special obligation
to the Black candidate. Delia asserts, and others agree, “I certainly hope so. If they don’t,
who is supposed to? I mean if the Black candidates don’t hold a special responsibility for
Black people then who is.”

Another group stops short of full support of Black candidates and instead suggests
that they would give more attention to elections in which Black candidates are running.
They revealed that when there are Black candidates running for certain offices then they are more likely to pay closer attention to politics. Although this doesn’t guarantee that they will vote for the Black candidate, the candidate’s presence gives them more incentive to get involved in the electoral process. Lela makes the point especially clear when she says,

“I must say that I might read more and investigate more when there is a Black candidate to decide whether or not I want to vote for them. Some things that are being run I don’t particularly care. Before I check yes on the brother or the sister, I will read more. It’s really hard with the Dispatch locally. But national issues, I guess I want to be sure, but in the same respect usually I leave it blank in a lot of presidential elections. It’s like do I pick the electric chair or the gas chamber. Many a year I have written my own father’s name in, and one of these days he’s going to win something. But if it’s an election that I care about and there’s a Black person who is running I might read up more.”

For members of this opinion group, the mere fact that the person is Black is not enough to ensure a vote in favor of the candidate, but it increases their interest. For many, this increased interest has also resulted in more general scrutiny of candidates. In their view, all Black candidates are not the same. Frank suggests that when deciding to vote for a Black candidate it all depends on which candidate you are talking about. For him you have to really know more about politics than just race, because for him you have to “categorize Black politicians. You got liberals on one side. You got Blacks who are more conservative.” These participants recognize that there are important differences between Black candidates since Black candidates are varied. Rahim suggests that Black candidates are not all the same because,

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20 The Columbus Dispatch is the major newspaper in the Central Ohio area of which Columbus is a part. It boasts between a quarter and a half-million paid subscribers. (www.dispatch.com)
“…that’s the interesting part about it. We aren’t all rural. We aren’t all urban. It’s like saying Jesse Jackson and Sharpton. Sharpton don’t play well outside of New York. In New York he makes sense. In Altoona Pennsylvania, he don’t make no sense whatsoever. Jesse he runs to and fro. But who Jesse represents, maybe a DC urbanite. For me, Jesse I don’t need ya. I can do it myself. I can argue and fight for my own.”

A third group of participants felt that there was no reason to hold Black candidates in any special esteem because while in office they perform no differently from their white counterparts. Many felt that even Black candidates were not responsive to Black constituents because many of them were only “black faced.” For them, Black skin was not a clear indication of support, attachment, or any sense of responsibility on the part of Black candidates. According to some participants candidates are only responsive to money, which Blacks either don’t have (one sentiment expressed) or are not willing to give (was the other.)

“when we have a Black candidate it would be someone that we have financially supported so that he would be engendered to us and not to Schottensteins or someone else he’s working for. So a quote-unquote Black candidate doesn’t matter if he is engendered to white people who don’t really care about you. So it doesn’t matter who you vote for in today’s society because we don’t pay for them to get elected. They are not engendered to us because we … have no economic basis for keeping ourselves together.

Other participants were less likely to differentiate Black candidates from any other politicians because they felt that Black candidates had not lived up to expectation that they would be the voice and caretakers of the needs of Black people. So they no longer felt allegiance to Black candidates because “a lot of time they put a Black person in certain positions or categories just to get the vote…Knowing that he is not running for the

21 The Schottensteins are a wealthy and influential family in Columbus, OH. They own several major store chains, and are big philanthropic donors in the community.
right things and he really isn’t running for you. And we’ve been smart enough to figure that one out. So no, I don’t go by color lines.” Thus the rejection of Black candidates is often attributed to the failed efforts of Black candidates. O’Neil suggests that this failure on the part of Black candidates has been detrimental to the Black community. “I think that we are in a very precarious position in Black politics right now. I think that Blacks that we have had in positions of authority for whatever reasons haven’t done a good job in those positions, and that doesn’t look well for the future endeavors.” Though members of the focus group view Black candidates in varying ways, there is no denying that voting is an important component of their political behavior.

Several reasons were given for this strong attachment to the vote in the course of the group discussions. First, often cited as a reason for voting and its importance was the fact that it was the right of all citizens, and they, as citizens, wanted to exercise that right. Sharon makes the argument that,

“This is my father’s saying but I agree with it. If you don’t vote you don’t have any right to complain because if you didn’t vote to make a change and that person didn’t get elected. But at least you tried. I heard my grandmother complain about the condition of life and close to when she died we were just talking and she said she never voted a day in her life. And I’m like…oh…and she grew up in the south where she couldn’t vote. Then when she got up here she wouldn’t vote, and that never dawned on me that she hadn’t voted because we always voted.”

For these participants, voting is an important activity that should be ingrained early in children and that should be something that all people should do from a more analytical point of view. When asked what the most important political goal is for African American, Paula reiterates her and other group members’ beliefs about the value of the vote. Paula recommends that,
your school experience should start teaching you at kindergarten about how the election process, how the voting process works in this country if we are going to continue to participate. My other viewpoints…as far as politics is that we should extract ourselves from both the Democratic and Republican aspects of voting and we need to become independent and let folks figure out where we are going because we used to be Republican and then we became Democrats and now both of those parties have bamboozled us and taken us for granted and we continue because my mama and daddy was a Democrat instead of doing it from a thought provoking experience as to why I need to vote the way I am. I have become an Independent this year. I am no longer a Democrat and I will vote whatever my conscience decides. If I have to become a Republican, I will do that too because I am no longer going to decide because I have two brain cells that do rub together that I am going to participate in a party that has historically been the party of my quote unquote people and I think if Black people began to do that from a thinking process instead of a historical process then they can begin to turn some things around politically in this country.

Throughout most discussions participants justified their support for voting while discussing some parts of the process that my be corrupt, unfair, or even futile. With all that, they still endorse voting as an appropriate and necessary activity for Blacks. This contrast is demonstrated in an exchange between Adrienne, Paula, and Janelle who state,

Adrienne: my vote counts  
Janelle: we learn that in the last election…my vote counts…I don’t know where they hiding it but my vote counts… [Laughter from the group]  
Paula: Irregardless  
Janelle: that’s right….irregardless… my vote still counts  
Adrienne: but you can’t stop, you gotta keep trying, and the only way that you can show that you are still trying is to get out there and check things out and vote.

Second, there was a heightened sense of being obliged to vote because of the history of struggle surrounding African American suffrage. When asked whether or not they thought it was important to vote, many said yes because so many people had died for
that right. It would be a disservice to people who had been pelted with water hoses, attacked by dogs, and humiliated by voting judges for them not to vote. Janet explains,

“We dishonor our heritage when we don’t vote. People died for us to have that right and that privilege and to not vote...you know...it’s a slap in the face to our ancestors. We show and vote and if the election is such that there are three good people on there that we want to vote for and the rest of the people we could careless, we go to vote for those three good people. Because, you know, to just...to do otherwise is to say that those lives that were lost for us for the right to go vote didn’t mean anything so we got to go.”

There were constant references to this by participants across all age groups. It should be noted that not all participants had a strong positive endorsement for voting. Participants echoed the amount of corruption and unfairness built into the process. Only one participant admitted withdrawing from the process. Sasha, a college student, acknowledged that although she did at one time, she had decided not to participate in the electoral process and to attempt to effectuate change through individual interactions with others. She explains her feelings,

“I just feel that the political climate that we have now in the United States is a joke. So I mean it’s like Pepsi versus Coca Cola. It’s the same thing. I just don’t care for the political climate in the United States that’s why I don’t vote. The way politics has gone over the years, and the way people have allowed it to go. I just don’t participate in it...Voting for somebody hoping that they will do that for you is ridiculous and they don’t know you cause they got other things to worry about. A part of being in politics is a career choice whether you believe it or not and these people are public servants but this is a career choice. So they have to keep their job. I mean there’s a lot things going on in politics that have nothing to do with getting us to the next level.”

These reasons illuminate two important components of African American ideological thinking that emerge when discussing political participation—a mix of disenchanted
and patriotism. Blacks, even those that are extremely dissatisfied with the political
process, still conceptualize politics and other issues related to race in terms of their
“American-ness”. Participants across economic, education and gender categories put
forth American democratic ideals and concepts, they assert their rights and privileges as
Americans, and they talk about the contributions African Americans have made to U.S.
nation building. Discussions of their connection to their American identity, however,
were laced with expressions of mistrust, dissatisfaction and disappointment with the
relationship African Americans have with each other and the larger political system.22 A
further research question might be whether the act of voting on the part of African
Americans can really be seen as the result of patriotism and good citizenship as it is so
often framed. Maybe for Blacks voting isn’t tied to good citizenship at all; it might be
that there is another set of factors that are contributing to the decision to vote for
members in the African American community—namely respect for ancestors and
commitment to the Black community. This commitment to the Black community and
references to obligations to ancestors should tie into Black nationalist sentiment very
easily. However, this relationship is mitigated by the fact that the behavioral
recommendation resulting from racial awareness is participation in the American political
system. It would seem that this would temper wholehearted support for or at least
extreme adherence to Black nationalism ideology, which supports the withdrawal of
Blacks from the political system.

22This is an interesting finding given Hochschild’s finding that African Americans in higher income groups
were extremely disillusioned with the American dream while their poorer counterparts were extremely
invested in the American dream and the potential arising from it. Because our sample of poor African
Americans is limited here, it is difficult to say if this is reflected in the broader population of poorer African
Americans.
Distrust and Disenchantment

Before concluding this chapter, there should be a short discussion about the role of distrust and disenchantment in Black political opinion because so much of the conversations about politics and political opinion were laced with such high levels of suspicion and disillusionment. Only fifteen percent or five of the thirty-two participants in the sample felt like they could trust the government. The majority felt like they could trust the government very little of the time. They cited specific examples, especially from the Jim Crow and Civil Rights eras, in which many of the older participants came of age. The intensity of the distrust was demonstrated in discussions about voting, in discussions of why they cannot trust Black candidates to support Black interests and in discussions about the continued persistence of crime and other problems in the Black community. The findings related to trust are not surprising. The National Election Study has consistently tracked governmental trust among Americans since 1958 and trust has declined. In fact, in 1958 over half of Americans felt like they could trust the government most of the time. By 2000, only forty percent reported trusting the government most of the time, and fifty five percent reported that they could only trust the government some of the time.

There is also another form of trust that seems to be important in these focus groups. There is what initially seemed to be a feeling of optimism about race relations and the possibility of integration on the part of younger participants. They talked about diversity and the need to hear multiple perspectives. Tied to that, however, seems less to be optimism and more to be a universal mistrust of people regardless of race and a focus on the power of the individual to progress or make things happen. This is best
exemplified in an exchange between several of the college students when the moderator asked them to explain the mistrust issues that seemed to be present in their discussions. One student, Breanna, uses a metaphor of a game to describe politics. Players must learn to play a game in which corruption, injustice, and other problem are built into the rules. When asked if there is a specific racial identity attached to the major players of this political game, she said that there was not. So for these students, targets of mistrust were colorless. An alternative view of this phenomenon is that it provides additional evidence of the emerging collective action problem which leads to a disconnect between the ideal unified Black community, as characterized by the concept of linked fate, and the one that has resulted from a move toward individualism in the face of perceptions of disunity, disloyalty and corruption.

Beyond distrust, there was also a strong sentiment of discontent in much of the discussion. There were several areas of dissatisfaction. First, participants were dissatisfied with the level of understanding and regard other Americans had for the predicament in which Black Americans find themselves. When talking about social and economic gaps between Blacks and whites, the influx or resettlement of large populations of whites into the inner-city, or the way that Blacks are portrayed in the media, there was a general belief that often Blacks are seen as disposable for America. Next, there was displeasure with what Blacks, themselves, had done with the opportunities made available to them since the Civil Right Movement. This dissatisfaction manifested itself

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23 This influx of whites was problematic for some participants because they were residents of a rapidly gentrifying community. It is interesting to note that these white residents are mostly gay males who the Black residents saw as threat not only because of the changing demographics but also that they would be able to financially (and thus politically) out-maneuver residents who had “done their time” and weathered the economic downturn that had diminished the once thriving African American middle-class community.
differently for younger participants than for older ones. Among younger participants, for whom the sixties are remote, there was a high level of Black blame for the problems faced by the Black community. Additionally, there were critiques of many of the social and political policies that are direct results of Civil Rights efforts, such as affirmative action. For older participants, the dissatisfaction reflected a firm belief that the American political system had not really changed as much as many hoped it would since the Civil Rights Movement and that many opportunities had been wasted by Black leaders and thwarted by whites.

**Contours of the Generation Gap**

Several important findings arise in relation to age and cohort differences. Younger people were much less likely to rely on direct racist experiences as explanations for their opinions. In fact, they were more likely to downplay or rebuff their parents and some of their peers’ reliance on race as an explanation for problems in the Black community. When positive affect for whites was expressed, younger participants most often expressed it. Additionally, because some parents and their children participated in the focus groups, clear intergenerational differences could be manifested and their reactions to those differences observed. Thus, age differences and socialization emerge as prominent factors in this analysis and will be discussed in subsequent chapters. First, when discussing racial issues, younger participants were less likely to see race as an impediment to individual or group progress. This is in contrast to older participants who clearly saw race as an impediment to their early progress and highly influential in their everyday lives even now. For instance, Breanna, a recent college grad asserts that,
“...however I have an issue with the whole idea of we were oppressed and yada and we were. We were...past tense. Right now is what we need to be worried about. “We were” was a time period in which I was not even around. My mama wasn’t even born. So I mean you know I don’t know about the “we were” I know what I can do right now. I think it’s important to know about the past but not to hold on to it so tightly. “

Andrea, another college student, who points out that although many African Americans may believe that there is a wide chasm between the worlds and experiences of Blacks and whites, she is doubtful. Andrea states that,

“I listen to the talk of the building the bridge and the closing of the gap and I want to say I just don’t...I don’t think ...I don’t...I don’t see the gap sometimes. I don’t see the need for a bridge. And yes it’s all really nice and wonderful to stand up and use the flowery language and say yes we need to bring the two worlds together but to me...it’s all really well and good to get up and say that...realistically is it going to happen—I don’t know. Why? Because we’re all sitting around here waiting for someone to get up and use the flowery language and say let’s build a bridge. What I do day-to-day is I go out and I interact with white people.

Breanna and Andrea are not alone. Like her peers, Sasha, bases her beliefs about the appropriate relationship between blacks and whites on her personal interactions with them. Her mother’s negative experiences with whites didn’t affect her “because any beliefs I have about other races is because of my encounters with them not her encounters.” The only focus group in which a majority of the participants express opposition to affirmative action, complete abhorrence to the idea of the formation of a nation composed solely of Black Americans, an enthusiastic embrace of multiculturalism, and the need for diversity was the group composed of young college students.

Older participants, when discussing race and racism, were much more likely to draw from experiences as direct victims of racism. This is in stark contrast to younger participants who were more likely to see race as either irrelevant or use examples of
generalized or indirect racist experiences. Members of other groups talked about affirmative action and integration (though rarely using that conceptual label) as byproducts of the Civil Rights Movement and as difficult experiences for those participants who were the first to integrate workplaces, educational institutions and neighborhoods. One participant talked about integrating a middle school in Maryland in the sixties and how difficult and hostile it had been. Janet says of this time period,

“It was a challenging experience and one that still haunts me. One that I think haunts everyone in the community of my age. I went to an all black elementary school which was wonderful and was a wonderful experience…and they really educated us…They [referring to the teachers] did their job…when we got to September…we ended up…they wouldn’t send the bus to our neighborhood. They sent it to the white neighborhood next door and our parents had to transport us over to the white neighborhood to catch the bus. Once they got that straightened out and they picked us in our neighborhood, they would pick the white kids up then pick us up and go to school. But we ended up with race riots on the bus everyday. You know, we were spit on; we were cursed at…that’s when I learned to curse. Because before that I never heard that. I didn’t hear that, but you know they put us through it. Um…it was a very hostile environment. I think that there were maybe 13 of us in the whole school. Um…by the time we got to high school they…my first year there were again maybe ten or twelve in a school of three thousand kids.”

Her husband who was also participating in this group talked about integrating a small college in Michigan and what it was like to deal with both the university community and that of the surrounding town. Both of their experiences were extremely negative and racist. Both also made it clear that they saw no particular reason to integrate their lives in any way. Also participating in that group were people who had lived very integrated lives in their early age. They talked about periods in Columbus when you couldn’t live in certain areas and how some of their families were a part of tearing down racist residential boundaries. Donna remembers one such attempt by her family, in which they were,
“…thinking of buying some land over by Hoover Dam, and they would not sell to Blacks. That really devastated me as a child growing up to know that this was a place that we would go on Sunday afternoons, after church and play…and …you know…people were friendly but how could this place be a place where Blacks weren’t permitted to live. So that was …um…a really…um…devastating situation. Just to see that people don’t like Black people and don’t want them next door. That was rough. That was difficult. “

The members of this focus group were also trying to create a community that looks a certain way. These particular focus group participants were from a neighborhood that was largely black but rapidly changing with the gentrification process. Much of it had to do with the fact that they felt as if they were in a place where people looked like them then they would also be accepted more. Another community resident, Cassie, points to her desire to reside in a community in which Blacks are the dominant group. She puts forward,

“It’s really sad. When people are selling houses around here, like that house across the street is for sale and so many white people…well first of all she tried to keep it on the D.L. 24 Like, do you know any Black people who would buy this? She did do that, and then a lot of white male gay couples came by and boked…so it’s really sad. I really want to see young Black couples live in my neighborhood. I want my daughters to have somebody to grow up with. I want to have a reason to keep her in the school system, but I don’t have one right now and she will probably be going to private school out of here... It’s okay for gay people to live here, but it’s also okay for married Black couples with children and elderly people to live here. “

Lastly, in recognition of the contrast in views on race and racism based on age and socialization, one participant, O’Neil, points to differences between his and his daughter’s experiences with race. O’Neil explains,

24 The “D.L.” is an abbreviation of the colloquialism—down low. It means to keep something secret or quiet.
“I’ve been through a lot of things as a black person, and I’ve got a kid who is now in college and her black experience is probably very nil. She probably doesn’t care about the black experience, and yet I try to instill that in her. I think young people today do not see the Black community the same way possibly your generation [referring to moderator] and I know my generation, and I think that’s unfortunate. I think we have to keep trying to instill close relationships with them.”

It is important to note, at this point that a few of the younger participants make references to direct racist experiences. These references are usually coupled with statements that admit fault on the part of African Americans for not taking advantage of opportunities along with any racism they have experienced. For instance Melissa notes,

“So I understand, like, how she said she doesn’t see the race card. I see it definitely. I have experienced racism in very subtle forms and so I’m not…it’s not that hate white people…I don’t hate white people but there are certain things I see in the Black culture based on what we had to go through. I think we are…I’m biased. I like my culture. I like where I come from, but I do see a lot times too where we play off the idea that everything should be handed to us…and true I think that there are some things that we deserve in terms of reparations but you have to know, kind of, how to get the message across. You have to take what we are doing based on historical things and make yourself better.”

Whereas Melissa’s comments are less specific about the nature of the racist experiences she has suffered, another of her peers, Aminah, points to a specific experience. Statements that attribute the problems of blacks to individual negative behavior, however, flank that retelling of the experience.

“…It’s just that I have experienced racism too. For example, when I just came back from Ghana this past Christmas everybody who was, this was just after the September eleventh thing, so everybody who got pulled to the side for a second screening had a funny looking name or was Black so um that was one experience I had of racism just recently. So I understand the racism part too, but I also don’t agree with that [a lot of time Black students believe] oh I can’t move forward because I’m black and oh I got a 2.0 GPA and my mom is going to buy me a car. I was like nobody was
Both of these direct racism references are told in a way that is very different than those of the older participants. The experiences of the younger participants are either vague in the case of Melissa, or in the case of both girls, they are framed by statements that point out the shortcomings of individual Blacks in a way that discounts the racist experience. Older participants did not do this. It is not that they didn’t offer “Black blame” sentiments. Instead, they offered accounts of racism to demonstrate their level of identification with the struggles of the Civil Rights Movement, to explain why they choose to live in all Black surroundings, and to discuss the development of their views about politics and race. They provide their own share of Black blame, but not as a way of devaluing the shock of racism.

Another example of a generation gap among respondents is their beliefs about the motivations, and behavior of whites. There was lots of discussion in every group about the character of the relationship between Blacks and whites, and most people advocated a cautious approach to any dealings with whites at the very least and strong negative sentiment towards them at most. The only people to express any positive affect towards whites as a group were a few members of the younger cohort. Andrea, who interrupts a discussion about the relationship between Blacks and whites, most vividly relays this, “I like white people…I just want to put it out there that I like white people. Yeah…you know white people aint bad where I come from…I talk to white people. I like them. I don’t have a problem with them because I think individually I don’t have a problem with myself. I don’t see myself as a lesser person than anybody else who is white or colored skin. I don’t see myself as having less opportunities. I don’t see myself as less bright, so when I go out there I portray myself as being not just there equal
because I know that I am better \textit{there is laughter from others} and that commands…it doesn’t matter to me…it doesn’t matter that my skin might be 18 times darker than their shade of pigment because I am representing myself as a person with of this amount of value…of this amount of estimation…”

Evelyn, a young college student who was raised in a predominantly affluent white community but was becoming more sensitized to racial issues because of her participation in a minority scholarship program at her college, reported a belief that she has always been treated well by whites and that she identifies with whites as much as she does with other races. Evelyn suggests that

“I honestly … I don’t want to say that everything I have I owe to the white community, but I’ve never not fit in to feel like, I couldn’t identify more with one group or another. Like I said before the only time I felt like I didn’t belong was with the black people who thought I wasn’t black enough. We \textit{[referring to black people talking about themselves]} speak this way. You seem white. I mean all I see is just a lot division \textit{[among Blacks]} so if there was a Black America I can’t really say how I would fit into it.”

It is interesting to note that both of these comments encouraging strong affect and efforts to maintain strong relationships with white are coupled with expression of negative affect towards blacks. This is a component of the notion of Black blame mentioned earlier and which will be discussed more fully later in the text.

\textit{Endurance and Metamorphosis of Linked Fate}

In the two decades since the initial research findings were reported, linked fate has continued to be a catchall category for understanding why African American group orientations persist in political and social arenas. Linked fate is the feeling of connectedness that individual African Americans have to the fate, image, progress, etc. of
African Americans as a group. African American respondents on surveys have demonstrated a resounding belief that their personal progress is connected to the progress of other African Americans. This belief is also found among the participants in this sample—to varying degrees African Americans consider the implications of events, ideas, etc. for their entire racial group. Throughout the discussions for this research there were constant references by participants to Black people as a group rather than to themselves as individual African Americans. Younger participants were tied less to their groups and at times even desired to distance themselves from the group; however, they still focused on the group. African Americans are aware that external to their racial group they are lumped together even if they don’t want to lump themselves. Participants felt that their political, social, and economic fates rose and fell with the tide of sentiment toward African Americans as a whole. Participants used possession words such as “we”, “our” or “us”.

Recognizing that African Americans still focus on their “groupness” as an overarching lens for much of their discussion of social and political issues, there were also some unexpected nuances in the way that participants attached meaning to which people are included in their group. This was especially evident in the focus groups that were composed primarily of older, more educated, and middle class participants. This discussion shed light on the fact that sometimes it is very important to simply ask more questions about which participants are talking about when they say things like, “It’s important to me to give back to my community.” Community is a word assumed to have a universal definition when; in fact, the word has vastly different meanings across individuals, time and space. For instance, in these particular focus groups, when asked
how the participants saw themselves in relation to the Black community, without any cueing from the moderator most of the answers provided were all rooted in definitions of the Black community based on geographical boundaries rather than the idea of a larger, national and more fluid definition of the Black community. The respondents recognized their membership in multiple communities, but when actually discussing their specific role in the community, it was often done in reference to their geographic community.

Tariq, a university administrator, provides comments that illuminate this point.

Responding to the question of whether or not they feel that they have a role in the Black community, Tariq proposes,

“I think…first I think we do have a role in our community just like the sister was saying, but I think the question is that we have a number of communities to be a part of like me…you know…I’ve grown up all over the place. I’ve never stayed in one locale for a long period of time due to my father being in the military, but every place I was I was a part of that community. Even now I am a part of my community where I live over in Cumberland Ridge. So yeah, I do believe that we have a role and a responsibility in our community. Just like the example earlier with the people in Bexley being invested in the community, we are the same way in Cumberland Ridge. We’re vested in our community. We want our property value to stay at a comparable level. We watch our streets. We want our kids to be safe. If there is something going on we are calling the police, we are talking to our neighbors, so there’s a really good communal base there. So I think yeah we do have…our communities are important to us, but I would like to make it a little bit broader…I mean…we’ve all got multiple communities. The question that I would like to pose is… how are we as Blacks working within our communities plural."

This definition runs contrary to the way scholars have both conceptualized and empirically analyzed the linked fate. Questions about Black representation, the success of social movements, cohesion in public opinion, and bloc voting in national elections all imply that African Americans see themselves as a member of this broad borderless
community. The fact that the most affluent and educated members of this analysis and potentially of the entire Black community are constructing borders around their definition of their Black community will have strong influences in the political and social dynamics of the Black community. A weaker feeling of connection to other Blacks also makes individuals less likely to support Black nationalism because that connection is a central component to Black nationalist ideology.

Another way that the discussion of community and linked fate are framed is through class differences. Class becomes a huge factor in discussions of the maintenance of Black residential communities and in the discussion of individual ability to succeed. Class serves as an interesting and important underlying factor in the larger argument made here about racialized ideologies. For participants in these groups, dialogue about class was framed as the choice between cross-class incorporation and class isolation. For some participants, there were clear boundaries around the sphere they define as “the Black community” that moved beyond the geographic boundaries discussed earlier. In the case of these participants, there was a clear and intentional separation between African Americans with higher incomes and social status and poorer African Americans. One participant, Cassie, talks about her goals for the Black community, but within those comments there is a clear differentiation and a justification of that differentiation. Cassie states,

“I want us to have political power. I want us to have economic power. I’m not saying…There’s a place for, you know, lower class blacks and I want to see a little bit of that. I don’t mind people who are poor. I just don’t want to see them bring the drugs, the guns and the alcohol and the violence.”
For these particular African Americans, who are often more educated and wealthier than many of their peers, poor people bring the same social pathologies and problems that are cited in popular media and by other well-to-do members of society. An interesting exchange emerges around this particular topic. One of the participants, O’Neil, who is a prominent architect in the Columbus area, plays devil’s advocate, but simultaneously he asks the other participants to really think about which is most important to them—race or class.

**O’Neil**: but the question is…let say across the street and you live here…say somebody…let’s say you got a white couple who wants to buy that house, you got a gay couple who wants to buy that house, and you got me [who is Black] who wants to buy it for section 8…

**Cassie**: if they were to manage that building…

**Hakeem**: no…no…I’m just going to stop that. I mean we’re talking about a race and a class issue…

**Hakeem**: somebody who can afford…

**Lela**: yeah, there are a lot of class issues within our own race.

**O’Neil**: but I’m talking about putting black people over there. Isn’t that segregation?

**Hakeem**: no…no it isn’t

**Delia**: economic segregation…

**Hakeem**: if you can afford to live there then you can live there.

**Cassie**: but most of us can’t afford…

**O’Neil**: that’s what they say about Black folks…

**Hakeem**: well…it’s not coming from a …95%…95%...they have five percent who are upstanding and that five percent gets off it eventually.

**Moderator**: so isn’t …when you define your Black community economic status plays an integral role in that and so then it becomes not just a black community but a Black, and I hesitate to say it… Black middle class.

**O’Neil**: Black caste system

**Moderator**: or a Black upper class but not just a Black community or do you see yourself as a part of a Black community more globally rather than based on…

**Hakeem**: it can be a Black community. People can even rent over there. What I’m saying is…somebody who moves in and has no responsibility whatsoever, that’s trouble. We all know its trouble.
We all know that. A Black person can buy that and put Black people in there and they can rent from him. That’s beautiful, but if a Black person buys it and puts Black people in there which he knows is going to tear down the community that person is no longer Black to me. I’m sorry. He’s not Black. He’s classified as something else.

For these participants, both class and race emerge as seemingly equal factors in their decisions.

For others, African Americans of different social and economic classes should try to live together and interact because their fates are tied to each other and because it is important for community maintenance and progress. They point to the ability of Blacks who are better off to help uplift and serve as role models for Blacks who are worse off. When asked directly if they thought it was a good thing for poorer and wealthier African Americans to live in close proximity, Janet volunteers the following answer.

“I think it’s a good thing actually…um diversity is a key word today…and if they neighborhoods were more mixed, more diverse in terms of income there would be less negative impact on our neighborhoods. Because people think…well, really you could be in a $300,000 ghetto as easy as a $50,000 ghetto. [Other’s agree] If those are the only people you associate with. When you have a mixture of people…different economic groups, different backgrounds…they improve each other’s lives when they get to know each other. You know…and just because you might only own $10,000 today…tomorrow it might be a $100,000…and by perhaps interacting with people who have that kind of income it might change your aspirations for what may be.”

So for her and others who agree with her the relationship is not just a drain of middle class resources, safety, and uplift by the poor, it is a more symbiotic relationship in which each group is contributing or getting something out of it. Sadie, a woman who also lives in this predominantly African American middle class community, even went as far as making sure her daughter interacted with poorer African Americans. She had grown up
in a totally white environment and had admittedly lived an extremely sheltered life. So when her daughter was coming of age. Sadie wanted to provide her with a different experience. She says,

“And the experience that I had growing up, I said that I would never let that happen to my child. So I actually introduced her to the inner city, ghetto, or whatever. And I would take her over there to Atkinson, to the Neighborhood House. Uh, so that they helped me raise her. You know I would take her there. Of course once again, my family was against it. All my sisters thought I was going crazy. But I thought it was really important to make her well rounded, to understand everything is not just what you have, but what they have. And I remember one day pulling up, and there were all these kids around her. And I was like, “Oh my God, what are they doing to my baby?” And they were saying, “talk for us.” You know because she talked proper English. And she didn’t talk any slang. It was a foreign language to them. So she learned from them, and they learned from her. So it was an exposure type thing. And then I learned, you are doing the right thing, because that exposure is important, because I didn’t have it. And it hurt me in being brought up, in my marriage, everything, because I was so sheltered. I didn’t know people were really mean. I didn’t know people were dishonest. I didn’t know people lied. I thought everyone was good. You know because I wasn’t exposed … they sheltered me from everything, and it’s really not for the best. You have to be exposed, be diverse, and be exposed to everything. And there’s a reason for it. That’s for your survival.”

So understanding that there are people who are less privileged than you and interacting with them on a regular basis is just as important to the wealthier people as it is to those who are less fortunate. Thus the incorporation of multiple social and economic communities in the same geographic space is important. This is significant for any discussion of linked fate because it tells scholars who are interested that the link that is constantly referenced and implemented as an explanatory value may be an unwanted tether for some and a welcomed connection for others. Either way it is something that deserves more scholarly inquiry. If the connection is unwanted then individuals may
seek to distance themselves from their own race and support the ridding of race as a defining category. This would, in turn, make them more likely to embrace integrationism rather than a race specific ideology like Black nationalism.

**Attributing Fault: Black Blame vs. System Blame**

A common thread surfaces throughout many of the exchanges about why Blacks continue to lag behind whites in important areas. This thread, I argue, is a compilation of reasons that fault Blacks and their individual shortcomings for their persistent lag. It comes in the form of criticism for the lack of unity, for poor behavioral choices that lead to poor life circumstances, and other personal and political pathologies. This constant criticism or Black blame then becomes the primary explanation for the failure of the Black community to keep pace with whites. This is juxtaposed with other targets toward which fault can be attributed such as breakdown in the political system or even the obstacles constructed by racist or malevolent whites. Among the members of these discussion groups there are two primary types of fault attributions—Black blame and system blame.

As previously stated Black blame is the attribution of fault to the African American community for any persistent problems or failure to thrive. This attribution often comes in the form of references to vague problems such as the lack of unity and inability to facilitate cooperative efforts or to poor behavioral choices such as failure to work, unplanned pregnancies, or illegal activities. Across each focus group, the presence of Black blame is there. It is even important to note that across age groups, economic and educational groupings and ideological categories, there is Black blame. Participants make comments about how Blacks have allowed certain things or how engaging in
certain socially unacceptable behaviors are the reasons for problems. Overall, there was no group where Black blame was not employed as an explanation, and very rarely was Black blame countered as inappropriate, stereotypical, or unjustified. For instance among some of the younger participants who talked about why Black students were not thriving in their universities, the answer proffered was very common to one made by Andrea, who says,

“Basically that’s what its come down to…from what I have witnessed because I don’t play the race game…I don’t pay attention to it. It doesn’t figure into how I think. People always ask me if it feels weird being the only Black person in certain setting. I don’t notice. I actually think it’s a little sad that people do notice it and they have to point out oh my God you’re the only Black person here. My problem with a lot of the race questions just because I haven’t experienced it is that my experiences with Black people have been not that they aren’t holding the torch but they are holding on too tightly and for the wrong reasons. I have heard so many excuses for not living up to potential not being able to do things because I am Black. That to me should not be an excuse for anything because I’m Black. Maybe there is racism that I just don’t notice that I am ignorant too but I myself personally I don’t believe in the you know, the white man’s trying to keep me down and it’s the white man’s fault that I didn’t get this job. No it’s because your hair is not combed, your shoes are dirty and you’re not wearing a tie. That’s why you didn’t get the job. That’s my take on it.”

Andrea and others who engaged in this kind of Black blame would point to individual problems or behaviors. For instance, Delia, who was a young professional in her early thirties, chides herself for it, but makes a similar comment about the problems of Black America, when she says,

“But boy I have to negate myself on top of that. There are times when even within your own culture group there are social economic difference. There are some Black folks I cannot relate to. There are just some things that I just don’t understand like how you can not have a job and continue to have children. How you…in that way I consider myself to be pretty conservative. I just don’t understand…you know…what our own people
are doing so I really, really vacillate between many different opinions, political.”

Even, when participants felt like what they were saying was not quite right or appropriate, they still attributed problems to poor personal behavior. It is as if they are saying that if African Americans would correct particularly aberrant behaviors that are inappropriate in the larger society, or if they would just focus on other goals, then lives of African Americans would be drastically changed. This point is cogently demonstrated in a dialogue between several members of one focus group.

Sharon: If they could stop striving to look as good. You know, I have a 7 year old goddaughter who goes to Africentric School and doesn’t want to wear the uniforms anymore because they don’t look good. And I said, “Baby at your age, you should not be worrying about how good you look, you should be getting your mind together so that when you get to a grade where the clothes matter, you can focus. You know it’s not what’s outside; it’s what’s up here [pointing to her head].”

Rahim: Our priorities are messed up.

Others: agree

Rahim: They are more concerned with whether they get school clothes and not the question, can they read. You know, I got the first day of school. I got to be looking good.

Donna: or can they see? You know….

Janet: And the whole push is to get the clothes for school, but no one says anything about buying a book. Do they?

Beyond personal shortcomings, Black blame also takes the form of general statements about the manner in which African Americans have squandered opportunities and betrayed the efforts of older generations of African Americans. Sasha points out that,

“We have to carry the torch, not white people. We have to keep that torch burning...and by keeping that torch going as individuals, we have to do more to keep those things alive as individuals. I can’t look at Breanna, Aminah or even you and expect you to keep it going so I can keep doing what I want to do. I have to do what I need to do to keep alive what those

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25 The Africentric School is a kindergarten through eighth grade public school in the Columbus Public School system. The school is open to all races, but it is designed with the idea of putting African American history and needs of African American children in the forefront. (www.columbus.k12.oh.us/shcpro/)
people did forty, fifty years ago. So I guess that’s my big thing. They did a lot of work and they worked really hard and they tried to get it out there but nobody kept it going…it’s gotten better. Granted my father’s generation wouldn’t have had all the opportunities that I have had, but at the same time we are not taking advantage of them, as they would have if they were getting them. If they were getting the opportunities they would have been on them like white on rice…you know, but people aren’t taking advantage of opportunities that our forefathers have worked so hard to set up.”

Another way in which this kind of Black blame takes place is when Blacks are blamed for things in the Black community that are perceived as ruined. The problem is attributed less to individual behavior and more to broad group pathology. For instance, Cora recounts the story of a group of women who are trying to help African American teen mothers make better lives for themselves and their children, but the women have found it very difficult to raise funds and other resources among members of the Black community. Cora points to this as an example of how African Americans fail to act when there is a problem. According to Cora,

“Even if you’re not willing to do it, let me help someone who is. Where I am not willing to go out and try to stop young girls from getting pregnant but you are, how do we help them in doing that? Well, we’re not. [Referring to African Americans] I think that’s part of the problem because we don’t support each other in doing things that we can’t do or we don’t want to do”.

Gina echoes Cora’s sentiment when she counters another group member’s argument that it is unfair that white people get things they don’t deserve just because they feel like they are owed more than other groups. Gina, however, defends this behavior as appropriate and further states that, “If we [referring to Blacks] were cockier as a people we wouldn’t be in the shape that we’re in.” When the topic turned to the state of predominantly
African American urban communities, Black blame becomes a principal reason for why much of these communities are so blighted. Hank, a young professional in his thirties suggests that,

“[This community is] theirs [referring to Blacks], but they have devalued it. They have no stake in it. So they bring nothing to the table. Like if I were to come and say I want to do something. I could bring the value of a house. I can bring something to the table. If I mortgaged the house that could bring me $200,000, I could leverage that and I could do something. You can’t leverage a Benz because it devalues. It’s just a great expense. It doesn’t have any value to it all. That’s the difference between, I think, Black and white. White, kind of, pander to us those things and we accept it. And they laugh at us. I’m a sell you this car for $50,000 dollars. I made it for $15, and it’s not gone be worth $5 when you get done with it. And we accept that.”

These types of sentiments are numerous and even those participants who have strong positive support for African American culture and the desire to be around Blacks predominantly engage in this behavior. How this affects the development of a racialized ideology will be developed in the next chapter.

An alternative to Black blame that is often invoked in these discussions is system blame. This is the attribution of fault to the government, its institutions, or agents for problems in the Black community. Arguments in this vein often cite the design of the system as a cause for Black problems. For participants who put forth these types of blame, the American system has built in obstacles that prevent Black progress. Thus African Americans have to be cautious of the system. When employing system blame, participants often point to events and time periods in history such as slavery or Jim Crow as events that have delayed African American progress. For instance, in one group a participant makes the statement that she is able to deal with whites because she feels and
knows that they are not better than her. So the moderator goes on to ask whether or not she thinks self-esteem is a problem for why Blacks don’t deal with whites more and that participant agrees that it is. Aminah then provides an explanation using a more conciliatory form of system blame. She asserts,

“Black people have been…um…they’ve been degraded for the longest time. They’ve been put down. They’ve been tortured and slavery hasn’t happened to anybody else. And seriously if a white person had gone through slavery they probably would have survived it so I’m just saying that Black people have gone through so many things in their lifetimes. And I think their self-estees is kind of hard to come by when your parents have gone through some things and maybe they don’t know how to teach you how to have that self-esteem so.”

A less conciliatory but still moderate form of system blame points to history as well, but it talks about how changes in the system have been to the detriment of Blacks. Pointing out one of the losses that resulted from removing barriers to education, Rahim says,

“Another thing that happened is the education system fell apart in America. Integration forced Black teachers losing their jobs. Okay, white teachers didn’t lose their jobs. It was the Black educators that lost their jobs. And they just got spread across, and all the principals and all the administrators in those Black schools, they were the ones that suffered. So now we had a system that totally changed, because they used to train you on how to think, how to read and how to reason. That system is no longer in place.”

Focus group participants also employ a stronger form of system blame. Proponents of this kind of system blame are more direct in their blame of American culture and government as forces that work against Black Americans. Felicia points out, on more than one occasion in the discussion, that systemic forces are put in place to hold Black Americans back. She says, for example, that

“I think that first of all we have to recognize that the system has been designed to put us where we are which means that we have to create our
own system. That does not mean that we exclude anyone it just means that we support ourselves and in doing so we are able to support other people. The system I live under right now is designed to keep white people in power and I can design a system where I can empower myself as a group, as a people, and then I’m of more benefit to this country and to the world globally.”

Another participant, Cameron, who is one of the few in all of the groups to counter participants who are engaging in the black blame process often, becomes visibly annoyed and points out that,

“Naw, naw…you become a victim of the same stuff that everybody else has been a victim of…you categorize folks inappropriately…you’re saying the folk where you live currently are acting differently than the folks in Reynoldsburg…that’s bullshit…and the system does that to you and to everybody else…I mean people respond in the same environment, people respond in the same way…it ain’t no difference between how Black people respond in the same environment as a white person…you gotta understand that…when they…the whole thing with crime affecting Columbus and people are always referring to the east side…obviously that’s bullshit…how’s the east side going to be the north end…you’re buying into things…they reinforce it all the time…I don’t know if you’re old enough to remember growing up hearing a news person on TV and he would tell people that were vacationing…coming to Columbus during the holidays don’t go to the east side but what he was saying was is that its niggers out there but I’m saying that was the media and they do that all the time and you gotta understand that…the name of the program was Looking with Long…his last name was Long and I remember being a kid and hearing this on TV and all he was basically saying was reinforcing…now he was supposed to be totally neutral and he was buying into that same mind set…don’t go over there where them niggers are…this was done on TV…and it’s done consistently you just don’t pay any attention to it…but they do that to us all the time…and we buy into it…we get to believing that stuff”

When system blame is invoked participants are signaling problems in the American political system rather than internal problems in the Black community. Although system blame is used to a lesser extent than Black blame, it is still used often. And it is used so
often that one becomes puzzled by other statements that are made in which participants whole-heartedly endorse certain activities and policies in that same system. One example is the area of electoral politics and political opinions surrounding voting and African American candidates. Another example is age differences in which younger members of this sample rely more heavily on Black blame than system blame as explanations for the status of Black America.

**Summary**

The goal of this chapter was to provide a sense of the major frames and attitudes used by focus group participants. It began by discussing those issues in which African American are really similar to the larger American populations. Like other Americans, participants in this sample were not very trusting of the government and had very little faith in the sincerity of candidates. Also there are differences in the manner in which younger participants view race and older participants view it. Younger people in this sample were less likely to rely on direct racist experience when discussing race and showed a tendency toward more positive affect for whites. This clearly makes the conclusions about appropriate race relations made by different generations systematically different.

There are other factors related to political behavior that are unique to Blacks, and those factors are discussed here as well. Linked fate is examined here, as well as important differences between traditional views of linked fate and the way linked fate is conceptualized by these group members. Additionally, an important feature of the way participants conceptualize the problem of race in America is the conflict between Black blame and system blame. The target to which an individual attributes blame is important
for the eventual conclusions reached. If one believes that the problems lie in the poor judgments of Blacks and better choices could lead to better circumstances, then you are also more likely to focus on prescriptions for changing problematic behavior. Alternatively, if an individual sees the problems in Black America as defects in the American political system then they are likely to focus on ways in which that system should be altered or, believing that the system is static, then they opt for withdrawal. This is important for our concerns because which type of blame you engage in also has an impact on which ideological structure and appeals are more attractive. How participants to make ideological decisions using this ideological continuum is discussed in the subsequent chapter.
CHAPTER 4

IN OUR OWN WORDS:
ORDINARY CITIZENS DEFINE INTEGRATIONISM AND BLACK NATIONALISM

In Chapter 3, an outline of the overall political character of the focus group participants demonstrated that African Americans are quite varied in their political beliefs. (For a detail discussion of the focus group process and the concluding survey used in later analysis, see Appendix A.) When assessing this variation, it is important to look for any systematic differences among expressed opinions. Whereas Chapter 3 demonstrates that participants fail to offer these ideologies explicitly when discussing race and race relations, analysis of the focus group transcripts shows that Blacks implicitly are wrestling with their positioning on Black nationalism and integrationism. Building on the conceptual and opinion categories defined in Chapter 2, this chapter will more clearly diagram the underlying characteristics of integrationism and Black nationalism as expressed in focus group conservations. After situating this project in current scholarship, developing elite definitions of each ideological category, laying the methodological foundation and formulating an image of our focus group sample, this chapter will return to the original research question.
This question stems from the argument that for African Americans, beliefs about the appropriate relationship between the Black community and the larger American society shape their overall political views. For Blacks, their race and racial group membership play central roles in many areas of life. Essentially, the implicit question that African Americans find themselves asking is: should they as individuals and as an entire group try to assimilate or incorporate themselves into the larger (and mostly white) American social and political structure or should they opt for withdrawal and seek to extricate themselves from that structure. Returning to that question, this chapter will lay out the political and social psychological beliefs and dispositions that emerge as important when individuals are aligned with either integrationism or Black nationalism or when they choose to plot a course that falls somewhere in between those ideological options.

The participants in the focus group, with few exceptions, do not mention or refer to these ideological categories during their natural conversations. So the quotes and conversation excerpts offered here are based on several different kinds of prompts. First, all of the focus groups began with a handout. In this handout were pictures of Martin Luther King and Malcolm X. It was hoped that King’s and X’s political beliefs and goals would spark discussions about individuals’ personal ideologies as well. Next, they were asked to talk about how these leaders views were similar, different, or irrelevant to their own political views. After this discussion ran its course, participants were asked how important it was to have contact with whites as well as other questions addressed in the previous chapter. These questions were related to candidate evaluations, important Black organizations, trust in government and others and voting. Additionally, there were
various occasions when participants would make unexpected assertions and the
moderator would prompt them to say more or even move the entire conversation in
another direction. What is reflected in this chapter are the answers to those prompts. Do
they ever say things like, “I am a Black nationalist and this is what I think?” Well, no.
However, underlying much of the discussions are actual ideological structures.
Participants take ideological sides. The commonalities among expressions of participants
on each side and those that chose moderate positions are taken up in this chapter.

Below Table 4.1 lists the attitudes and issue positions that function as major
c characteristics of each ideological category. This information is put into tabular format
so that comparisons between the categories can be made more easily. It is vital to note
here, and in the arguments made in this project, that these categories should not be seen
as overly rigid. Participants in the focus group and the NBES samples rarely express
opinions that fit solely into single categories representing the polar ends of this
ideological continuum. Like many of the opinions associated with political attitudes,
most people in each group fall into a more moderate mid-range category that allows them
to take on individual traits from the extreme ends without fully adopting either ideology.
Thus, the category traits listed here are archetypes of each ideology with its particular
adherents subscribing to most of the characteristics rather than absolutely all of them.
Table 4.1: Attitudes and Issue Positions by Ideological Category

The first attitude orientation referred to in Table 4.1 is linked fate. From earlier discussion and a long line of scholarly work it is evident that linked fate serves as an important starting point in this and all analysis of African American politics. African Americans feel tied to each other in significant ways, and that remains true across this ideological spectrum. The presence of a belief in linked fate among African Americans has become a constant in the analysis of African American politics. Stipulating that allows this project to move beyond linked fate to analyze the nature of the connection that Blacks have to each other and other communities. This chapter takes up that
assignment and will be divided into four primary parts. The first three sections will be
dedicated to closely examining each ideological category in relation to the traits listed
above. The end of the chapter will outline some interesting findings that are beyond the
scope of ideological definitions and categorizations, but related to these ideologies
nonetheless.

**Integrationism**

Much of American political history surrounds the conflict related to the demand
for and unwillingness to incorporate smaller groups into the larger American community.
The incorporation process for African Americans has been challenging and drawn out,
but still there are many African Americans who are committed to full incorporation. It is
a strong leap, however, to say that this commitment is premeditated rather than a
subconscious process. During the course of the focus groups, rarely do you hear
participants saying that it is important to make a conscious effort to integrate American
culture. Instead, they talk about integration in more roundabout and subtle ways.
Participants talked about what it was like for them to move into all white neighborhoods
when they were a child and how important it was to them then, and the impact it has had
on them since. Or they talked about what it was like to be the only African American in
certain settings and what the appropriate reaction to that experience should be. All of this
allows us to create a composite model of the ingredients proponents of integrationism use
to make up their decision calculus.

Participants who subscribe to integrationism are more likely to acknowledge and
incorporate multiple identities into their decision making process. These participants
were clear that they didn’t want to be thought of as just one thing—a Black person. This
is true even though rarely did they offer up other prevailing identities as alternatives. For them, being college educated, being multicultural, or having direct ties to another country, were all examples of ways in which they conceptualized their beliefs about the level of association African Americans should have with whites. For example, Andrea, who was a young student of Caribbean ancestry and had spent part of her childhood in the Caribbean, was the most effusive of all participants about integrating with whites. Her motivation for this support for integration had a lot to do with her admitted inability to identify with much of the African American experience, which encompassed its negative interaction with whites. Andrea states,

I have been listening and I didn’t grow up here. I don’t know anything about Martin Luther King or Malcolm X. I don’t know…I saw the movies. Basically that’s what its come down to…from what I have witnessed because I don’t play the race game…I don’t pay attention to it. It doesn’t figure into how I think. People always ask me if it feels weird being the only Black person in a certain setting. I don’t notice. I actually think it’s a little sad that people do notice it and they have to point out, “Oh my God. You’re the only Black person here.

Andrea is not alone in her belief that race is not the most vital filter through which she views the world. Her statements tie into other participants’ beliefs about multiple identities and the importance of recognizing diversity both internal and external to the Black community. Sasha, who comes from a military family, suggests that for her parents it was very important for her and her siblings “to be ourselves, be citizens of the world.” Integrationist participants are very clear that they do not want to be boxed in by stereotypes about what represents Blackness. Breanna, chiding her mother for her narrow definition what it means to be Black, offers
[My mother thinks] like we need to stand up for ourselves and you should not let other people enter your Black circle…she’s kind of becoming an extremist as she gets older…she appears to be like okay well not only can they not be white they can’t be anything else either. They have to be Black. And we’re talking about Black and straight.

Participants were clear that they didn’t want to be confined by other people’s perception of proper “Black” characteristics and behaviors. There was a strong desire to shatter popular images of Blackness; however, this desire did not lead to expressions of other identities or characteristics that were more appropriate.

With no other prevailing group that would characterize their identities, Integrationist participants often spoke in terms of just being recognized as an individual without reference to race. Some simply wanted to associate with people who espoused similar values as theirs, which for them were not bound by racial categorization. Sasha makes the point,

I was raised predominantly around white people. It also depended on the region of the country you were in. I was in the southwest and around a lot of Chicanos, …when I moved to North Carolina we were in predominantly Black areas, and when I came to Ohio I was in predominantly white schools. So it just depends on what your background is…I want to live in a culture or around people who are on the same level as me because my biggest gripe about being here in Ohio is that in Ohio everybody thinks in terms of Black and white and there is a whole world out there of people…and never mind that there are many shades of Black. There are also people from different parts of the world who might on sight look Black but not consider themselves Black…or like even in whites there might be people who look down on being called white…they are like I’m not white, I am Croatian or Ukrainian or whatever or I’m South American. For me I want to be around people who are like-minded. I don’t care what race. I don’t want to be around people who are all the same. I don’t want to be in a society that is all of one anything to be honest…
Others also emphasize good character, harmonious values and the establishment of sound relationships as more important than race in deciding which interactions are appropriate. For instance, Adrienne sees it as progress that her grandchildren do not focus on race as much she and previous generations did. In an exchange between Adrienne, Paula, and the moderator, she highlights her beliefs about this point.

**Adrienne:** My grandchildren, they don’t have a color thing going on. They don’t care. That’s my friend. They don’t see it. They haven’t been through what we’ve been through. They haven’t been through what my parents have been through so that’s just their friend. That’s their little friend they go to school with and can she come over. And, girl, you ought to see the look on my face when I see that they friend ain’t one of us. [Laughter] As Mama used to say when I was a kid. If they can’t use our comb don’t bring them home.

**Moderator:** so do you see that change as progress

**Adrienne:** I think its progress. Because when my children were coming up, they had only had a little exposure to white people. They thought only their face and hands was white. They called them the people with the white face. My grandchildren, they don’t even think of them in terms of color. That’s Megan. That’s Amber. That’s my friend. Can she come over?

**Paula:** Well color is taught anyway. That’s a learned behavior

**Adrienne:** so I notice that they don’t care like we were brought up to care or like our parents were brought up to care.

The beliefs of these participants and others tie into the second category listed in Table 4.1, which is a social outlook that focuses on the individual. Although they recognize that for various reasons they are seen and judged as members of a certain racial group, they reject or ignore that categorization and instead choose to focus on the individual. In her discussion of the NAACP, Breanna really exemplifies the belief among Integrationists that it is important to move beyond race toward critically examining the worth and efforts of individuals when she says,
and like sometimes [people say things like] I don’t want to be in that organization [referring to some fictional organization] because it’s an all white organization… but its important to know that like the NAACP was set up by a group of definitely intellectuals and thinkers but was mainly like pushed through by an older white gentlemen who saw that there should definitely be an advancement of a group of people that was not as knowledgeable about things that was going on. The NAACP has definitely been the one [organization of this kind] that has lasted the longest just because…it helps to …it helps people to see that like …it’s important that we work together that we work as a collective. That’s saying that what organizations is it important for Black people to be a part of? It is being a part of those organizations that not just help Black people but help people in general to be…that help with advancement…I hate to say that…that helps with the advancement of any good people. It doesn’t have to be about a group just individuals overall.

Breanna’s assessment that there should be organizations that help “any good people” really summarizes much of the comments made by supporters of integrationism throughout the groups. They view, or at least want to view, the world to be viewed, from a colorblind perspective in which good moral character, individual effort, and sound judgment are the prevailing determinants of ultimate success.

Focusing on the individual and their ability to impact their personal circumstances results in unambiguous definitions of the causes of enduring problems in the Black community. These definitions usually surround two important themes—Black blame and individual failure. Blacks become both the perpetrator and victim as explanation for why African Americans fall short of other groups in so many social and economic categories. As discussed in the previous chapter, many of the participants across the ideological spectrum employ Black blame. The differences outlined here are in the manner in which Black blame is employed. For integrationists, Black blame is the central reason for Black
problems, and because their focus is on the individual, then individual failure is the resultant explanation of why Blacks cannot and do not overcome these problems. In a discussion of how Blacks are often negatively portrayed as the mythical welfare queen and other images, one group’s members acknowledge that this is a stereotypical portrayal but then continue to employ Black blame as a reason for why Blacks cannot get beyond these stereotypes. Breanna suggests that individuals have to be “smart enough” to counter those stereotypes; otherwise, it becomes a “self-fulfilling prophecy” that Blacks then live out or emulate the behaviors outlined in these stereotypical images. Other adherents point to refusals to work, to conform to mainstream standards of dress, to maintain a “normal” family structure that entails having a reasonable number of kids that one can afford to care for, and other behaviors to explain why Blacks aren’t taken seriously, turned down for jobs, and numerous other negative reactions by non-Blacks. Even Blacks who are not living “deviant” lives and manage to become successful are blamed for how they choose to use or not use their successes. Eve explains,

When you ask what that relationship [between Blacks and whites] should look like, I think it’s more of a symbiotic relationship. We have to be able to feed off of each other equally. I know we’re not at that point yet, but I think a lot of that’s because Black people don’t care and it’s not affecting them everyday and if they manage to surpass living in the ghetto to have money and nice clothes…it’s like well I got out and no one helped me, then they don’t think they need to help others who didn’t have opportunities.

In essence, what they are all saying is that Black people continuously find themselves at the negative end of statistical results because of individual personal failure on the part of Blacks.
Extreme integrationists, meaning those participants who totally reject racial categorization as a prevailing judgment tool, were the only participants to offer any form of positive affect towards whites. As discussed in the previous chapter, Andrea and Eve are two young college students who freely talk of efforts to deal with whites on a daily basis, the high comfort level they feel around whites and the need for a “symbiotic” relationship with whites. Although not everyone in the sample expressed negative attitudes towards whites, all but these two fall short of offering unwavering positive evaluations of whites. However, most integrationists do not find interactions with whites problematic or undesirable. This ability to make positive affective evaluations of whites is connected to the fact that integrationist participants were also less likely to reference direct experiences of racism and hostility from whites. Andrea and Eve’s comments in the last chapter are the starkest example of this but others fall into this way of thinking as well. In this case the positive affect is not detected in the verbal presences of positive white evaluations; instead it is visible in the absences of references to racism and hostility from or towards whites.

In the course of most discussions with a particular focus group, participants were frequently asked to clarify whom they were talking about when making statements using general or vague pronouns such as “they,” “them,” or “some people.” When participants in one focus group began a discussion of the media an interesting dynamic emerged. The moderator suggested that there seemed to be “a high level of mistrust. Maybe mistrust is the wrong word but [members of this focus group] see some kind of low level sort of deceptiveness on the part of whites.” Again Breanna emerges as the spokesperson of the group’s views, even though others clearly indicate agreement through nodding and other
non-verbal forms of communication. In a rather long but important exchange between
Brandy and the moderator this is demonstrated.

**Breanna**: …it’s not necessarily a deception or like a convincing of like oh
okay I can use your life up to like help me cause you’re white and
you’re going to make a whole lot of money because you’re white.
I mean, I don’t think that that’s what happens. I think it get more
into being a misunderstanding. And I think it gets into trying to
become more…not necessarily become more of the ignorant
person like Sara was saying but more of the intelligent and using
the system to your advantage. Does that necessarily mean the
white man? No, that’s talking about the government. I mean we
are talking about using what you have available to you to your
advantage. Now, that sometimes entails manipulation

**Moderator**: on your part or on the part of white people

**Breanna**: on your part. Not on the part of white people. All people are
manipulating the system at any point in time just period. But, I
mean, it just takes a need to understand and have the education in
order to better understand how this whole bureaucracy or
institution works. And I don’t think that that has anything
specifically to do with just white people. I couldn’t say that it’s
Justin or it’s Allen or any other just white person that I can think of

**Andrea**: just being white

**Breanna**: it’s not any of that. It’s the institutions. It’s the system in
which we are that they just so happen to be the majority of. So I
don’t think that’s necessarily a Black on white attack. I think of it
more of trying…of not trusting the system…of not trusting or
trying to better understand the system at large or as we know
it…i.e. the United States.

**Moderator**: so, when you talk about the institution or the system or the
government you are not referring to white people

**Breanna**: No. I’m saying the institution itself. I don’t know if it has
anything to do with the mistrusting of white people like you know
they are running around with clouds and they are like trying to
“trick” us [She makes the quotation gestures.]

**Moderator**: oh…what do you mean by running around with clouds. I’m
lost.

**Breanna**: it’s not like they are trying to trick us. It’s just that you are
basically conditioned to try to get a better understanding of or
perception of what is going on. And being aware of what is going
on around you. Not necessarily tricking anybody or not trusting
them.
This exchange also speaks to another category that addresses the motivations and intentions that participants attach to the behavior of whites. For many of the Integrationist participants, rather than perceiving whites as having bad intentions for Blacks, whites were mostly just “ignorant” or unaware of other cultures. They (whites) simply need to reach out to other communities to overcome that ignorance. Then with a certain level of education society will improve.

**Sasha:** I think the most important thing about us is that white people need to come to us. I’ve got a white friend and the thing that stagers me is their ignorance of other people in general. Never mind Black folks but just in general. It saddens me just how ignorant they are of other people’s cultures. They know all about rich white people and poor white people but they can’t translate that to other cultures. They just… they are blind. I have a friend that’s white and I have known him since like 7th grade. He probably knows me the best and he is white, but I have had to educate him on some things. He just doesn’t have a clue and that feeds into the media. [White] people are ignorant. They might even be stupid. You have ignorant people watching stuff on TV and unfortunately they just become more ignorant. Ignorance begets itself. I think we can educate each other as much as we want but white people need to come to us.

**Moderator:** us as in Black people

**Sasha:** Any minority groups…so white people, and the word needs to get out…you need to come to us. You know I am tired of those few white people who come to me and I tell them what the deal is. The few that have that nerve to ask and I don’t care what kind of questions. You know, I have had questions about my hair, skin color. Even my friend who I was just talking about asked me if Black people are more fertile than white people is that why they’re having all these babies. I’m like no…

**Sasha:** it’s ignorance. Just ignorance. Even as if a child were to ask you a question. You can’t get angry because they don’t know. They have no concept of it. You know I feel sorry for them. Honestly, I have deep sadness for them. [Laughter] Because they are so ignorant, and they’re gonna be because they don’t have to worry about us. Why should they? You know…they are on top of the game. Why should they have to worry about us?
Breanna doesn’t necessarily agree that whites need to come to other racial groups to make apologies for anything; however, she does agree with the need for whites to be educated about the needs of other groups. She adds,

And I think it’s not even just saying that white people need to come to any group of people to have a better understanding but I think even just the ability of that group of people to say let me show you what happened. You need to come over here with me and you need to see what’s going on at my house. And have a better understanding and a more realistic perspective than what they see on TV. I mean…that’s not necessarily realistic.

This is also echoed by Delia, who on several occasions, refers to the need of Blacks to educate whites as a method of countering stereotypes whites have about the Black community.

For this particular ideological group we have seen that institutions are rendered colorless in the sense that actors’ behavior and policy implementation are not race specific; rather, they are race neutral. Because Integrationists focus on the efforts of the individual, the importance of individual effort in changing circumstances and do not attach racial labels to forces working within governing institutions, they are also less likely to believe that there are race specific targeting of Blacks and less likely to support race targeted programs. This is best demonstrated in the most Integrationist focus group, which was the group composed of young college students. Above, Breanna’s comments really show the same regard for the political system that many of the others in her group support as well. In essence, these young people seem to view political and social interaction as a game that is both flexible and winnable for all people. In that sense they
see whites and Blacks as equal and undifferentiated players in that game. So they follow
Melissa’s beliefs outlined below.

**Moderator**: There seems to be a high level of mistrust even among those
of you who think that cooperation with whites is important. It
seems to be a high level of mistrust of whites or is it that I am just
reading that wrong.
**Melissa**: As far as we use white people but we don’t trust them.
**Moderator**: That’s what it seems like most of you are saying to me…
**Melissa**: Yeah, I think so…I can agree with that… I mean I have white
friends cause that’s…
**Aminah**: [says very quietly] I don’t trust anybody
**Moderator**: She doesn’t trust anybody
**Melissa**: Well yeah that’s true too.

Because these young participants often evoke this game image, it is also interesting to
report the amount of bravado that went into their belief that they would individually fare
well in this game. This seems to also inform their beliefs about affirmative action and the
appropriateness of it as a strategy to equalize the game for Black Americans. Most of
these participants expressed a great deal of negative reaction to the idea of affirmative
action for various reasons. Although they indicated that they could see some benefits to
affirmative action efforts, there was still a high level of discomfort. So much so, that the
benefits are questioned because of the negative impact of the costs. First, they were very
cognizant of and uncomfortable with the amount of hostility Blacks received in
employment and education settings because of the belief that they had gotten their
positions unfairly. Melissa offers,

I don’t. I just don’t like the hostility that affirmative action brings,
because just the other day, [a friend of mine] and I were talking about
applying for different scholarships and applying to Ohio State just because
there is such a great need for minorities in graduate programs and [another
white student]…she’s a sweet girl…she says oh I wish I had that card to
play. And I am so sick and tired of hearing that. And I know it’s written
out there that they are helping us but I just get so tired of hearing that.
Melissa acknowledges that she understands the benefits of affirmative action and that she

...there’s just so many people always saying that [you have it easy because of affirmative action]. It just…it unnerves me…it makes me so sick. People just assume that you don’t have to work hard and you’re going to get into any school you want because you’re Black. No. You can be Black and be as dumb as anybody else and not go anywhere with all the little social programs they have in place. You can still not prosper.

Second, the mere chance that they had gotten their position through affirmative action channels implied that they were simultaneously unqualified. Andrea voices her concern that Blackness should not be the sole reason for acquiring anything and in fact she doesn’t want a position that is given to her because of her race. She adds,

My problem is when I go for a job, I don’t want the job because I am a Black woman. I want the job because my qualification was better than the white man. That’s why I want the job. You know. It was so funny that my Caucasian boyfriend made the comment the other day that, um, because we had both gone out for [the same job] and we had both gotten the job and he was telling me how he felt the need to be so much more competitive with me in the interview room because I was the Black women. I already had three points up on him. I’m like that has to be the dumbest thing that has ever come out of your mouth. I’m sorry it is just because to me that is sad. And I know what affirmative action is supposed to do. I know it. I can see the benefits of it and I can see that it is supposed to do this. But I…to me…I cannot get over the whole handout issue is what it comes down to, to me. It’s like I don’t want you to make a law that says you have to have two percent Black people in your company so that you can hire me. No, I want you to[hire me] because I have so much degrees and I can make this contribution to your company…because then what it comes down to is that you are going to treat me…you are not going to patronize me in my position because of how I got it. And to me that is not fair. That’s when racism comes in if you ask me. That’s when it’s most prevalent to me. That’s why I don’t want to deal with it.
Her group mates further echo Andrea’s sense that Blacks are viewed as incompetent because of affirmative action. This negative reception by white colleagues further exasperated these participants because they were uncomfortable with the fact that Blacks were seen as the “face of affirmative action” and received the bulk of the backlash even though white women are the greatest beneficiaries. This is illustrated by the following discussion between various group members.

**Sara:** White women get the most from that.

**Brandy:** I was just about to say that…that’s what I wanted to say. Thank you. You have such a good point, you and you [referring to Andrea and Melissa]. Who is the primary beneficiary of affirmative action?

**Tiffany:** White women

**Brandy:** And who is the face of affirmative action, somebody Black. It’s the same thing with the welfare issue…that’s the face of affirmative action. The face of affirmative action is some Black woman who got the job because she is Black. Some Black man who got the job because he is Black. Not because of anything else. And yes that does tear down basically any movement forward that you may have because it’s like oh that’s the only reason why you got it. Um, excuse me, no that’s not why I got it. It’s because I did a better interview than you did because you don’t know how to speak. And you know that’s what it has to do with and it has nothing to do with anything else and I think that that’s a problem. I don’t think of it as necessarily a handout. It’s supposed to be a hand but to some people that is what it is. And I mean it can be kind of nasty.

This reaction reinforces the interconnection of individual effort and personal outcomes for integrationist supporters. American history is filled with tales of rugged individualism and the power of one’s effort to make life better for you and those around you. African Americans who support integration as the appropriate strategy for empowerment follow in that tradition. They are not unaware of their race nor are they unwilling to acknowledge that they and other Americans are grouped and often judged
based on racial categories. What is different, however, is their refusal to engage in such broad brushed categorizations themselves. They recognize that whites have behaved historically in ways that were hostile to Blacks, but for them that history represents the past. Now they accuse Blacks of being their own obstacles to progress. For them, whiteness and even Blackness are secondary to common values, world outlooks, and codes of conduct. These characteristics then become the basis for distinguishing integrationism from other ideological categories discussed in subsequent sections.

**Black Nationalism**

Relying on the historical conflict and hostility as well as a desire to reconnect to African cultural origins, Black nationalists have called for pulling African Americans out of the American political system. Although Black Zionism represents the most extreme form of nationalism, rarely have proponents of this ideology ever been able to muster the amount of support necessary to amass and sustain an emigration movement. For an overview see Carlisle 1975. More popular, instead, have been more reserved forms of nationalism. These forms of nationalism entail the protection and maintenance of African American culture, institutions, and traditions separate and apart from others. It is this type of Black nationalism that is demonstrated most among participants in this set of focus group.

For nationalists, their African American identity is central to how they define themselves. This is important because a major tenet of Black nationalism is the development of a strong connection to individuals, cultural traditions, and social movements throughout the African diaspora. Felicia summarizes the essential beliefs of nationalist participants in her discussion about why she agrees with Malcolm X,
Well you know if we read the books that Malcolm told us to…we always talk about what we can’t do. What we are not able to do, we have not analyzed why we are there mentally and how do we break that mental slavery…um…the fact that when you go over to Africa, not in the colonized areas because you know they are just confused as the Black folks over here but in the rural areas…people eat out of the same plates, people see each other as one. If you’re hurting, I’m hurting. If you don’t have, I don’t have. If you have, I have. So I feel good when you get because that means I got and I feel bad when you don’t have because that means I don’t have. So I’m saying that being kidnapped and then being raped of our identity and like Paula said you ain’t going to get it back in thirty years but to be able to identify that I don’t trust people and why don’t I trust people. And work on that because the only way you’re going to get through it is—it’s almost like having a phobia you have to expose yourself to it—and say okay I’m going trust Jerri and Paula and Adrienne and somebody’s going to let me down but it’s okay. That’s where we’re human. But the point is—are we looking out for the group. We’ve been so Europeanized that it’s me and I. And we forgot about you and us.

Felicia’s sentiments really encompass a lot of the characteristics of a nationalist ideology. For instance, she demonstrates a social outlook that emphasizes the importance of taking care of the group. Community uplift and progress are central to the beliefs of Black nationalists. Nationalists look inward for resources within the Black community to meet the needs of that community. Reliance on community resources and the belief in the interdependence of all Blacks is realized through frequent interactions and transactions with Black businesses, community centers and other organizations. Reflecting on this need to preserve community, Paula refers to a time when this type of community based living was the norm.

**Paula:** there was a time in school when we were on our own and our teachers were Black…then when we weren’t subjected to *[negative treatment and stereotypes by white teachers]* even though we were still being taught the dominant culture because for you to survive that’s the culture you had to live. You had to have two personalities…

**Janelle:** it’s called by W. E. B. DuBois duality
Paula: duality… you had to have it

Paula and Felicia really point to another key ingredient to Black nationalism and that is the recognition that there are important differences between the way Blacks and whites think and interact with each other and within their own cultural groups. Part of this seems to be the belief that African Americans have to go through a cognitive liberation process. Social movement scholars, Piven and Cloward (1979), define cognitive liberation as a three step process in which one must relinquish their faith in the “legitimacy” of the current system, understand that their current situation is changeable and begin to make demands, and believe that they are capable of changing the system. For nationalists, cognitive liberation is similar in the sense that ideological adherents recognize the illegitimacy of the system; however, instead of making demands and asserting rights in the system, nationalists choose to withdraw from that system and attempt to effect change by creating a new system. This is demonstrated in Felicia’s earlier assertion that Black Americans need to shake off those beliefs and behaviors that are “Europeanized”—read white. This need to alter individual thought patterns away from the status quo is not expressed by other groups. Instead they discuss the best tactics for maneuvering within the current system.

Focusing on their African American identity and history, when added to the obligation to work for the uplift of the entire group, leads participants to engage in the cognitive liberation process. Having gone through the process, nationalist participants begin to define problems within the African American community drastically different from integrationists. For them, African Americans are casualties in the American nation-
building process. They express negative evaluations of Black Americans, but this is because some Blacks have bought into the negative images possessed by other groups—especially whites. Adopting these negative images leads to the poor choices that result in bad outcomes. Their predominant target becomes, however, American institutions and actors whose racial designation they see as white. A discussion by Felicia and other participants in her particular focus group about the lessons learned from Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement really demonstrates not only the way that nationalists define Blacks’ inability to overcome racism but also the motivations attributed to whites.

Felicia: I think that Martin Luther King Jr.…he clearly demonstrated that you can have that theory and idea to be peaceful but through the experience he showed that even though it put us in the right direction it still didn’t solve the problem of racism. So I think that we learned from that experience…I’m grateful for that experience because without that experience with Martin Luther King we would go through that cycle again. So I think if we analyze and study we will clearly understand where we would take parts of it out and we can see where that was a benefit and the other parts either we can learn not to do it that way again or refine it some other way.

Adrienne: We are not the only ones who learned though. They learned too. They learned how to hide it better…how to go about it a different way…

Moderator: when you say they who are you referring too.

Adrienne and Felicia [simultaneously]: white people

Adrienne: I think [white people] learned how to get us from the right direction. And saying no that is not how it was meant to be. You got it all wrong and trying to make us [whites] feel bad. And you’re like well maybe they didn’t mean that…well yes

Janelle [in background]: Yes. They did

Adrienne: They mean us harm. And I think they mean us harm because they think in their own heart that if someone was to do this to me and mine, I would get them. So they are afraid of us. So that is why they are trying to hurt us, and they think our mentality is to try and hurt them. That’s why they can’t leave us alone. They’re scared.
Nationalists see whites as intentionally malevolent towards Blacks. The American political system and its entire social structure is, in the words of Felicia,

designed to put us where we are, which means that we have to create our own system. That does not mean that we exclude anyone it just means that we support ourselves and in doing so we are able to support other people. And so if I take that whole philosophy and theory of me and look at it as an us and say that I am aware that this system I live under right now is designed to keep white people in power and I can design a system where I can empower myself as a group, as a people, and then I’m of more benefit to this country and to the world globally. And so I just feel like the Nguzo Saba which is the seven principles of Kwanzaa…I just feel like if we even operated by something that simple it would bring us up as a people and then we wouldn’t have to be angry at other people for designing a system that keeps them strong and healthy.

Nationalists were less trustful of the government, and less likely to refer to the need to participate in the American political and social “game.” Conversely, they were more likely than integrationists to acknowledge and incorporate the impact of direct racist experiences into their lives and their assessments. For instance, Lela discusses the experiences she had when her family integrated a Columbus neighborhood. Lela says,

I feel like I’ve already lived in an all Black America. When I was in elementary school very few white people came into my life except a few teachers. The businesses we went to, the doctor, almost everybody. The year we moved into our neighborhood, there was a whole bunch of empty houses around us all of a sudden. All of the white people moved out and it was an all Black neighborhood, all Black elementary school, like 95%. We went to Long Street for businesses, the beauty shop, the doctor or whatever. You just didn’t come in contact with white people. I thought I had a good life. I don’t feel like I missed anything by not having white people in my life.
Lela does not point to this experience as especially negative, but other participants reported explicitly negative interactions with whites. Felicia gives her account,

That’s what I really want to push out on my children and I probably was pretty blatant because I came up during the sixties and seventies. It wasn’t no joking and playing around, and I told them, see I came up through Catholic schools and I went to elementary school with all white children so I know what it is like...so I’m speaking from experience and if you think for a moment that just because your kids are around white people that’s going to make them better...ha, ha, ha, ha...one thing it will make you is very cautious and strong.

Additionally Gina talks about her experiences with whites and why she’s more comfortable being in all Black environments. She offers,

I prefer to be with all Blacks. For instance, when I go out I want to go to a Black club, I don’t want to go to a white club. I just prefer to socialize with Black people more than white people. I try not to be— I try to make sure that my daughter knows that God loves everybody equally. It is just that I don’t want her put through that. When I was growing up, we were a very small portion of the people going to Catholic school in the south end. We went to school with some terribly, terribly racist ...Well, I am just saying that because of some of the experiences that I have had with white people, that’s all. I am a lot more comfortable around Black people than I am around white people. Socializing and everything. I have people in my family that are the opposite.

Nationalists both experience racism and believe that racism stems from white malevolence. Felicia believes that recognizing color differences is normal and appropriate behavior. She has a problem, however, when color consciousness moves the area of discrimination, and for her she “feels like genetically whites are told that you’re better. I mean in this country anyway.” This belief that the system is permanently tilted in favor of whites leads nationalists to actively withdraw, either on a limited or more
comprehensive basis, from a system that they perceive to be already excluding them from full participation.

**Integrationism Nationalism Mix**

The ideological prototypes offered here represent the extreme ends of the ideological continuum. Participants who fall into the opposing poles have clearly defined positions on issues related to race, perceptions of problems within the Black community, and the best strategies to address those problems. For one group, interactions with whites and other ethnic groups are appropriate and even necessary for the progress of Blacks. For the other, interactions with whites are not necessary or optimal for Black community uplift. Ideally individuals would know and be able to cogently express their views about issues regarding race, politics and a multitude of other issues about which scholars are concerned. Participants in these focus groups struggle with these questions and like many other individuals they fall short of being able to take an extreme stand on most political issues. For that reason, a third or middle range ideological category is created that contains the largest group of participants, whose beliefs fluctuate between integrationism and Black nationalism, and will be discussed in the following section.

The largest segment of participants falls into this fused category, which advocates some parts of both ideologies. Like nationalists, they primarily identify with their African American experiences when making political and other decisions. However, similar to integrationists, other identities emerge as secondary lenses in addition to race. A good example of this is the discussion in one focus group surrounding the influx of gay and white couples into an established Black middle class neighborhood. This group was mainly composed of residents of this particular neighborhood, and they were really
feeling uncomfortable with the changes in the community. (See discussion in *Endurance and Metamorphosis of Linked Fate* section in the previous chapter.) This discussion is reiterated here to highlight another important aspect of this discussion. Participants readily admit that they prefer African Americans to live and raise families in their community. So race and association with people in their own racial category is important to these participants. However, there is another identity that emerges as important in this scenario and that is class. Participants are not willing to accept any Blacks as neighbors; they want them to have similar economic backgrounds as well.

Participants in the mixed category focus on both the individual and group concerns. They want to see Black people prosper and feel like they should work more cooperatively to effect community change, but they don’t want an excess of poor people in their neighborhood bringing down property values and increasing crime. They want candidates who are responsive to the needs of the Black community that is poorer than white communities, but they don’t want to elect a candidate who is going to significantly increase their taxes. This is due to the fact that they usually diagnose problems using causes that stem from a belief that social problems result from both individual Black failure and problems that are imposed on Blacks from outside their groups. For instance, they employ Black blame when trying to understand why some Blacks refuse to work, and simultaneously acknowledge that the system is often unfair and that whites are not in touch with the Blacks. Tariq admits that there is some conflict in thought when trying to sort out the politics of race and other issues. He expresses how this variability works for him,
I think it depends on the day and the situation. Sometimes you do want to be with people like you, so you don’t have to have all these different masks and other facades, because…you know…when you’re at work white people don’t understand you and understand how you are when you want to express yourself in a particular way. And sometimes you just want to be able to do that without being questioned, without being chastised or going through this thought process as to how they are going to view you.

Tariq uses the conditionality of “sometimes” in his assessment of his relationship with whites and other Blacks. Conversely, there are times when he is okay with being around whites. They fluctuate between wanting Blacks to do for themselves and wanting to believe in the ability of all human beings to cooperate. Delia asserts,

Sometimes both of them [being in all Black or racially mixed settings] are more appealing. There are times when I truly believe that Black folks need to take care of themselves and stop worrying about integrating and being with other people. And there are other times when I really believe that at the bottom of it all we are all human beings and we have to learn how to get together on this earth in a better way than we have been. So maybe race isn’t as important, but when you see injustice it’s hard to…it’s hard to say boy I really want to be in a diverse, mixed environment. Sometimes you just want to be with your own folks.

Tariq and Delia, while both partially supporting integration and separation demonstrate the kinds of opinions that participants in this mixed category hold. There is ambiguity built into their assessment of why they prefer to retreat into the Black community at times. Tariq, Delia, and others are cautious of the motives and behaviors of whites.

People who fall into this ideological middle ground are distinctly aware of the existence of racism; however, they are more likely to refer to indirect forms of racism or direct racism that is mitigated by Black blame. Sharon, for instance, recounts an instance of indirect racism that she heard from a friend. She offers,
One of my coworkers just told me that her brother just got a house…and up until the last minute he didn’t think he was going to get a house. Now someone who helped him with the paperwork put a blatant lie on the paperwork. He put down that the person who is purchasing was a white man. And he said, he thought he wasn’t going to get the house because he had a spotty credit record but the fact that that little box was checked, white male, his spotty credit record didn’t matter.

Other’s point to racism that is both mitigated and indirect. Talking about his daughter’s experience with whites, Rahim points to her disregard for color in general and offers that whites still don’t really understand Blacks. This point and the lack of understanding by whites are mitigated, however, by the assertion that Blacks don’t even understand themselves really.

**Rahim:** Kids today are in a different place, different time and different set of circumstances. So what they might do and how they would react…my daughter reacts different than I do. For her *[referring to his daughter]* white folks are just white folks.

**Moderator:** Do you see that as progress or…

**Rahim:** neither…neither…I’m glad that she has come to term with our culture and is beginning to realize people as people. But there are still a lot of things they don’t accept us on. Like historically they don’t understand our…where we truly came from…they’re beginning to get a clue, but they still haven’t embraced it all. Even us we still haven’t embraced it all. So…you know…it going to be very interesting to see

This group walks a tightrope between communities. Whites have hurt them, but they do not see all Blacks as being on their side either. They don’t attach a particular color to government actors and institutions. They see the racial makeup as varied and ruled by money rather than concern for people. Rahim and others in his group illustrate this point,

**Rahim:** so sometimes your vote is not your vote…they got their plans. They got their plans already.

**Moderator:** and when you say they, who are you referring to?
Rahim: oh… the powers-that-be. They say all you have to do is run in this election and then after it’s over you can go and do what you want to do and we’ll shuffle positions and you can run for state senate or whatever…but the meantime you need to get this through

Moderator: do you think that there is a particular racial makeup of the people who are in power?

Rahim: No

Donna: whoever has the most gold

Frank finishes: makes the rules

Opinions for this middle group are complicated and muddied by conflicting views about whites and Blacks. They really try to combine both ideological perspectives in a way that works for them. For instance, they may be perfectly happy to work with whites but only want to interact with them in other arenas on a limited basis. They try to really incorporate the ideas and the rhetoric of leaders of these ideological viewpoints into a worldview that allows them to navigate both the Black and white communities. Janet summarizes the point,

When I think about [Martin Luther King and Malcolm X], I think about the fact that they were both agitators. And just like in a washing machine, you need agitators to get the clothes clean? We needed them both. At the turn of the century it was Booker T. Washington and DuBois. In the middle of the 20th century, it was Malcolm and Martin. We’re in 2002 now…. I’m waiting.

As we begin to move to the quantitative analysis based on the 1996 NBES, it is important to remember that individuals seem to concentrate in the middle range categories. Often individuals in these focus groups are conflicted, both consciously and subconsciously, by their own oppositional views. Thus it becomes very important for models used in the quantitative analysis to effectively measure the major tenets of each ideological category.

After establishing definitions of each ideological category and providing
examples from the conversations of ordinary citizens, one is left wondering how these attitudes are transmitted across generational cohorts. Is it true, as Felicia and others believe that you have to be diligent about teaching children about race and racism? Or is it a maturation process in which aging becomes a key factor in how individuals view race and at what points they embrace integrationism or Black nationalism.

**Observations of Parent-Child Cohorts**

A unique situation presented itself in the focus group—two sets of parents and children participated. Observations of two parent-child cohorts yielded significant differences between parents and children in relation to beliefs about race and racism and demonstrate the importance of both verbal and non-verbal communication in the transmission of beliefs about race and racism across generations. Both sets were mothers and daughters—one consisting of a mother and her two daughters in their middle to late twenties and another consisting of a mother and her daughter in her late teens.

The first mother, Felicia, although never using the word nationalism, was clearly aligned with beliefs about community focus and nation building as well as prominent leaders who are closely associated with the ideological tenets of nationalism. She lives and has raised her children in an all Black center-city community; she is self-employed as a natural hair-care provider and African art dealer, and she shared with the group that she made an effort to instill in her children a sense of pride in their Black heritage through her beliefs in Afrocentrism.  

Felicia offers,

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26 One of its primary proponents, Molefi Assante (1988), sees Afrocentrism as a social, political and cultural theory in which its adherents seek to rid themselves of Europeanized notions of cultural history and replace it with an African-centered perspective. This is necessary because, in Assante’s view, Blacks in America will always find themselves in a losing position in all arenas if they do not learn to see themselves in a greater light based on ties to an historic and splendid African past.
but you know just like Nicole and Cora [her daughters] being the youngest people at the table and not having the personal experience that we had in the 50’s, 60’s, 70’s, and 80’s. The point is when we don’t pass that knowledge on to them they are lost. Unfortunately, I am sure my children will testify that some of the things I said may have been pretty raw, but they found out through their experience that some of what I said was really true. So when you parent them and even yourself its constant continuous learning experience so you can only give them what you know to give them and everybody will continue learning. Because to know or to not know anything about your past or any knowledge about who you are as a people that is one of the most criminal acts that I think this country has done…

The entire family subscribes to Afrocentrism and shares a clear sense of obligation to the Black community through community service and strong belief in the power of the vote. Both mother and daughters talk openly about the need to confront racism and challenge (even rebel against) those parts of the American social and political system that they perceive as detrimental to the progress of African Americans. In one exchange between the participants in her focus group, the discussion moves to inter-racial marriages and why they are opposed to them. Although this is not explicitly political, it does highlight the way in which Felicia and others rationalize their beliefs about racial interactions.

Felicia: but in all honesty I think that I did not tell my children…I don’t think I told my children maybe I did and I don’t remember… not to marry white men

Cora and Nicole (simultaneously): yes

Paula: I told my son the same thing, but that’s because I feel that there is a healing that needs to take place within our race before we start projecting ourselves onto other people

Moderator: so it’s not racism…it’s a healing process

Paula: it’s a healing process.

Felicia: I know that I didn’t say to hate white people, and I didn’t tell them to disrespect them…as a matter of fact I would not tolerate them disrespecting anyone

Paula: that’s right…
Felicia: that was not part of it. I probably did say don’t bring white people in here as far as being a mate and bearing children, but I think that I studied Malcolm so strongly that I’m serious about that and I am still committed to that. In order to heal you have to work with yourselves.

In contrast, the second mother, Lela, lives in a predominantly upper middle class and affluent white community, she is employed as a scientific researcher in a large corporation, and like the first mother she shares a deep sense of connectedness to Black people and the Black community. Her views expressed during the focus group puts her into the middle range category. In the course of the discussion, however, it becomes apparent that her experiences and sentiments about race and racism have not been transmitted to or adopted by her daughter, Evelyn, who is also a participant. Her daughter, like other participants her age in this sample, suggests that race is not an important part of how she sees herself or others. She doesn’t believe that she has ever experienced racism even though her mother offers events that have happened in her predominantly white community that were (in the mother’s view) overtly racist. For instance, Lela, after listening to several comments in which her daughter suggests that she has never experienced racism, puts forth,

“I must say I think that my daughter doesn’t see her experience the same way that I do. She has been in predominantly white schools in Bexley and at [Columbus School for Girls], but she is a very positive Black force. People look at her and they can’t apply their stereotypes of Black people to her. She is confident, respectful. She’s not trying to be white. She’s being herself, and I see that. Maybe she doesn’t see that. I remember…we had some issues in the Bexley schools and I asked her, “Evelyn, do you think that your teachers are racist or prejudiced against you.” [She replied] “No I don’t think so. They do seem to not understand though how I could get an A in a subject that I don’t like.” And I say, “Evelyn, that’s racism.” See her perception of not being mistreated other than instances of other Black kids told her she was too white. Her perception
of racism is also skewed. She didn’t know. I said, “If somebody has really low expectations of you just because you’re Black then that’s being racist.” She recognized it. She just couldn’t name it. Like I said she hasn’t seen everything from my perspective.”

As a part of this exchange, other older participants go on to talk about how the inability of younger Blacks to label things as racist makes them more susceptible to embracing negative stereotypes of Blacks and to the shock of racism when it happens to them later in life. Then Lela offers,

I don’t think I ever phrased it this way, but basically I told Evelyn, “yeah, you’re Black but there is no one here better than you.” I mean at [Columbus School for Girls], you give a kid a brand new $40,000 car for turning 16. You know that’s not gone happen for you. Some of these kids’ parents have lawyers on retainer. If you screw up, you’re going to jail.

For Lela this is equivalent to making connections between her daughter and her Black identity. She seemed to feel that she was pointing out to her daughter that she was somehow different from the white children at her school, but without specifically saying it, her daughter has not made that connection. When asked about her relationship to the Black community, she replied that to the extent she feels obligated to any community it is to the people in the predominantly white community in which she was raised. Like others in her particular discussion group, she used geographic boundaries to define community and that led her to define community as those who live in proximity to her—her white neighbors. Also, like others in her age cohort, she focused more on her individual experiences rather than a more group-centered focus to explain her beliefs about race.
A commonality that was revealed in observing the discussion groups in which these family sets participated is that non-verbal behavior (towards whites, choosing where to reside or which schools to attend) was just as important as verbal communication. It was apparent that some of what the mothers thought they had communicated to the children through practices was not transmitted in the way intended. The Black nationalist mother said that even though she had always demonstrated an affinity for Black people and culture, she always told her daughters to respect non-Blacks and not to discriminate. For example, she pointed out that she never explicitly told her daughters that she was opposed to interracial dating. The daughter quickly retorted that her dislike of this was communicated in both verbal and non-verbal ways. Additionally, the integrationist mother was shocked to hear her daughter talk about her feelings of obligation to her white community and the fact that she hardly ever thinks about race. In fact, by the end of the group discussion, she was left wondering out loud to her daughter whether or not she knew that she was Black; for this mother, attached to that label was a history of oppression and animus towards white people. For the daughter it seemed to be a much less important label, and she openly resisted the frames that her mother used to talk about race and its role in her life experiences.

It is important to point out that the integrationist daughter was much younger than the nationalist daughters who had already spent time in the workforce, gotten married and started families. Additionally, the finding here are interesting, they are reported with the caveats that this analysis is based on only two parent-child pairs and very different life experiences. This makes it more difficult say how socialization and ideology play out in the broader community. There are two potential explanations here. It may be that the
recognition of race and racism as important influences in the everyday lives of African Americans gets stronger over the course of one’s lifetime. Having more life experiences possibly provides a clearer or different sense of how racism works in America. Alternatively, this may suggest that part of the reason that the younger members of this sample were not as focused on race as a social and political filter is that they were not expressly taught to do so, and in the absence of direct racist experiences, there is no reason to view race as an important lens through which to filter information.

**Dreaming Blackness…**

Complete and total separation is, for some, by far the most difficult and the most extreme measure Blacks could take to solve race problems. Dawson (2001, 237) found that only 14% of Black respondents endorsed a separate nation for Blacks. (See also Brown and Shaw 2002.) In the course of these focus group discussions, it was interesting that no one ever actually proposed this as a personal option or strategy. So to get a sense of overall beliefs participants were asked to participate in an exercise. At the end of each focus group session, participants were asked to go around the room and talk aloud about their reactions, thoughts, etc. to the idea of an all Black America. Participants were asked to convey to the moderator what an all Black America would look like, taste like, smell like and feel like to them. In an effort to get a real sense of how people feel about the notion of separatism, participants were asked a straightforward question about how they viewed an all Black America. Participants were allowed to take a utopian view of Black America, a realistic view based on current conditions within the United States and the Black community, or a totally fantastic view in which they could create a recipe of what their Black America should look like. This exercise yielded very exciting results. Of
course there were participants who were vehemently opposed to the ideas; some who supported the idea whole-heartedly, and others whose views were muddier.

Those people who were strongly opposed to idea of an all Black America gave three main reasons for their opposition. First, like true Integrationists, some participants were opposed to the formation of an all Black America because they truly endorsed diversity. They liked the fact that a diversity of racial groups also meant the possibility of diversity in thought. O’Neil offers an idea for what an all Black America would look like, and in the end simply decides, “I think too I like the diversity and the melting pot aspect of America.” Using a similar and oft repeated metaphor, Adrienne adds, “It’s like a pot of soup. The more stuff you put in it the better it is. It’s the spice of life—the differences. She cooks different from me. I cook different from her. We need all those things coming together.” In addition, some felt that the learning process that Blacks and whites would get through continued integration was simply the way it was supposed to be. Paula offers,

Personally I like the mix up and with the racism and whatever is going on…to me it’s supposed to be happening. It’s happening as it is supposed to be for a reason. It is not just by accident. It is for a learning, training, more creative process. I don’t know. It is horrible. What happened to us is horrible. Racism is horrible, but for whatever reason it is and it is for a reason. And so therefore…um…whatever experiences I have had and am having…I could have been raped, killed whatever…apparently there is some purpose in that. And so to change the process…I don’t know…I don’t guess I want to be a part of that…I don’t want to be a part of utopia. I want to be a part of this, and it’s insane…but I know that within the insanity there is organization even though we don’t see. And because we don’t see it don’t mean we don’t participate.

Melissa, who is pessimistic about the existence of any differences between current America and an all Black America offers,
I think it would backfire just because I have noticed from my interaction with certain Black people that we are so…I don’t think we can prosper until we ourselves are a whole and are working towards the same thing…we’d still be divided and you could send us all over and give us our own little continent [but] something’s going to be wrong with it. There are still going to be the have haves and have-nots. I don’t think we would benefit from it at this point.

This is also echoed by Breanna who supports the need for diversity as well, but finally comes to primary conclusion that there is too much division and too many problems in the Black community for Blacks to even think about going out on their own. For Breanna,

There could not be a Black America where we are all in unison. I just don’t think that. There is too much…there is too much racial divide just in the Black community alone…There's a lot of Black on Black hate…just the mentality is just not there. They are not able to move forward. Like I said…I can organize it…help them go…not go myself.

Like Breanna, some participants are extremely passionate about the belief the impossibility of an all Black America. For them Blacks are not able to successfully design and maintain a workable system. Mae and other members of her group simply think that,

**Mae:** it would be a war. I mean constant nicking and picking at folks trying to bring everybody down to your level and stuff. Everybody pulling in their separate ways. Doing what they best at.

**Rhonda:** It would be how the beginning was. You know what I’m saying

**Mae:** I mean it would be hard…

**Rhonda:** But knowing our record, our track record far as being united, it wouldn’t be good thing at all.

**Lena:** I will say this, it wouldn’t last
Others do not express such strong negative beliefs about the formation of a Black America. They, instead, offer conditions under which they might support this idea. First, those conditions involve being able to rid this new system of any social ills that they currently see in the political system. Cassie points out,

I mean, not that we are a homogenous community, but it would be fantastic to see a community within our area that’s our own. I want us to have political power. I want us to have economic power. I’m not saying...I mean I do agree with Hakeem and I disagree with Hakeem. There’s a place for, you know, lower class Blacks and I want to see a little bit of that. I don’t mind people who are poor. I just don’t want to see them bring the drugs, the guns and the alcohol and the violence. There’s always going to be guns. There’s always going to be drugs. I just think that my view of Black America, it should not be the predominant number of people in jail would be Black people. And I think we need to find positive ways to lift our community up so that people find alternatives to all the illegal stuff. That’s what my Black America would look like.

In addition, participants offer conditions for support that are based on their ability to choose who would be able to participate in this all Black America. For instance, Nicole would support an all Black America if, “I could have an all Black America that was as simple and perfect...well not that my house is perfect, but as simple and non-complex as my house then that would be fine.” The last participants who offered this conditional endorsement believed that this country would be a good idea if there were never a history of slavery and oppression. In a discussion of the impact of slavery on the viability of an all Black America, Cameron and Gina really point to the greatest concerns. They offer,

**Cameron:** But in this country we were told or made to hate each. We were made to hate what we represented. If you look in the mirror that person was Black. That person was negative. That person was a bad person. That kind of racism causes us to discount each other. It caused us to hate each other. It causes us to not be able to form a country where we are able to get something done. I don’t think that necessarily happens in countries in Africa that didn’t
experience that same kind of racism. This is the worse racism, worse kind of slavery that ever existed in the history of man. 

**Gina:** yeah, I think that’s the difference…you have to make the statement…okay if this is an all Black country would it be post-slavery or would it be without a history of slavery because I think a lot of our problems stem from slavery.

Some participants are delighted and offer unwavering support for the formation, possibility, or even notion of an all Black America. If nothing else it provides an opportunity for Blacks to create something new and distinctive. They could create a place that is free of the shortcomings that they see in the current political system. Delia realistically thinks that under current conditions things would not change, but her model of a Black America would be different.

because I think if the world was exactly the way it is now and everybody was Black. I don’t think that….not too much would change because, like Evelyn said, we have so many divisions because of the way we got to the United States has created a lot of identity crisis. We don’t have…there isn’t just one Black community. Now ideally it would be what it would it be. It would be, you know, Black people in every position of power. I think it would look very much like Washington D.C. where there’s a Black mayor and people in the political positions are Black, the chief of police is Black, a lot of the teachers in the school are Black, people wouldn’t feel any fear of speaking up on an issue because, okay, is this going to be perceived as, “here’s that Black person again on that Black issue”. Or it’s just going to be an issue that we need to deal with. People would be owning homes and taking responsibility for themselves and other people and other people’s children. There would be economic diversity. I think it would be unique and diverse and peaceful.

Sara would also change the system and delete undesirable characteristics of society and agrees with Delia’s conditions. Sara adds,

the youth of America I would love for them to be in a situation where they are around other people who are working towards a bigger goal, but I know that with the trappings of today’s society it’s not going to happen. It’s too strong…it’s like crack-cocaine turning on the TV nowadays. You
know people want that stuff…people think that this is what they should have in their lives…but if I was to have a Black America it would not be about stuff like that …not for one moment, second, whatever…about just immediate gratification…looking good and being cool and bling bling. No those things wouldn’t exist. We would be humanist working towards the goal of uplifting ourselves. And getting to the next level of, as far as I’m concerned evolution, because our bodies can change as much as possible but it’s our mind is what needs to change the most…to me it’s about…to me…I would love to see it happen…but I know it wouldn’t work. Maybe on the small scale then it would grow and grow and grow…

Still other participants are supportive of this all Black America because it would give

Blacks a chance to be in power and in important decision-making positions. Tariq’s

Black America would

be an all inclusive Black America. Everything you see white now would be Black. Black TV, Black president Black bankers, Black CEO…people would be progressive…Black people doing what they need to do…you’d see us as role models all over the place…um…you know…Black folks out here buying restaurants, running restaurants…everywhere you go you would see a Black person in a leadership or entrepreneurial relationship…it would be something like that. We would be part of the game. We’re not just a sideline trying to get…like a third string quarterback or third string receiver trying to get on the field to make a play. Let’s not say make a play. Let’s just say trying to get on the field and start at that. I just think it would be more inclusive…you’d be seeing more of us in these positions or more of us in the mainstream.

This sentiment has resonance with Crystal who feels that

if I could choose the way that Black America was going to be then I would definitely go but …because I would love to see that…Black ambitious prosperous people with goals, but I know that will not happen. So I definitely would not go unless it was somewhere where I wanted to be. Well I shouldn’t say where I wanted to be, but the way that it should be. Or the way I am used to seeing things happen.

For Felicia, who has most consistently represented the nationalist perspective, the existence of a Black America would be a wonderful idea and something she fully
endorses. In true nationalist fashion she invokes a connection to the African continent in her explanation for why she supports an all Black America. Felicia states,

let me just say that when I went to Ghana, it was all Black. I could have counted on my hand three white people in three weeks. That’s how many white folks I saw, and it was absolutely wonderful. Even though there was corruption, and I mean there was corruption but there was no racism. No racism. Now if you could have a mixture of everybody in the same pot with no racism that would be wonderful. But to say all Black, I could see that. If it could be that way because then you don’t deal with racism, you deal with flat out corruption.

**Summary**

Felicia views above are a clear and concise representation of her nationalist views. Other participants are also able to express consistent views that can then be systematically connected to the ideologies of interest here. Like most Americans, the vast majority of participants here hold views that are much more complicated, malleable, and conflicting. The goal of this chapter was to simply outline the definitions of nationalism and integrationism as these ideologies are used by ordinary citizens in the language they use to describe it. To that end, each ideology was discussed as well as a section that represents a fusion of both ideologies. Most participants fall into this fused category because they consider and support tenets of each philosophy. This makes it more difficult, but not impossible, to tease out the systematic ways in which individuals decide which positions are congruent with their own beliefs.

As with most research projects, interesting results surface that imperfect scholars and optimistic research designs could never predict. In that spirit two other sets of results are reported here as well. Findings from observations of the two parent-child cohorts are presented. Additionally, focus groups are highly variable in the tone they take, topics
discussed and backgrounds of participants involved. Each group was asked their opinions of an all Black America, and like the composition of the focus groups the answers to this question was highly varied. This project now turns to the goal of bridging the results from this small sample in a focus group setting with the findings about integrationism and nationalism from a larger sample’s responses to closed-ended or structured questions. Using the 1996 National Black Election Study, the rest of this project will address efforts to make further explanatory and predictive statements about the role of this ideological spectrum in the political decision-making of Blacks.
CHAPTER 5

MEASURING INTEGRATIONISM & NATIONALISM IN THE BLACK PUBLIC

The Black nationalist and integrationist ideological positions have been widely discussed by African American elites, but their presence in the mass public has mostly been speculated about. This project attempts to measure the use of this ideological continuum by the Black public and to dissect and explain the salient characteristics of those individuals who subscribe to the various ideological positions along it. We have already examined the results from the focus group research. In order to get an expanded and more generalizable picture of African American opinion holding, it is necessary to analyze a larger sample. The previous two chapters explored these issues in focus groups; this chapter examines national survey data that explores the attitudes of a cross-section of Black Americans.

The survey data used in this paper come from the 1996 National Black Election Study conducted by Katherine Tate (1996). The sample was composed of 1,216 Black respondents in the pre-election survey and 854 respondents who were reinterviewed in the post-election survey; all respondents were randomly selected using random digit dialing. This project uses questions from both the pre-election and post-election surveys, so the number of respondents is approximately eight hundred for each question, with an
allowance for missing data. As expected in any survey of African Americans, the respondents were overwhelmingly Democratic. The 1996 NBES showed that, again predictably, the majority of Black Americans surveyed felt they shared a common fate with other Black people.

**Measuring Race Specific Ideology: The Integrationist-Nationalist Index (INI)**

There is no pre-existing direct measure of adherence to Black nationalism or integrationism used in survey research with African American respondents. Therefore, I have constructed a multi-item index, which combines several related questions from the 1996 NBES. This allows me to create a “composite measure of complex phenomena,”—in this case the variance in the degree of adherence along an integrationist and Black nationalist continuum (Johnson and Joslyn 1991). Scholars suggest that multi-item measures are more useful than single-item measures because they capture the variance of more complex and robust concepts, as are most problems in the real world (McIver and Carmines 1981).

Four items from the 1996 National Black Election Study address, from different angles, the issue of Black nationalism versus integrationism. Those four items asked respondents whether or not they thought Blacks should 1) attend Afrocentric schools, 2) always vote for Black candidates when available, 3) shop in Black owned stores, and 4) have nothing to do with whites.\(^{27}\) (See Table 2.1 below.) All four of these items speak to the question of whether Blacks should attempt to integrate into American society or become more community centered and internally focused. These questions address respondents’ beliefs along this continuum in cultural arenas through support for

\(^{27}\) The total number of respondents for the Integrationism/ Nationalism Index is 782.
Afrocentrism, in political arenas through support for Black candidates, in economic arenas through patronage of Black owned and operated businesses, and in affect towards whites by their willingness to associate with them. The distribution of responses on each item appears in Table 5.1 with the two extreme values on the nationalist and integrationist end of the continuum combined.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Four Index Items (percentage points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attend Afrocentric schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationalist</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Range</td>
<td>59.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrationist</td>
<td>32.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1: Frequency for Items Used in Integrationist-Nationalist Index.

The first step in creating a multi-item index to measure a concept is to ensure that these questions are actually related to one another and can be summed to form a single measure. Several statistical indicators of reliability are used to determine this. When examining the correlation between these items, we find that all are significantly and positively correlated with one another, which is the first evidence that they are all measuring similar things. (See Table 2.2 below.) Chronbach’s alpha assesses scale reliability; the alpha coefficient for these items is .628. This suggests that the items individually measure parts of the same phenomena to a considerable degree. When put together, they reliably measure a single phenomenon—in this case African America’s

28 See methodological appendix for question wording and coding scheme.
assessment of their relationship to the wider, non-Black American community (Spector 1992).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Attend Afrocentric schools</th>
<th>Always vote for available Black candidates</th>
<th>Shop in Black owned stores</th>
<th>Have nothing to do with whites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attend Afrocentric schools</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always vote for available Black candidates</td>
<td>.40**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shop in Black owned stores</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have nothing to do with whites</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td>.47**</td>
<td>.11**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2: Correlation Matrix of Four Items used in the Integrationist-Nationalist Index.

** Indicates significance at p < .01 levels.

One last statistical test of this measure was to subject the four variables that make up the Integrationist-Nationalist Index to a factor analysis. (See Table 2.5 below.) Kim and Mueller (1978, 8) suggest that factor analysis “assumes that the observed variables are linear combinations of some underlying (hypothetical or unobservable) factors.” The results indicate that there is one underlying factor that explains nearly fifty percent (48.9%) of the variance among the components of this scale. This factor, I argue, is the degree of ideological adherence of respondents on an integrationist/nationalist continuum. The percentage of explained variance by this first factor is more than twice the amount of any other components.
Table 5.3: Factor Analysis of Index Items. Extraction Method: Principal Component Method.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale Items</th>
<th>Principal Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children Attending Afrocentric School</td>
<td>.768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always Vote For Black Candidates</td>
<td>.772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shop in Black Owned Stores</td>
<td>.489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have Nothing to do with whites</td>
<td>.729</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Variance Explained 48.9 %

This index represents the best proxy for the ideology of interest in this project; however, it is not without weakness. The alpha coefficient is on the low end of the acceptability range. Although these items are significantly correlated, the relationship of the decision to shop in Black owned stores, voting for Black candidates, and having nothing to do with whites have very low coefficients with shopping in Black owned stores and having nothing to do with whites having the lowest correlation coefficients. This may be related to the fact support for these items require the most extreme views or shifts away from the norm. The statistical significance of the relationship of these items provides evidence and confidence that these measures can be used to make further predictions, but the relationships are not as strong as one would prefer.

After satisfactorily determining that these items are indeed related and should be used in forming an additive measure, the index is created by adding all four items together into a five-point scale. A score of one represents no nationalist response to all of
the items in the index and an adherence to extreme nationalist sentiment. (See Table 2.3 below.) Alternately, a score of five represents an integrationist response to all items and an adherence to extreme integrationist sentiment. Fewer than fifteen percent (12.2%) of respondents fall in either the extreme nationalist or nationalist categories; conversely, the majority (59.2%) are either extreme integrationists or integrationists. This constitutes the largest group of respondents. The second largest group of respondents is categorized as neutral.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideological Categories</th>
<th>Frequency (Percentage Points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extreme Nationalist</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationalist</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrationist</td>
<td>37.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme Integrationist</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.4: Frequency Distribution of the Integrationist-Nationalist Index.

Several potential explanations for the large number of respondents in the integrationist categories can be offered. First, the items used in this index, although the only items in the survey that address integration and separation directly, prove to be a really hard test for separatism. Michael Dawson (2001) has recently found that very few African Americans actually endorse the formation of a separate Black nation; however, more

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29 This middle range or neutral category is composed of respondents with conflicting views that sometimes place them in the integrationist category and in the nationalist camp at other times. Additionally, it includes those persons who consistently place themselves into the category designated for respondents who offered "don’t know" as a response. These categories represent two different types of ambivalence. In the first category respondents are really torn between supporting oppositional views. The latter represents those respondents who were simply unsure of their positions. Although characterized by very different motivations, these two groups of respondents look very similar methodologically.
respondents are supportive of more moderate withdrawal efforts. Agreement with some questions such as not having anything to do with whites is difficult and may be viewed as a utopian rather than realistic goal. Support for Black owned stores could be another example of a utopian goal. In the 1996 NBES respondents were only slightly more likely to strongly agree (28.2%) with this question as to strongly disagree (16.7%). Some respondents might believe that it is important for African Americans to patronize Black-owned and operated businesses, but they may also recognize the difficulty in finding businesses to meet certain needs.\(^{30}\)

Second, it is important to mention that although respondents who took sides generally tend to be more integrationist in the 1996 National Black Election Study, a longitudinal analysis of this measure might yield significant changes in this distribution. Taylor (1989), in her examination of ideological movements based on feminist beliefs, suggests that social movements have natural ebbs and flows that are determined by the broadening or narrowing of the political opportunity structure. In related research, international relations scholar Errol Henderson (1998) argues that there may be a dominant/subordinate relationship between these two ideologies where the mass public has cycled between being more nationalist or integrationist at various points throughout American history. Consequently there is no reason to believe that simply because integrationism proves to be the prevalent ideology among African Americans in 1996, it will remain or that it always has been the dominant ideology. Whereas the youngest

\(^{30}\) For instance there are no major Black-owned grocery chains. Thus, African Americans, regardless of their desire to patronize Black businesses, will be forced to use the same qualifications for patronage as other Americans such as proximity to home, price difference, selection, etc. Additionally, poor Blacks with limited incomes are forced to shop in the larger, more competitive, national franchises because of their market dominance.
NBES respondents were more supportive of Black nationalism, analysis of focus group data seemingly demonstrate an ideological shift toward more support of integrationism in the next younger generation. The youngest focus group participants are even younger than the youngest respondents in the NBES sample.

Methodologists agree that a carefully designed scale is more statistically sound and less arbitrary than a simple additive index (Carmines and Zeller 1979; Johnson and Joslyn 1991; Spector 1992). Admittedly, there are weaknesses in the measure constructed here. These items may be somewhat inadequate for meeting the standard of some rigorous tests and maybe even for fully measuring these concepts. However, they provide valuable insight into the diffusion of ideas long debated by elites into the mass public. Additionally, they allow for the use available quantitative data to study Blacks, an empirical approach that has been limited, until relatively recently, by the rarity of large data sets that cover a diversity of topics.

Generally, the closer the alpha coefficient is to 1.0 the better; however, an alpha level of 0.6 or higher moves a measure into the acceptable range. The measure used in this study is on the low end of the acceptability range. There are several important points, however, that bolster confidence in this measure beyond the alpha level. First, several versions of this index were tested before accepting the one presented here. For instance, I recoded the individual items into a dichotomous measure with those strongly agreeing with nationalist sentiments in one category and those who simply agreed, remained neutral, and disagreed in any form were in another category. With the measure constructed in this way, the alpha coefficient increased to 0.73. At this level, the index falls squarely into the acceptable range. In this case and others, better reliability measure
results are sacrificed for substantive reliability. Although it would be better methodologically to dichotomize each item for construction of the scale, any models that included items coded in this manner would be difficult, at best, to interpret. A category that included respondents who both agree and disagree with a particular item is rendered meaningless and precludes straightforward interpretation. The current measure, therefore, is based on items coded into three categories. Those respondents who strongly agreed with nationalist sentiments are placed into one category. The second group is composed of those who reported that they did not know their position on a particular item or merely agreed with either ideology. The third group included those respondents who strongly agreed with integrationist sentiments. Extreme cases are placed in separate categories because these questions prove to be a really strenuous test of Black nationalism or integrationism. These three categories allow us to clearly distinguish between those who firmly place themselves into either ideological category and those who either placidly or inconsistently fell into either category.

**Validating the Integrationist-Nationalist Index (INI): What Can it Tell Us?**

To explore the predictive validity of this measure as a proxy for subscription to integrationism and Black nationalism, the index was correlated with several variables, which should have clearly identifiable integrationist and nationalist positions. These variables include a Louis Farrakhan feeling thermometer, an item asking how much they think about being Black, a feeling thermometer for whites, and an NAACP feeling thermometer. (See Table 2.4 listed below.) It is expected that nationalists should be supportive of Louis Farrakhan (as indicated by raw feeling thermometer scores) because of his role as preeminent nationalist and separatist leader in the last few decades.
Additionally, because Black nationalism emphasizes a reclamation of Black pride through increased awareness of Black history and African cultural traditions. On the integrationist side, a feeling thermometer for whites was analyzed. Due to support for a more egalitarian non-race specific ideology, integrationists should have warmer affect towards whites. Also the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was born out of integrationist principles but has since become a general advocacy group for African Americans. Therefore, integrationists should have stronger affect orientations towards whites and the NAACP.

The correlation between the Integrationist-Nationalist Index and the feeling thermometer of Farrakhan shows that as respondents move up the index and toward extreme integrationism their support of Farrakhan decreases. It should be noted that the \( R^2 \) coefficient is small, but the relationship is significant at the 0.01 levels. Because of their emphasis on a pan-Africanist identity, it is expected that as you become more nationalist you are significantly more likely to think about being Black. Respondents reporting higher scores on this item hardly ever think about being Black, and ones with lower scores think about being Black frequently. Like the Farrakhan feeling thermometer, this coefficient is small but significant at the 0.01 levels. This finding is logical considering that one of the primary tenets of nationalism is self-determination and increased Black pride.

A surprising finding was that as respondents become more nationalist, they are more likely to have higher scores on the NAACP feeling thermometer.\(^{31}\) This may be

\(^{31}\) The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was founded in 1909 by a multiracial coalition to push for equal treatment of African Americans under United States law. However, over the course of its history, the NAACP has expanded its efforts to address the needs of African
related to the changing role of the NAACP. From its inception the NAACP’s primary goal was to promote the integrationist principles of racial unity and cooperation. Since the end of the Civil Rights Movement and the elimination of \textit{de jure} segregation,\textsuperscript{32} the NAACP has transformed itself into a general advocacy group for the African American community. Additionally, the NAACP, along with Historically Black Colleges and Universities, were the only organizations mentioned when focus group participants were asked to discuss organizations that were helpful to the Black community. Hence, many individuals with a community-centered focus are likely to support any group working to improve the lives of Black Americans.

\textsuperscript{32} Although many, if not most, will agree that \textit{de jure} segregation in the United States has been eliminated, discussions surrounding the elimination of \textit{de facto} segregation are more divided. This is especially true given findings about the persistence of residential and social segregation across the United States and its subsequent impact on the creation of a Black underclass (Massey and Denton 1993). More recently, researchers at the Brookings Institute found that although, “Black/non-Black segregation levels are currently at their lowest point since roughly 1920,” there are still a larger number of “‘hypersegregated’” metropolitan areas (Glaeser and Vigdor 2001). This suggests that even though racial segregation is on the decline, there are still problem areas though out the country.
Table 5.5: Correlations Used to Assess Predictive Validity. ** Indicates significance at the 0.01 levels. * Indicates significance at the 0.05 levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feeling Thermometers</th>
<th>Integrationist/ Nationalist Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Louis Farrakhan</td>
<td>-.206**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Feeling Thermometer</td>
<td>.173**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think about being Black</td>
<td>-.105**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAACP</td>
<td>-0.07*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.053)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the rest of this study, this measure will be used in various ways. First, it will be used to paint portraits of what subgroups within the African American community subscribe to these ideologies. This will be done by evaluating the relationship between these ideological viewpoints and several important indicators such as SES variables, liberalism and conservatism, and views on linked fate with other African Americans. Second, the measure will be used to assess and understand the relationship between this ideological continuum and policy and leadership preferences. This analysis is exploratory in nature. It attempts to quantify concepts that have previously only been discussed as theories and potential strategies for Black empowerment. Thus, it begins with this somewhat crude measure of ideology. Our confidence in this measure is bolstered by the results of correlations between this scale and related variables, as well as results from the factor analysis. This measure is a starting point for making predictions and assessing African American ideology and is complemented by the focus group data.
The ultimate goal of this project is to develop more precise measures of Black nationalist and integrationist ideology. The index used in this project is simply the first step toward reaching that goal.

**Summary**

The goal of this chapter was to establish a measure that would capture respondents’ position along an integrationist-nationalist continuum. Using items from the 1996 NBES, a multi-item index was created using questions that asked whether or not respondents supported Afrocentric school, shopped in Black own stores, though Blacks should vote for Black candidates, and how desirous they were of contact with whites. Although this measure did not encompass as many aspects of the ideology as is optimal, it does prove to be statistically sound. Factor analysis and reliability analysis results demonstrate this. To further test its predictive ability, a series of bivariate correlations are run using items that have clear nationalist or integrationist meaning. As expected we find that nationalists are more focused on race and supportive of Farrakhan. Alternatively, integrationists are warmer towards whites. These findings provide strong encouragement that this measure goes a long way in capturing the ideology of interests and should be further analyzed.
CHAPTER 6
SOURCES OF INTEGRATIONISM AND BLACK NATIONALISM

Having established the Integrationism/Nationalism Index (INI) as a reasonable measure of African American ideological views, this chapter seeks to relate this scale to various measures of political behavior and participation as well as socio-demographic variables. The primary goal of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive portrait of the people who subscribe to these ideological positions. And, once they are identified, what does this mean for their attachment to a race-specific political ideology? To this end, the chapter is divided into several parts. The first section will examine SES and other variables that provide a contextual picture of members of each ideological subgroup. Additionally, it examines the relationship of this ideological category to the traditional measure of ideology based on subscriptions to liberalism and conservatism. It will also relate this ideological continuum to other political variables such as linked fate and religiosity which are measures traditionally associated with African American political behavior. It ends with an OLS model that analyzes the sources of integrationism and Black nationalism. Because of the explanatory power demonstrated by a measure of perceived race of the interviewer, this measure is examined more closely. This is done by analyzing two models of sources of integrationism and Black nationalism that separate the sample based on perceived race of the interviewer.
Analyzing Ideological Sub-categories

Painting a portrait of each ideological subgroup is accomplished by examining a series of contingency tables of various SES and contextual variables. There are several relationships examined in this part of the analysis. Socio-demographic variables are important predictors of beliefs and behaviors. Categorizations such as race, age, and gender can potentially lead respondents to make potentially predictable preference choices. For this analysis, I analyzed several socio-demographic variables to get a sense of their relationship to the Integrationist Nationalist Index.

First, as the focus group results suggested, age can be an important factor for determining ideological preference. For this analysis we divided respondents into six age groupings—1) 18-24, 2) 25-34, 3) 35-44, 4) 45-54, 5) 55-64, 6) 65 and older. Respondents in this survey are overwhelmingly young with nearly seventy percent of respondents reporting their age as less than forty-five years of age. More specifically, the age ranges of 25-34 (25.5%) and 35-44 (26.0%) are the largest age groupings. Age is significantly related to ideology. (See table 6.1) Within each age category, nearly a third of respondents fall into the neutral ideological category. Beyond this, there appears to be a curvilinear relationship between age and Black nationalism. The largest groups of nationalist are respondents in the two lowest age categories of 18-24 and 25-34, and the highest age category of nationalists composed of respondents over the age of 64. Alternatively, the largest groups of integrationists are clustered in the 35-44 and 45-54 age cohorts. Interestingly, the youngest participants in the focus groups were in their

33 These age breakdown is based on the categorizations used by Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) in Voice and Equality.
early to late teens when the 1996 NBES was conducted and were highly supportive of integrationist beliefs and efforts. Why this younger group was different from the youngest members of the NBES sample, who are just five years their seniors, is unclear. It may be due to differences in the nature of socialization. Subscription to Black nationalism requires a rejection of the current American political system. This is a major undertaking for people who have been socialized as American citizens, especially when they are socialized during a time of prosperity like the youngest focus group participants who came of age primarily under the Clinton administration and record economic upswings. Alternatively, some might see nationalism as a radical step. Thus, younger participants in the NBES sample might be more inclined toward making this step because they were coming of age during the Reagan and Bush eras which were characterized by economic recessions and downturns and social (especially racial) conservatism. Additionally, the oldest group of African Americans might be more inclined to support nationalistic goals because of disenchantment with their knowledge of the historical relationship of Blacks as a group and their personal history with the American political system. Similar findings also emerge in the focus groups. The oldest participants are much more nationalistic than their younger counterparts.
### Table 6.1: Crosstab of Age and the Integrationists-Nationalist Index.

Chi-square test is significant at p < .001 levels

One of the major tenets of Black nationalism is reclaiming their African history. Part of that reclamation process is centered on restoring African males to the rightful place as head of the Black community and Black households. It follows that nationalism would be more attractive to African American men who would be desirous of these leadership positions. Women in the most recent wave of Black nationalist movements spoke about their distaste for those males who thought that the appropriate role for women in the Black power movement was as mothers, cooks, and typists (Bambara 1970; Brown 1974, Davis 1992). Despite these expectations, however, gender differences in placement along this ideological continuum are marginally significant. (See Table 6.2)

As a group men are more likely to fall into the neutral and integrationist categories than women. Alternatively, women are more likely to be nationalists than men and less likely to take an integrationist stance than men. This counterintuitive finding
evokes more questions about the why respondents subscribe to a particular ideological category. There are several potential explanations for this finding. First, the fact that women are more nationalistic could be signaling their agreement with the need for uplift of African American men given the horrible social statistics associated with African American males. Second, women are less likely to fall into the neutral categories and more likely to take clear stances on ideology which might result from findings that African American women are more politically knowledgeable and engaged than African American men (Burns, Schlozman, and Verba 2001). This may also account, incidentally, for the dearth of males in all of the samples used in this analysis, as less politicized people are more likely not to respond to a request to be involved in a survey or otherwise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex of Respondent</th>
<th>Integrationist Nationalist Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extreme Nationalist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.2: Crosstab of Gender and Integrationist-Nationalist Index. Chi-square test is significant at p > 0.10 level.

34 A recent study by the Justice Policy Institute found that the number of Black men behind bars is now greater than the number of Black men who are enrolled in institutions of higher learning. “The number of Black men in jail or prison has grown fivefold in the past twenty years (Butterfield 2002).” This is coupled with other alarming statistics. For instance, “Black males age 12 to 24 were 14 times more likely to be homicide victims than were the general population (Bastian and Taylor 1994).
Education also appears to be significantly related to the Integrationist Nationalist Index. (Table 6.3) Although nationalists and neutral respondents seem to be fairly evenly distributed across education levels, a different trend emerges for integrationists. Respondents whose education falls between a high school diploma and a four year degree are more likely to be integrationists. Additionally, respondents with either a high school diploma or moderate college experience comprise the largest group of nationalists. Thus, it seems that increased education leads to more integrationist views, but at some point this relationship plateaus and respondents become no more likely to be integrationists than to be nationalists. Several reasons can be offered for why integration appeals more to the moderately educated groups. Members of these groups might see integrating into mainstream America as more available to them than respondents who are less educated or more educated than them. For instance respondents who are high school dropouts may feel that there are very few opportunities to integrate available to them as far as economic advancement. This is especially true given the research agendas by Wilson (1999, 1997, 1978) and others who suggest that there is an economic chasm between others and residents of the center cities who are often less educated, unskilled, and unable to access higher paying suburban job—and often Black. Additionally, the most educated NBES respondents may be more sensitized to the rewards and benefits that should come with increased education and somehow feel unfairly denied opportunities, which make them less likely to agree with items in the NBES measuring integrationist beliefs. (For example, see Feagin and Sykes 1994.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Extreme Nationalist</th>
<th>Nationalist</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Integrationist</th>
<th>Extreme Integrationist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than High School Graduate</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduate</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College; No Degree</td>
<td>.3</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelors Degree</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate or Professional School</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.3: Crosstab of Education Level and Integrationist-Nationalist Index. Chi-square test is significant at p > .05 level. Kendall’s tau-b and gamma are significant at p > 0.10 level.

How does this continuum used for Black ideology relate to conventional ideology differences in American politics? To test this, I examine the relationship between the Integrationist-Nationalist Index and liberalism and conservatism. This is important because adherence to liberalism, conservatism and moderate ideologies have traditionally been used and accepted as predictors of political behavior. This is especially true when examining voting behavior. Within each ideological category, the respondents overwhelmingly see themselves as moderates. (Table 6.4) Beyond this finding, we see that both nationalist and the neutral categories are more likely to place themselves in the liberal categories. Nationalists are almost twice as likely to be liberal than conservative.
Additionally, integrationists and extreme integrationists demonstrate a greater tendency towards conservatism. Although chi-square tests are not significant, Kendall’s tau-b and gamma are significant at the .001 levels, both indicating an ordinal relationship between these two measures. Adherents to conservative ideology are more supportive of the status quo, in the sense that they are more likely to buy into the major tenets of a particular country and are less tolerant of change. Thus, it follows that integrationists, who simply want to be a part of the existing system, are more likely to subscribe to some form of political conservatism. On the other hand, nationalists, who reject all or part of the existing political system, are more likely to also be more liberal and supportive of change. It is important to reiterate, however, the overwhelming subscription of NBES respondents, however, was to a moderate position.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Liberal Conservative Ideology</th>
<th>Integrationist-Nationalist Index</th>
<th>Extreme Nationalist</th>
<th>Nationalist</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Integrationist</th>
<th>Extreme Integrationist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong Liberal</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak Liberal</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>.3</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak Conservative</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Conservative</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.4: Crosstab of Integrationism-Nationalism Index and Liberal Conservative Ideology (%). Chi-square test not significant. Kendall’s tau-b and gamma significant at p < .001 level.
Over two decades ago, a research agenda led by Pat Gurin and other scholars at the University of Michigan established overwhelming evidence of a key component of African American political calculus—that of group consciousness or linked fate (Gurin, Hatchett and Jackson 1989; Gurin, Miller Gurin 1980; Shingles 1981). Thus, any new measure of African American political preferences or behavior must include an analysis of the relationship between that measure and measures of linked or common fate. The result of this analysis demonstrates a tendency for nationalists to be more group centered and integrationists to less group or race centered. (Table 6.5 below) Nationalists are significantly more likely to say that a lot of their future is tied to that of other Blacks. This is expected since a feeling of linked fate is a crucial part of nationalist ideology in that they are more likely to connect their identity to the African American community as a part of the African diaspora rather than to connect themselves to people of other races. This is expected because integrationists are more likely to see themselves as a part of a larger American identity rather than endorsing a Pan-African identity preferred by nationalists. It is also important to note that, although their actual numbers are small, no extreme nationalist believed that they did not share a common fate with other Blacks.
Table 6.5: Crosstab of Integrationist-Nationalist Index and Common Fate. Chi-square test is significant at p < .05 level. Kendall’s tau-b and gamma are significant at p < .05 level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Fate</th>
<th>Extreme Nationalist</th>
<th>Nationalist</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Integrationist</th>
<th>Extreme Integrationist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, a lot</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, some</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, not very much</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Substantial research in both political science and sociology has documented the significance of religious institutions to the political development of the Black community (Frazier 1963; Harris 1999; Lincoln and Mamiya 1994; Lincoln 1974). These scholars demonstrate that religion plays a key role in shaping the political behavior of African Americans. The Civil Rights Movement, for instance, was carried out through the efforts of African American churches in terms of manpower, institutional structure, community networks and financial resources (McAdams 1985; Morris 1984). Because of its influence on behavior it is also important to assess whether or not religiosity plays an important role in determining ideological positioning along an integrationist nationalist continuum. In an analysis of a contingency table displaying the relationship between the
Integrationist Nationalist Index and religiosity, chi-square tests are not significant.\textsuperscript{35} (Table 6.6) This suggests that there are no significant differences between nationalists and integrationists in relation to attendance at religious institutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church Attendance</th>
<th>Extreme Nationalist</th>
<th>Nationalist</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Integrationist</th>
<th>Extreme Integrationist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Times a Week [VOL]</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every Week</td>
<td>.8</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almost Every Week</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once or Twice a Month</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Few Times a Year</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.6: Crosstab of Integrationist-Nationalist Index and Church Attendance. Chi-square test is not significant.

More sophisticated analysis could potentially tease out a relationship between ideological position on this continuum and religious beliefs. Additionally, church attendance may not be as important as the type of church individuals attend. Scholars have noted that some churches are more explicitly political than others (Calhoun-Brown

\textsuperscript{35} Religiosity in this analysis is measured by respondents’ answer to a question asking how many times a week they attended church. Incidentally, a crosstab was also run of the Integrationist Nationalist Index and how important religion is in the respondent’s life. This also proved to be statistically insignificant.
For instance, some churches are very involved in registering their members to vote, encouraging them to turn out on Election Day, and holding meetings for candidates to present their platforms. Others, however, rarely mention anything political and even suggest that politics and religious life are incompatible. This suggests that a measure that captures whether or not individuals attend a political church might be more appropriate when attempting to analyze the effects of religion on subscription to an integrationist or nationalist ideology. (Table 6.7) To test this, a multiple item measure of a political active church was created. These items asked respondents if their place of worship was involved in politics, whether respondents heard about the presidential campaign at church, and whether their place of worship encouraged respondents to vote. A score of zero represents a church that is apolitical and performed none of the political activities used to compose this scale. A score of three indicates a church that is highly political and that encourages strong and varied political participation. A reliability analysis using Chronbach’s alpha yields a coefficient of .639, which suggests that these items measure the same phenomena and can be reliably used to create an aggregate measure. In this case the aggregate measure is of the level of political involvement encouraged by respondents’ place of worship. The relationship between the INI and political church attendance, like frequency of church attendance, however, proves not to be significant.
Table 6.7: Crosstab of Integrationist-Nationalist Index and Political Church Attendance

Chi-square test is not significant.

The first half of this project was concerned with analyzing focus groups. As a part of that analysis, transcripts were examined to find systematic differences in the expressed beliefs of the participants. Moving beyond the small N of a focus group to a large data set allows for broader generalizations. Analysis in the previous chapter created and tested the validity of a measure of integrationism and Black nationalism. This chapter began by using this measure to assess the relationship between, the Integrationist-Nationalist Index and important SES and political variables. So far the analysis only looked for tendencies towards certain relationships in bivariate relationships. The rest of this chapter uses more sophisticated analysis to make statements about what are the important factors influencing individual positions along this ideological spectrum in multivariate analysis.
First, regression analysis is used to predict which factors influence individual adherence to integrationist or nationalist views. (Table 6.8) The model used is composed of several types of measures. Previous analysis explored the impact of standard SES predictors, such as education, income, gender and age, and they are included in this multivariate model as well. In this analysis gender is coded as a dichotomous variable in which females are assigned a score of one and males zero. Young people are less likely to engage in political activity and because they are politically inexperienced their attitudes and ideological orientations are less stable (Flanigan and Zingale 1998). Actual reported ages are used so as age increases so too should the item’s score. Scholars have shown that educational attainment makes individuals more politically informed and tolerant of others’ opinions. These skills also increase the probability that those individuals participate more in the political process. Income is also an important factor in determining political activity, especially those that involve some kind of monetary expenditure (Verba, Scholzman, and Brady 1995). A higher score for income and education indicates increased wealth and educational attainment. All of these factors should also foster definitive coherent beliefs in the form of ideological adherence.

Long-established political variables like liberal conservative ideology and region are included because of their enduring ability to influence political behavior. Liberal conservative ideology is measured on a seven-point scale from strong liberals on the low end to strong conservatives on the high end. The variable for region delineates respondents living in the South from those who reside in the rest of the country. For various reasons, many of which are directly related to race and the treatment of Blacks,
Southern culture and politics are unique and different from other regions of the country. Thus, this analysis includes a dummy measure of region in which respondents residing in the South are assigned a score of one. Additionally, linked fate is particularly important because African Americans overwhelmingly demonstrate a belief that their fates are connected to other members of the Black community. This survey measures linked fate by asking respondents about their level of agreement with the statement, “What happens to Black people has a lot to do with me.” High scores on this item suggest that the respondent strongly disagrees with this statement and believes that their individual fate is not tied to that of other Blacks. The opposite is true for respondents with low scores on this item. This group of respondents believes that what happens to other Blacks has a lot to do with their individual fate.

Certain variables provide scholars with information about the environment in which respondents live outside of what is reported in the survey. To that end several of these environmental variables have been added to the data used in this analysis using census block data. The kind of neighborhood one lives in can impact ideological positions in several ways. First, supporting political integration may be related to other decisions such as whether to live in a racially mixed or segregated neighborhood. Second, the racial and economic makeup of the neighborhood will have a potentially significant impact on the life experiences of individual respondents. It also impacts the amount of contact respondents might have with non-Blacks. In relation to social context, Huckfeldt (1994, 416) found “that the political influence of context is realized through social interaction processes,” in that it impacts both “intimate” and “casual, less personal, and nearly inexplicable encounters.” Additionally, Cohen and Dawson (1993, 291) have
found that “living in a neighborhood with high levels of economic devastation leads to greater isolation from social institutions that are most involved in Black politics such as the Black church and organizations dedicated to social affairs.” Despite high levels of isolation, many respondents in the Detroit Area Study still reported high levels of political efficacy. All of these factors suggest that the model should include, not just fixed demographic measures like race and gender, but also the social context in which respondents live out their daily lives. Using the census tract and block codes of respondents in the data set, variables were included that measured both the percentage of residents living in poverty and the percent Black population within the outlined geographical boundary. These variables report actual percentages; consequently as scores increase so does the number of Blacks and impoverished residents.

Some variables included in this analysis are specific to the African American community in that they have been found to have a significant impact on African American political behavior. These variables include religiosity, attitudes about the economic positioning of Blacks versus whites and the ability of Blacks to achieve full equality as well as feeling thermometers measuring affect towards Blacks and whites. Citrin et al. (1975) found a strong connection between alienation and negative evaluations of government institutions. Thus, respondents who see the system as permanently closed to them and who perceive high levels of economic disadvantage in relation to whites are prone toward both increased criticism of the government and greater political alienation. Religiosity is measured by assessing the level of importance placed on religion. A high score is assigned to those respondents for whom religion is not important in their daily lives. Respondents were asked whether they thought Blacks
were worse off, better off, or about the same economically as whites. If respondents believed that Blacks are economically disadvantaged in relation to whites then they will be more likely to look for reasons why this might be the case and move toward Black blame and support for integrationism or system blame and support for Black nationalism. So it becomes important to know if this relationship is significant or not. A high score on this item represents a belief that Blacks are much worse off than whites; a low score represents a belief that Blacks are much better off than whites. As a proxy for Black blame and system blame, I include feeling thermometers that measure affect towards whites and Blacks. The intuition underlying the inclusion of these items is that respondents who engage in high Black blame will offer lower scores on the Black feeling thermometer. In turn, those respondents who attribute blame to the system vis-à-vis its white agents will provide lower thermometer scores (i.e. negative affect) towards whites. The raw scores used for both feeling thermometers were included in this analysis; lower scores equal negative affect, and higher scores equal positive affect. Another item used in this analysis asked if respondents thought Blacks would ever achieve full equality. Individuals who believed in the possibility of eventual Black equality received the lowest scores on this item. High scores on this item means that respondents believe that Blacks will not achieve full equality with whites. Lastly, perceived race of the interviewer effects were accounted for by including a dummy variable in which white interviewers are assigned a score of one and Black interviewers are assigned a score of zero. The exact model is specified as follows:

\[ \text{See Appendix B for descriptive statistics of each variables included in the model.} \]
Integrationist Nationalist Index = \( \text{Constant} + \beta \text{Education} + \beta \text{Income} + \beta \text{Age} + \beta \text{Gender} + \beta \text{Region} + \beta \text{Liberal Conservative Ideology} + \beta \text{Linked Fate} + \beta \% \text{Poverty} + \beta \% \text{Black} + \beta \text{Religiosity} + \beta \text{Black Thermometer} + \beta \text{White Thermometer} + \beta \text{Perceived Race of Interviewer} + \beta \text{Relative economic positioning} + \beta \text{Achieve Full Equality} \)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>( \beta )</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>.034</td>
<td>.710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>-.023</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (18-43 dummy = 1)</td>
<td>-.004</td>
<td>.098</td>
<td>.970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-.088</td>
<td>.098</td>
<td>.369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>-.099</td>
<td>.099</td>
<td>.381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal/Conservative Ideology</td>
<td>.060</td>
<td>.024</td>
<td>.012*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linked Fate</td>
<td>.095</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>.007*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Poverty</td>
<td>-.006</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Black</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religiosity</td>
<td>.088</td>
<td>.042</td>
<td>.035*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling Thermometer: Blacks</td>
<td>-.001</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling Thermometer: Whites</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Race of the Interviewer</td>
<td>.470</td>
<td>.101</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Position of Blacks vs. Whites</td>
<td>-.078</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>.044*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will Blacks ever achieve full equality</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.052</td>
<td>.983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>2.839</td>
<td>.393</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( \text{Adjusted } R^2 \) \( = .172 \)

\( N = 340 \)
Although they appear to be important when analyzing contingency tables, a very different picture emerges for SES in more rigorous analysis. SES variables that seemed to be important in the contingency tables fall well short of significance in the regression analysis. It should be noted that the coefficients move in the directions indicated in the crosstabs. Gender and ideology are inversely related, which suggests that women are more likely to be Black nationalists than men. As respondents get older, they become more nationalistic. The coefficients for region indicate that Southerners are also more supportive of Black nationalist views. These coefficients move in expected directions, but they do not achieve (or even come close) to statistical significance, once other variables are included.

Several traditional indicators of political behavior prove to be statistically significant in predicting where individual scores will fall on the Integrationist-Nationalist Index. Both liberal conservative ideology and the variable measuring belief in common fate with other African Americans are significant indicators of where respondents fall on the INI. They both are positively related to scores on the INI. This demonstrates that as respondents become more conservative they are also more likely to identify with integrationist ideology. This confirms the evidence provided in the contingency tables of
the significance of liberalism and conservatism on INI placement. As stated above the nature of conservatism has to do with the preservation of the status quo and orthodox interpretation of Constitutional questions. On the other hand, liberals are more open to ideas or strategies that challenge enduring American traditions that can be exclusionary and unjust. Thus, liberals may also in turn be open to more transformative or revolutionary appeals in the form of Black nationalist rhetoric.

Linked fate is significantly and positively related to scores on the INI. This suggests that those who disagree with the statement, “What happens to Blacks has a lot to do with me” are much more likely to be integrationists. Thus, for integrationists intraracial connections are less significant than for nationalists whom group identity is integral to their ideological construct. The finding that linked fate significantly predicts African American political ideology of any kind is not surprising given the well established research demonstrating its importance.

A feeling thermometer measuring affect towards whites on a scale of zero to one hundred was included in this analysis. A score of zero represents absolute negative or unfavorable affect towards whites, and a score of one hundred represents absolute positive or favorable affect towards whites. Although the actual coefficient is small, positive affect towards whites is a predictor of respondents taking an integrationist stance as was found in validating the INI measure. This finding is congruent with an understanding of these ideologies. As discussed in previous chapters, nationalist ideology recognizes and even to some extent exposes both historical and on-going contentiousness between African Americans and whites. This conflict reflects an enduring history of oppression of Blacks by whites. Thus, it follows that nationalists
should be more likely to express anti-white sentiments or negative affect towards whites. Alternatively, beliefs held by supporters of integrationism are really emanating from a universal humanist perspective in which racial prejudices and the resulting behavior becomes a byproduct or tool of inequality. Integrationists believe that human beings are inherently the same. Just as African Americans do not want to be judged as a group, they in turn, are reluctant to hold negative views or judge whites as a group. This is demonstrated in both the focus group analysis and here.

For this analysis religiosity is measured by importance placed on religion. The vast majority of African American respondents believed that religion is important in their lives. There is a significant and positive relationship between religiosity and positioning on the INI Index. Nationalists place less importance on religion than integrationists. The importance of religion may partly stem from the role the church has played in providing manpower, structure, and leadership in popular integrationist movements such as the 1960’s Civil Rights Movement. Also, this may be less true for African Americans whose faith traditions are not Judeo-Christian based. For instance, African American Muslims have traditionally been more nationalistic than other African Americans because of the role the Nation of Islam has played in both nationalist and separatist movements and debates. Unfortunately, the 1996 survey does not provide information to allow the role of various faith traditions in determining ideological views to be teased out.

In response to an item measuring respondents’ beliefs of whether or not African Americans fare better, worse, or about the same economically as whites, very few African Americans were willing to say that Blacks were better off than whites (less than 10%). However, a little more than half were willing to say that Blacks were worse off
than whites. Responses to this item are negatively and significantly related to INI scores. This suggests that as respondents become more nationalistic they also become more likely to believe that Blacks are worse off economically than whites. This finding is not surprising; however, the direction of the causal arrow may be more complicated than it appears. Do Blacks see the economic advantages of whites and become more nationalistic? Or do Blacks become nationalistic and thus focus more on inequality? The answer to that question is unclear and really difficult to tease out through statistical analysis. Given the evidence found in the focus groups discussed in earlier chapters, it may simply be a combination. Surely there are some nationalists whose beliefs are the result of perceived inequality between Blacks and whites. There may also be others for whom an intra-racial focus is more appealing and would support nationalist beliefs even in the absence of inequality. Not only is this difficult to tease out in the data, it is made more difficult by the fact that the presence of stark inequality has been enduring and constant throughout the history of American race relations.

The race of the interviewer can play an important role in changing the responses offered by survey participants. In this case, the presence of a white interviewer made respondents significantly more likely to express views that support integrationist sentiments. The race of interviewer effect is extremely strong. It is one of the strongest indicators of support for integrationism. The strength of the indicator is surprising; however, it is not surprising that talking to a white interviewer or any non-Black interviewer will change responses somewhat. This finding is simply corroboration of findings in a pair of articles by Anderson, Silver, and Abramson (1988a; 1988b) in which they assess feelings of warmth and closeness by Black respondents for whites and Blacks.
Anderson et. al. defined closeness in terms of a strong feeling of similarity with the target group and warmth as simply an affective evaluation of the target group. They found that Blacks were more likely to express feelings of warmth and closeness towards whites when questioned by white interviewers than Blacks who were questioned by Black interviewers. This is in contrast to Black respondents’ feeling of closeness to other Blacks; regardless of the race of the interviewer, Blacks felt a strong sense of closeness and warmth towards individuals with whom they share common racial designations. As discussed earlier, integrationist African Americans were more likely to express positive affect towards whites in the focus group sample, and the same holds true for this sample as well.

**Examining Race of the Interviewer Effects More Closely**

Because race of the interviewer effects are so strong, it seemed important to look at potential differences between those respondents who were interviewed by whites and those who were interviewed by Blacks to tease out any potential differences in willingness to express certain beliefs. It is still important to note that other variables are significant even when controlling for race-of—the interviewer effects. This relationship was examined in several ways. First, although the coefficient is low there is a significant and positive correlation between perceived race of the interviewer and scores on the Integrationist Nationalist Index. The coefficient of .181 is significant at the .001 level.

Additionally, a contingency table of this relationship was examined. Chi-square tests indicate that there is a significant relationship between differences in respondents’ perception of the race of the interviewer and their scores on the Integrationist Nationalist Index.
Respondents who thought they were talking to a Black interviewer were almost twice as likely to fall into the Black nationalist category as those who thought they were talking to a white interviewer. Alternatively, respondents who perceived their interviewer to be white were almost twice as likely to fall into the extreme integrationist category. Additionally, the moderate category is more likely to be the ideological option for those respondents who thought they were talking to a Black interviewer. This demonstrates that respondents were more nationalistic when they thought they were talking to another African American. Thus, the inclusion of the race of the interviewer in this analysis would serve to diminish the presence of Black nationalist views in the sample by decreasing the number of respondents who are willing to identify strongly with items that support nationalist views.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Interviewer Perceived as African American</th>
<th>Interviewer Perceived as White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extreme Nationalist</td>
<td>.8</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationalist</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrationist</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>38.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme Integrationist</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.9: Crosstab of Integrationist-Nationalist Index and Perceived Race of the Interviewer. Chi-square tests are significant at p < .001 level.
If African Americans are more likely to temper or change their views about race and a race specific ideology when they believe that whites are interviewing them, then the factors contributing to ideological positioning may be different based on the race of the interviewer. To analyze this separate OLS models were run with two samples divided on the basis of perceived race of the interviewer. The variables used in these models were identical to the OLS model used in Table 6.8. The perceived race of the interviewer variable is not included since it is the filter variable. The first difference that emerges is that there are fewer significant variables in the filtered models. This may be due, in part, to the significant decrease in the amount of respondents included in the model. A larger N yields more stable and reliable results. However, the findings with the lower N here are by no means trivial. The results are reported in Table 6.10 below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Black Interviewers</th>
<th></th>
<th>White Interviewer</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B (Std. Error)</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>B (Std. error)</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>3.121** (.712)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>3.587**(.522)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Level</td>
<td>.002 (.053)</td>
<td>.647</td>
<td>.001 (.046)</td>
<td>.997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Income</td>
<td>.001 (.034)</td>
<td>.663</td>
<td>-0.054* (.028)</td>
<td>.057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual age</td>
<td>.001 (.007)</td>
<td>.851</td>
<td>.0004 (.005)</td>
<td>.936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-.132 (.163)</td>
<td>.420</td>
<td>-.091 (.128)</td>
<td>.476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>-.156 (.161)</td>
<td>.334</td>
<td>-.066 (.128)</td>
<td>.608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linked fate</td>
<td>.001 (.077)</td>
<td>.889</td>
<td>.166* (.058)</td>
<td>.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology</td>
<td>.006 (.040)</td>
<td>.125</td>
<td>.056b (.032)</td>
<td>.082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Poverty</td>
<td>.003 (.010)</td>
<td>.792</td>
<td>-.013 (.008)</td>
<td>.125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Black</td>
<td>.001 (.002)</td>
<td>.592</td>
<td>.002 (.002)</td>
<td>.310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieve full equality</td>
<td>.057 (.087)</td>
<td>.509</td>
<td>-.079 (.069)</td>
<td>.256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative economic positioning</td>
<td>-.109* (.065)</td>
<td>.095</td>
<td>-.074 (.050)</td>
<td>.142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Thermometer</td>
<td>-.005 (.005)</td>
<td>.305</td>
<td>.0009 (.003)</td>
<td>.794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Thermometer</td>
<td>.009* (.004)</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.010* (.004)</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Adjusted R²</th>
<th>N</th>
<th></th>
<th>Adjusted R²</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.112</td>
<td>155</td>
<td></td>
<td>.141</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.10: Comparisons of Source of Ideology by Perceived Race of the Interviewer. Significant variable are in bold print. **Indicates significance at p < .01 level.
*Indicates significance at p < .05 level. b Indicates significance at p < .10 level.
There are differences in which variables impact ideological positioning based on differences in the perceived race of the interviewer. When respondents perceive that a Black interviewer is interviewing them, there are fewer variables impacting their ideological positioning. Beliefs about relative economic positioning of Blacks versus whites and score on the INI are significantly and inversely related. If respondents believe that Blacks are disadvantaged economically in comparison to whites, then they are more likely to support Black nationalists views. Alternatively, respondents who are more likely to believe that African Americans are better off or the same economically as whites are more integrationist. This finding mirrors those in the larger sample in that Blacks who recognize disparities between their own community and the white community also endorse nationalist views. Affect towards whites is positively and significantly related to score on the INI. As respondents report more positive affective orientations to whites (as measured by raw feeling thermometer scores), they also become more integrationist. For many Blacks, like those nationalists included in the focus group, the American political system and white people are inextricably linked. Therefore as respondents become more withdrawn from and critical of the American political system they will also demonstrate more negative evaluations of whites in general. This is also important given findings by Anderson, Silver and Abramson (1988a, 1988b) that Blacks do temper their racial attitudes when being interviewed by someone they perceive as white. These two variables are the only significant predictors of where respondents fall along the integrationist nationalist continuum.

When respondents perceive that a white interviewer is interviewing them, the picture is slightly different. There are more significant predictors of where individual
respondents fall on the Integrationist Nationalist Index. Respondents’ family income is inversely related to INI positioning. As one’s family income rises, individual respondents become more nationalistic—meaning that wealthier African Americans are more likely to endorse effort to separate Blacks from the larger American political system. This finding ties into arguments by Feagan and Sikes (1994) and others who find that members of the Black middle-class are extremely disgruntled about their social, economic, and political lot in America. As the wealthiest (and often most educated) members of their community, higher income and higher educated Blacks are also the ones who stand to benefit the most from Integrationist efforts. As a result, they are also the most alienated and incensed by perceptions of unfair treatment of African Americans.

The opposite may be the case for poorer Blacks because who live more racially and economically segregated lives and for whom the prospect of living out the American dream may be more remote. Another possibility is that social desirability might be more important to poorer Blacks who are more reluctant to provide more nationalistic and controversial views about racial questions when speaking to white strangers.

Two variables in this model are also significantly and positively related to INI scores as in the model for the larger sample. First, there is a positive relationship between belief in a linked fate and subscription to integrationism and Black nationalism. Respondents who are more likely to disagree with the statement, “What happens to Blacks has a lot to do with me,” are also more likely to sanction the integrationist viewpoint. This make sense because adherence to integrationism requires a diminished emphasis on race and other salient characteristics and increased emphasis on the equality and equal treatment without regard to those characteristics. Second, there is a significant
and positive relationship between liberal conservative ideology and score on the INI. Even Blacks potentially assume or recognize the “liberal bias” among Blacks, so those African Americans who are more conservative might be more willing to not only identify as conservative when speaking to whites, but to associate those views with a related belief in integrationist attitudes. As respondents become more conservative, they are also more likely to be integrationists.

Similar to all models examined thus far, affective evaluations of whites in the form of feeling thermometer scores is a powerful predictor of the degree of support for integrationism or Black nationalism. Respondents with more positive or warm evaluations of whites also consistently present stronger endorsements of integrationism. It is safe to say that for various reasons anti-white sentiment may play a strong role in Black respondents’ desire to withdraw from the American political system. Respondents and theorists alike suggest that this may not be as related to anti-white sentiments as it is a desire for Blacks to be a self-determining and self-governing community—efforts repeatedly hindered by whites. Either way, the data show that negative evaluations of whites do impact belief that nationalism is a more appropriate ideological position. This finding is equally important given the findings in the focus group discussions that when Blacks are criticizing the government they often attach the racial label of white to governmental institutions. Additionally, many focus group participants connected their broad views about race and specific views about Black nationalism to incidences of negative racial interactions and continued Black-white hostility. In a recent study, Sniderman and Piazza (2002, 180) argue that although Blacks share common values with white other Americans, Blacks have “turned inward, having lost confidence in the
promise of America” and “drawing on their unique experience and traditions to develop their own ideas and aspirations.”

**Summary**

The previous chapter was concerned with creating a measure that, in the absence of direct measures, serves as a proxy for adherence to either integrationism or Black nationalism. This measure, the Integrationist Nationalist Index, is a composite measure based on respondents’ level of agreement with items that capture their desire to be separated from non-Black or inclined into a larger multiracial community. Using the data from 1996, there were few nationalists. Although this seemed to be the case in 1996, there is no evidence to suggest that another ideological position would not be more popular in previous or subsequent time periods. After the measure was established and tested, that measure was used in this chapter in a series of contingency tables to examine its relationship to other variables.

Contingency tables are important because they provide preliminary encouragement for the validity of a particular path of analysis. In this case we have found that SES factors such as education, age and gender (more moderately so) have an impact on variation across the Integrationist Nationalist Index. It appears that nationalist appeals are more attractive to women, the moderately educated, and both the very young and very old. Additionally, factors often associated with political behavior such as liberalism, conservatism and belief in a linked fate are significantly related to position on the Integrationist Nationalist Index. Respondents who subscribe to conservatism are also more likely to support integrationism. Also those respondents who feel less connected to
other Blacks were also more likely to endorse the integrationist perspective. These early results strongly suggest that this index plays an important role in the political calculus of respondents in the 1996 NBES and that more sophisticated analysis is warranted.

In more sophisticated multivariate analysis, traditional SES variables do not achieve statistical significance. However, traditional variables such as liberal conservative ideology and linked fate also prove important in determining where individuals position themselves along this continuum. Increased conservatism and decreased connection to other Blacks significantly predict support of integrationism. Also the strength of feeling thermometers towards whites and the perceived presence of a white interviewer were also analyzed. Negative feelings towards whites consistently yield more support for nationalist ideological views. When respondents believe that someone who is white is interviewing them, then different factors emerge as significant predictors of ideological adherence than when they see their interviewer as Black. First, there are fewer significant predictors of ideological positioning when respondents think that someone of the same race is interviewing them. Respondents who perceive that Blacks are economically disadvantaged in comparison to whites and report negative affect towards whites are significant predictors of support for nationalist ideology. Alternatively, there are more factors influencing ideological position for those respondents who are being interviewed by whites. Respondents in higher income brackets, who are less connected to other Blacks, more conservative, and more positive towards whites are more likely to embrace integrationist views.

The findings here demonstrate the difficulty in unpacking the complexities associated with individual ideological adherence. The power of the race of the
interviewer here is extremely important because it demonstrates that the ability to capture individual ideological beliefs is diminished by non-political factors. This may be due to efforts by respondents to provide socially desirable answers. Additionally, affect towards whites is important. Nationalists report more negative affective evaluations towards whites in general. This is consistently shown regardless of the race of the interviewer; how respondents feel towards whites matters in their political judgments. But simple affective evaluation does not explain it all. Negative evaluations of whites are tied to respondents’ views about the economic and socio-political disadvantages of Blacks in relation to whites. Given the findings in the focus groups, Blacks see that the inherent inequality of a system in which whites receives more than their fair share of the positive ends of American democracy. This leads to critical evaluations of whites and more nationalistic views.

Although we find that many African Americans, like many other Americans, are not thinking ideologically, there are other interesting findings from this chapter. First, we find that African Americans’ adherence to this race specific ideology is influenced by factors that have long been demonstrated as important factors impacting both political opinion and behavior. Linked fate and liberalism and conservatism are significantly related to position on the INI. Black conservatives and those who feel less connected to other Blacks are significantly more likely to embrace the integrationist viewpoint. A second finding is the strength of importance of the race of the interviewer. It appears to play an important role in respondents’ willingness to identify with those items that support Black nationalism. The fact that white interviewers interviewed half of the sample, then, serves to diminish the number of nationalists identified in the sample.
Regardless of the race of the interviewer, evaluations of whites are a significant predictor of ideological orientations. Negative evaluations of whites significantly impact individual support for Black nationalism.
CHAPTER 7

CONSEQUENCES OF INTEGRATIONISM AND BLACK NATIONALISM

Now that we have gained a better sense of the correlates of positioning along the integrationist nationalist continuum, we can turn to the final goal of this project. Ultimately, it is hoped that this measure is significantly related to political behavior and that it supports the argument that it is a better (or more appropriate predictor) of political behavior than conventional measures like liberal conservative ideology or linked fate for African Americans. This is achieved by creating OLS models of political behavior and attitudes and by switching integrationism-nationalism from the dependent side of the equation to the independent side. This chapter is divided into three sections. The first portion takes up the task of examining the relationship between political alienation (e.g. trust and efficacy) and a race-specific ideology. The next portion examines the relationship between ideology and diffuse and specific support for government efforts. The third section examines the relationship between ideology and attitudes related to political parties. Last, it ends by exploring the relationship between ideology and participation.
Alienation and Ideology: Analysis of Trust and Efficacy

It is generally believed and argued that a democracy cannot sustain itself without popular support. Thus political scholars and practitioners are both interested in understanding and ultimately preventing the growth of political alienation. Miller (1974) argues that the level of political alienation can be measured along two dimensions—political trust and political efficacy. High levels of political alienation, it was believed, led to increased political tension and reliance on unconventional forms of political expression (Aberbach and Walker 1970b). This was a popular explanation proffered for such widespread support for previously unorthodox political protest in the sixties and seventies. Arguing against conventional wisdom, Pollock (1983, 406-407) argues, “an increase in cynical perceptions…does not necessarily imply an increased potential for extremist behavior. It may, however, imply a change in patterns of conventional participant activity.” Instead he finds that “politically competent cynical individuals favor high initiative modes of influence—campaigning and contacting as well as protest behavior.”

Political trust is a function of several factors including level of trust in others, social background, political expectations, and feelings of deprivation (Aberbach and Walker 1970; 1199). It is believed that individuals who have a propensity towards trusting other people will also be more likely to trust the government. Political expectations are important in engendering political trust if individuals believe that there is a chance for some of their expectations to be met. Closely related to expectations are feelings of deprivation. Individuals who believe that rights and benefits are being unjustly withheld from them are less likely to believe that the government will do what is
right. Additionally, social factors can work to make individual more or less trusting of government. Those individuals who receive more rewards from the political system—the wealthier, better educated, etc. —are more likely to trust its actors and institutions to do what is right. General levels of trust in the United States have decreased significantly since the 1950’s. This sustained period of cynicism toward governmental actors and institutions has been attributed to several factors including the poor economic environment, dearth of leadership, and major negative political events (Citrin and Green 1986; Lipset and Schneider 1987; Miller 1974).

There was a resurgence of political trust in the 1980’s that was directly related to a larger increase in confidence of the leadership of the Reagan administration and growth in economic prosperity (Citrin and Green 1986). Citrin and Green (1986, 450) offer, “the current upsurge of political confidence is palpable, but it may be fragile as well. The continued growth of trust in government seemingly requires that good times endure.” Agreeing that an “extended period of good news would be required to reverse the confidence gap.” Lipset and Schnieder (1987, 1272) argue that there “seems to be no end to the series of events that create and sustain the confidence gap.” Pointing to events such as the Vietnam War, protests of the sixties and seventies, Watergate and Iran-Contra scandals, they suggest that Americans are being provided with more evidence to persuade them of the untrustworthy nature of the government and its agents. Given the persistent scandals that characterized the Clinton years, there seems to be no change in this trend. Because political mistrust has become so entrenched in the American psyche, Hetherington (1998, 791) has found that “rather than simply a reflection of dissatisfaction with political leaders, declining trust is a powerful cause of this dissatisfaction.” The end
result of entrenched mistrust is “a political environment in which it is more difficult for leaders to succeed” (802).

For African Americans, low levels of trust are more common than in the general population for various reasons related to historical and contemporary disagreements between Blacks and the government. Examining political efficacy and trust among Black students, Abramson (1972, 1273) found that Black children ‘tend to have lower feelings of political effectiveness’ and “lower feelings of trust toward political leaders” than their white counterparts. Examining the attitudes of African American adults during this same time period, Aberbach and Walker (1970b) found that distrust among lower educated Blacks was related to the perceptions of discrimination, but distrust among Blacks with more education was based more abstractly on perceptions of group-wide discrimination. Using quasi-experimental methods, Howell and Fagan (1988, 343) tested whether or not African American mistrust was simply based on their perception of a political reality in which “leaders treat Blacks less favorably than whites.” In an attempt to assess whether or not Blacks trusted the government more when there were Black leaders in power who presumably would be fairer to Blacks, Howell and Fagan examined trust levels among African Americans in New Orleans, a city that consistently had African American mayors in the 1980’s. Additionally, Bobo and Gilliam (1990, 388) found that increased political empowerment (measured by the presence of a Black mayor) “contributes to a more trusting and efficacious orientation to politics” and it “greatly increases Black attentiveness to politics.” Both works found that when Blacks believed that the system is fairer or at least less biased, they are more trusting of the government. Given that sustained Black leadership has escaped much of the country except at the local level, a
change in political reality is a more abstract goal rather than a eminent possibility. As linked fate increasingly emerged as an important explanatory variable, a certain level of distrust by African Americans was included in the way linked fate was defined. Michael Dawson (1994) suggests that linked fate represents awareness that Blacks are seen as a collective entity and that entity has often bore the brunt of racist policies and behavior, either actively perpetuated or at best tolerated by the American government. However, the effects of linked fate are potentially mitigated in persistently poor Black communities because “social isolation and economic distress…may be leading to a lack of confidence in Black group effectiveness and continued class divisions (Cohen and Dawson 1993).”

But what about the relationship between distrust and integrationism and Black nationalism? In early studies of a racialized ideology, Aberbach and Walker (1970b) found that individuals who were more supportive of a racial ideology were more likely to distrust the government. Although the definition of ideology offered here is more refined than mere support of Black militancy, it is expected that more nationalist individuals will also be significantly less trustful of the government. The following is an OLS model of trust among Black Americans in the 1996 NBES. Trust is measured by asking respondents how often they trust the government to do the right thing. Fewer than five percent of respondents believed that they could either trust the government just about always or never. (Frequency distribution is presented in Table B.21.) The largest group of respondents (71.2%) reported that they could trust the government just some of the

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37 Rather than calling it linked fate, Michael Dawson refers to it as the Black utility heuristic.
38 Aberbach and Walker define this belief system based on individual levels of favorability toward the Black power slogan, support of Black militant leaders, and support for riots.
time. Respondents are assigned a score of four if they report trusting the government just about always and one if they never trusted the government.

\[
\text{TRUST} = \text{Constant} + \beta \text{Education} + \beta \text{Income} + \beta 18-34 \text{ Age} + \beta \text{Gender} + \beta \text{Region} + \beta \text{Integrationist Nationalist Index} + \beta \text{Liberal Conservative Ideology} + \beta \text{Linked Fate} + \beta \% \text{Poverty} + \beta \% \text{Black} + \beta \text{Religiosity} + \beta \text{Black Thermometer} + \beta \text{White Thermometer} + \beta \text{Perceived Race of Interviewer} + \beta \text{Relative economic positioning} + \beta \text{Achieve Full Equality} + \beta \text{Political church attendance}
\]

This model is similar to those used previously in Chapter 6. It includes standard SES variables such as education, income, gender and age. As income and education variables increase so does actual income and education. Gender is coded as a dummy variable in which females are assigned a score of one and males are scored as zero. Age is a dichotomous variable as well with those respondents in the survey between the age of 18-34 coded as one and everyone else coded as zero. Also a region variable is included in which individuals residing in the south are assigned a score of one and everyone else is given a score of zero. There is a measure that reports raw percentages of both the poverty rate and number of African Americans living in individual respondents’ census tract. Additionally, the perceived race of the interviewer is included. Respondents who believed that they were being interviewed by a white interviewer are scored as one.

There are variables related to African American attitudes about race and the status of Blacks. For example raw feeling thermometers scores for both Blacks and whites are included and high scores denote positive affect. Measures for religiosity and political church attendance are important behavioral and psychological resources for Black Americans and their political evaluations and decisions (Harris 1999; 1994). A high
score on the religiosity measure means that religion is not important to respondents’ lives. A high score on political church attendance means that respondents attend a church that is very political. Lastly, respondents are asked whether they think that Blacks will ever achieve full equality and if they are better or worse off economically than whites. High scores on these items represent a belief that Blacks will never achieve full equality and that they are worse off economically than whites.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-.036</td>
<td>.024</td>
<td>.140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>.523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (18-34 Dummy= 1)</td>
<td>-.029</td>
<td>.072</td>
<td>.686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (Female=1)</td>
<td>-.0007</td>
<td>.071</td>
<td>.993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region (South =1)</td>
<td>.110</td>
<td>.073</td>
<td>.136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrationist-Nationalist Index</td>
<td>-.017</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>.671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal/ Conservative Ideology</td>
<td>.0003</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>.987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linked Fate</td>
<td>-.012</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>.700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Poverty</td>
<td>-.0001</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Black</td>
<td>.0009</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling Thermometer: Blacks</td>
<td>.0004</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling Thermometer: Whites</td>
<td>.0005</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Race of the Interviewer</td>
<td>.128</td>
<td>.076</td>
<td>.092b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Position of Blacks vs. Whites</td>
<td>-.023</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td>.406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will Blacks ever achieve full equality</td>
<td>-.104</td>
<td>.038</td>
<td>.007**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religiosity</td>
<td>-.059</td>
<td>.043</td>
<td>.170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Church Attendance</td>
<td>-.008</td>
<td>.032</td>
<td>.791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>2.646</td>
<td>.312</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Adjusted $R^2$                                | .025   |
| N                                             | 295    |

Table 7.1: OLS Model of the Political Trust. Significant variables are in bold type. ** Indicates significance at p < .01 level. b indicates significance at p < .10 level.
The findings of this analysis show that very few factors play into individual levels of trust for African Americans. Both traditional ideology and the race-specific ideology of interest here fail to achieve statistical significance. However, when respondents believed that they were being questioned by white interviewers they are more likely to say that they trust the government just about all of the time. The level of openness perceived by individual respondents turns out to be very important. Those respondents who believe that Blacks will never achieve full equality were also more likely to say that they never trust the government. The finding of the significance of perceived race of the interviewer is no surprise. What is demonstrated here and elsewhere is that believing that you are talking to someone of a different race has a profound impact on responses. Additionally, if Blacks believe that there is no chance that their racial group will ever achieve full equality and thus receive no benefits from the activities of the American government, then they will be less likely to trust the government to do what is right.

A second component of political alienation is a lack of political efficacy. Individuals who feel politically efficacious believe that the government and politicians are concerned about their beliefs and that they have the potential to influence how the government is run. Political efficacy plays an important role in individual decisions to participate in the political process. Scholars have demonstrated that those African Americans who have a strong sense of linked fate also tend to demonstrate a high level of political efficacy and mistrust (Shingles 1981). Additionally, Blacks whose social and political expectation have been met should be more likely to feel that they can influence the system—thus better educated and wealthier Blacks should feel more efficacious. However, Cohen and Dawson (1993) have demonstrated that African Americans who
live in persistently poor areas perceive that certain activities are more efficacious even though they are less likely to engage in such behavior. Lastly, there should be a significant relationship between integrationist and Black nationalist ideology and level of political efficacy. Because nationalists see the American political and social system as sources of persecution and hostility for Blacks they should be less likely to believe that public officials care what they think or that they as individuals have a say in what the government does. Alternatively, integrationists, who support the greater inclusions of Blacks into the American political system, should believe that they have a chance to achieve greater inclusion by impacting the decision of policy makers. This should lead to higher levels of efficacy among integrationists than nationalists.

Two items are used to assess the relationship between political efficacy and integrationist-nationalist ideology. First, respondents are asked whether or not public officials were responsive. A high score on this item is assigned to those who believe that public official care what they think and a low score is given to those respondents who believe that politicians do not in fact care about their concerns. This gets at feelings of responsiveness of public officials. Nearly equal percentages of respondents moderately agree (29.9%) and moderately disagree (29.5) with the statement, “Public officials don’t care what people like me think.” (Frequency distribution is presented in Table B.22.) These two categories represent the largest group of respondents.

Second, respondents are asked whether or not they have a say about what the government does. This has to do with individual respondents’ beliefs about their own ability to influence the system. Approximately thirty percent of respondents disagree strongly with the statement, “People like me don’t have a say about what the government
does.” (Frequency distribution presented in Table B.23.) Thus the largest group of respondents strongly believe that they have the power to influence government actions, and the next largest group falls into the somewhat disagree category. Hence more than half of the sample believes that they have some degree of influence over the government. Alternatively, very few respondents fall into the neutral category and forty percent feel that they have little power to influence the government. A high score on this item is assigned to those responded that believe that they have an influence on what the government does and a low score represents the opposite. The models are specified as follows:

\[
\text{POLITICAL RESPONSIVENESS} = \text{Constant} + \beta \text{ Education} + \beta \text{ Income} + \beta \\
\text{Age} + \beta \text{ Gender} + \beta \text{ Region} + \beta \text{ Integrationist Nationalist Index} + \beta \text{ Liberal Conservative Ideology} + \beta \text{ Linked Fate} + \beta \% \text{ Poverty} + \beta \% \text{ Black} + \beta \\
\text{Religiosity} + \beta \text{ Black Thermometer} + \beta \text{ White Thermometer} + \beta \text{ Perceived Race of Interviewer} + \beta \text{ Relative economic positioning} + \beta \text{ Achieve Full Equality} + \beta \\
\text{Political church attendance}
\]

and

\[
\text{INDIVIDUAL INFLUENCE} = \text{Constant} + \beta \text{ Education} + \beta \text{ Income} + \beta \text{ Age} + \beta \\
\text{Gender} + \beta \text{ Region} + \beta \text{ Integrationist Nationalist Index} + \beta \text{ Liberal Conservative Ideology} + \beta \text{ Linked Fate} + \beta \% \text{ Poverty} + \beta \% \text{ Black} + \beta \\
\text{Religiosity} + \beta \text{ Black Thermometer} + \beta \text{ White Thermometer} + \beta \text{ Perceived Race of Interviewer} + \beta \text{ Relative economic positioning} + \beta \text{ Achieve Full Equality} + \beta \\
\text{Political church attendance}
\]

The explanatory variables in these models are specified in the same way as the model in Table 7.1 and discussed in the paragraph preceding that table. The results of
this analysis are reported in the same table to facilitate easier comparison of these two types of efficacy—political responsiveness and personal influence on government activity. See Table 7.2 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Efficacy Types</th>
<th>Political Responsive</th>
<th>Personal Influence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variables</td>
<td>β (SE)</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.013 (.725)</td>
<td>.816</td>
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<td>Income</td>
<td>.061 (.036)</td>
<td>.085b</td>
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<td>Age (18-34 Dummy= 1)</td>
<td>.140 (.166)</td>
<td>.400</td>
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<td>Gender (Female=1)</td>
<td>.036 (.166)</td>
<td>.825</td>
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<tr>
<td>Region (South =1)</td>
<td>.008 (.171)</td>
<td>.961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrationist-Nationalist Index</td>
<td>.206 (.091)</td>
<td>.025*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal/ Conservative Ideology</td>
<td>.004 (.042)</td>
<td>.916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linked Fate</td>
<td>.041 (.076)</td>
<td>.593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Poverty</td>
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<td>.200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Black</td>
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<td>.625</td>
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<td>Feeling Thermometer: Whites</td>
<td>-.001 (.004)</td>
<td>.719</td>
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<td>.346 (.176)</td>
<td>.051*</td>
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<td>Economic Position of Blacks vs. Whites</td>
<td>-.011 (.064)</td>
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<td>Will Blacks ever achieve full equality</td>
<td>-.229 (.088)</td>
<td>.010*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religiosity</td>
<td>-.161 (.096)</td>
<td>.094b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Church Attendance</td>
<td>.024 (.075)</td>
<td>.750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>2.431 (.725)</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adjusted R²</strong></td>
<td><strong>.058</strong></td>
<td><strong>.049</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>N</strong></td>
<td><strong>293</strong></td>
<td><strong>296</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7.2: OLS Model of Political Efficacy. Significant results are in bold type. ** Indicates significance at p < .01 level. * Indicate significance at the p < .05 level. b Indicates significance at p < .10 level.

In the first set of results presented, there are several variables that significantly impact individual level of political responsiveness. The first significant finding is that as respondents’ family income increases so do respondents’ sense of efficacy. Wealthier individuals are more likely to believe that public officials care what they and people like them thinking. This relates to Aberbach and Walker’s (1970b) assertion that when political expectations, in this case a prosperous economic environment, are met, individual are more likely to trust the government to behave in ways beneficial to their interests. The presence of a white interviewer, like in other analyses, is a significant predictor of individual response. Those respondents who believe that a white person was interviewing them were more likely to report that public officials care what people like them think. Religiosity also serves as an important political variable for African Americans. Those individuals who report that religion is important to their lives also strongly agree that public officials care what they think. Religiosity may serve as important in efficacy because of the role it has been found to play in political skill building for African Americans. Verba, Schlozman, Brady and Nie (1993, 491) have found that African Americans receive more participatory benefits from church because they are more likely to attend church, affiliate with Protestant churches that give them the chance to practice civic skills, and receive more exposure to political stimuli in church.
Increased participatory skills and political engagement should also lead to a belief that those skills are taken seriously by officials and policy makers.

Two variables related to beliefs about the relationship of Blacks to American society also proved to be significant. First, African Americans who believe that Black people will eventually achieve full equality also are more likely to believe that public officials also care what they think. This is an intuitive finding in that Blacks who believe that equality is inevitable for Blacks must believe that elected officials will work towards this goal thus working toward their benefit. Second, the measure of most interest to this project is also statistically significant. There is a positive relationship between scores on the Integrationist-Nationalist Index and beliefs about government responsiveness. Integrationist respondents are more likely to believe that government officials care about what people like them think. This finding is not surprising given the fact that integrationists endorse the American political system and participation in that system. Thus, they should also be more inclined to believe that government officials are responsive to their concerns.

The second aspect of political efficacy assesses whether or not respondents believe that they (and people like them) have a say about what the government does. This particular measure captures individual beliefs about their ability to impact government actions. There are fewer significant variables related to respondents’ scores on this item. First, region is significantly related to feelings of personal influence. Southern Blacks are more likely to believe that they can impact government activities. This might be related to the fact the southern Blacks are often more concentrated (thus in higher proportions) than in other parts of the country. This leads to a greater sense of
efficacy because membership in a concentrated group should lead to both more personal and group efficacy. Like the analysis of efficacy related to political responsiveness, respondents who believe that Blacks will achieve full equality also believe that they can influence government actions. Last and similar to previous findings, positioning on the Integrationist-Nationalist Index is significantly related to political efficacy. Integrationists feel that they have more of a say about what the government does. Integrationism and feelings about the potential for equality are related; both inspire a certain level of optimism required to support both the belief in eventual equality and racial integration, which is also related belief in the ability to change their political environment.

**Ideology and Support for Government Efforts**

In the 1996 NBES, respondents were asked questions related to both diffuse and specific attitudes related to government help. First, respondents were asked about a specific policy—busing—and whether or not the policy was justified to achieve integration. A high score on this measure suggests a lack of support for integration through busing; a low score represents strong support for integration through busing. Clearly integrationist should endorse any effort aimed at increasing the amount of racial integration in the U.S. Other groups should also be prone to supporting busing as an integrationist tactic. People who are wealthier and more educated should support busing since it provides them with more opportunity as the most likely candidates to take advantage of this policy. Additionally, like in previous analyses, those respondents who

---

39 Concentration effects likely had reverse effect before the 1960’s and the Civil Rights Movement when states that were the most densely populated with African Americans were also those with the most hostile racial policies and stringent efforts to disenfranchise Blacks.
believe in the probability of full equality for Blacks should also be more likely to endorse busing as a strategy for achieving equality. Because of the historical political importance of the church, both religiosity and attending a political church should be significant influences on support for busing. Using the explanatory model employed in the previous sections, the model for support for integration is specified below.

SUPPORT FOR BUSING = \( Constant + \beta \) Education + \( \beta \) Income + \( \beta \) Age + \( \beta \) Gender + \( \beta \) Region + \( \beta \) Integrationist-Nationalist Index + \( \beta \) Liberal Conservative Ideology + \( \beta \) Linked Fate + \( \beta \) %Poverty + \( \beta \) % Black + \( \beta \) Religiosity + \( \beta \) Black Thermometer + \( \beta \) White Thermometer + \( \beta \) Perceived Race of Interviewer + \( \beta \) Relative economic positioning + \( \beta \) Achieve Full Equality + \( \beta \) Political church attendance

The model includes standard SES variables, specific attitudinal variables about the Black community and whites, as well as contextual variables such as poverty levels and homogenous residential community. Analysis of the model demonstrates that there are fewer variables that impact individual support for busing. The results are provided in Table 7.3 below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Education</em></td>
<td>.087</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td>.057*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Income</em></td>
<td>-.008</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td>.766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Age (18-34 Dummy= 1)</em></td>
<td>-.045</td>
<td>.134</td>
<td>.736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gender (Female=1)</em></td>
<td>-.022</td>
<td>.135</td>
<td>.870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Region (South =1)</em></td>
<td>-.149</td>
<td>.138</td>
<td>.282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Integrationist-Nationalist Index</em></td>
<td>-.006</td>
<td>.074</td>
<td>.931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Liberal/ Conservative Ideology</em></td>
<td>-.021</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>.533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Linked Fate</em></td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>.061</td>
<td>.140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>% Poverty</em></td>
<td>.0002</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>.980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>% Black</em></td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Feeling Thermometer: Blacks</em></td>
<td>-.006</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Feeling Thermometer: Whites</em></td>
<td>-.004</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Perceived Race of the Interviewer</em></td>
<td>.193</td>
<td>.143</td>
<td>.179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Economic Position of Blacks vs. Whites</em></td>
<td>-.043</td>
<td>.053</td>
<td>.413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Will Blacks ever achieve full equality</em></td>
<td>.049</td>
<td>.071</td>
<td>.495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Religiosity</em></td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.083</td>
<td>.931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Political Church Attendance</em></td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.061</td>
<td>.792</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Constant</em></td>
<td>2.673</td>
<td>.587</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Adjusted $R^2</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>N</em></td>
<td>292</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.3: OLS Model of Support for Integration through Busing. Significant variables are in bold type. ** Indicates significance at p < .01 level.  * Indicates significance at p < .10 level.
Two factors that prove to be statistically significant predictors for support for integration through busing are education level and affective evaluations of African Americans as a group. First, an interesting finding emerges in relation to education and support for busing. Those respondents who have attained the highest level of education, and also those probably most likely to be bused, are the least likely to support busing as an integration effort. One explanation might be arguments made by several scholars (Hochchild 1995; Feagan and Sikes 1994) of the impact of proximity to whites on attitudes about perceptions of racism and fair play. Scholars have found that wealthier and more educated Blacks often have the most contact with whites, which also makes them more likely to have engaged in negative interactions with them as well. Additionally, the very fact that these groups of African Americans have achieved so much also increases their expectations of achievement and their disappointment when they feel that achievement is somehow hindered by racism. Those people with the most education are by and large those who are also more likely to have experienced busing or some other form of educational integration efforts. Thus, direct experience with integration efforts may also play a part in the lack of support that many well-educated Blacks demonstrate for busing.

The other important variable in predicting support for busing is the feeling thermometer measuring affective orientations towards Blacks. As respondents begin to offer negative affective evaluations of Blacks, they also become more likely to support integration through busing. This may be related to the problem of Black blame discussed in previous chapters and employed by African Americans who attribute blame for continued lags in social statistics by Blacks on the poor choices and efforts of Black
themselves. Additionally, Black blame is often invoked when individuals are distinguishing their own behavior from the larger Black community or at least the troubled portion of it. In this case Blacks respondents who evaluate other Blacks negatively are more likely to support integration efforts through busing.

The second variable related to attitudes about the level of government help for Blacks versus Blacks helping themselves. A high score on this measure means that individuals believe that Blacks should help themselves; a low score represents the belief that government should make an effort to help Blacks. The OLS model used is specified below.

\[
\text{OPINION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORT SCALE} = \text{Constant} + \beta \text{ Education} + \beta \text{ Income} + \beta \text{ Age} + \beta \text{ Gender} + \beta \text{ Region} + \beta \text{ Integrationist Nationalist Index} + \\
\beta \text{ Liberal Conservative Ideology} + \beta \text{ Linked Fate} + \beta \% \text{Poverty} + \beta \% \text{ Black} + \\
\beta \text{ Religiosity} + \beta \text{ Black Thermometer} + \beta \text{ White Thermometer} + \beta \text{ Perceived Race of Interviewer} + \\
\beta \text{ Relative economic positioning} + \beta \text{ Achieve Full Equality} + \beta \text{ Political church attendance}
\]

A key component of Black nationalism is the belief that Blacks should form institutions and develop efforts that are self-determining and sustaining. Thus nationalists should be less likely to believe that the government should make more effort to help Blacks. This should be the case because they also believe that the government will not make the effort to help Blacks. Additionally, beliefs about the government’s role in helping any group are clearly tied to individual adherence to liberal or conservative ideology. Conservatives are more likely to support individual self help rather than government intervention in any way. Given previous findings in this chapter it also seems that those respondents who
believe that Blacks will never achieve full equality should also be less supportive of government help for Blacks. The results are listed in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td>.091</td>
<td>.660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>.536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (18-34 Dummy = 1)</td>
<td>-.409</td>
<td>.271</td>
<td>.133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (Female = 1)</td>
<td>-.439</td>
<td>.271</td>
<td>.108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region (South = 1)</td>
<td>.282</td>
<td>.283</td>
<td>.320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrationist-Nationalist Index</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td>.160</td>
<td>.928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal/Conservative Ideology</td>
<td>.154</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>.026*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linked Fate</td>
<td>.334</td>
<td>.129</td>
<td>.010*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Poverty</td>
<td>-.004</td>
<td>.017</td>
<td>.804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Black</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling Thermometer: Blacks</td>
<td>-.013</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>.090*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling Thermometer: Whites</td>
<td>-.002</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Race of the Interviewer</td>
<td>-.204</td>
<td>.290</td>
<td>.482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Position of Blacks vs. Whites</td>
<td>-.040</td>
<td>.107</td>
<td>.711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will Blacks ever achieve full equality</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.146</td>
<td>.887</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religiosity</td>
<td>-.108</td>
<td>.180</td>
<td>.547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Church Attendance</td>
<td>.0007</td>
<td>.126</td>
<td>.996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>3.487</td>
<td>1.234</td>
<td>.005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.4: OLS Model of Opinion on Government Effort Scale. Significant variables are in bold type. ** Indicates significance at p < .01 level. * Indicates significance at p < .05 level. b Indicates significance at p < .10 level.
As predicted more conservative Blacks are also more supportive of the position that Blacks should help themselves rather than the government doing more to help Blacks. This position aligns squarely with conservative beliefs that support low levels of government intervention into the daily lives of citizens and strong support for rewards garnered from individual effort. Another significant finding is the role of linked fate in predicting level of support for government help versus Black self-help. People who feel less connected to other Blacks also believe that Blacks should help themselves. Blacks who demonstrate less group based thinking should be less supportive of group-based initiatives by the government or any other institutions and more individualized views. Lastly, negative affective evaluations of other Blacks make Blacks more likely to endorse the position that Blacks should help themselves. This finding relates to previous findings related to employing Black blame as a reason for negative outcomes in the Black community.

Integrationism and Black nationalism fail to achieve statistical significance in either of these measures. It seems that other factors are more important in predicting support for integration policies and government intervention in improving the lives of Black Americans. Education, for instance, plays a significant role in attitudes about integration efforts through busing which is an education related policy. Additionally, conservatism is a primary determinant of whether or not respondents support government effort to help Blacks over Blacks helping themselves. One factor that is a significant determinant of both support for integration through busing and for Blacks helping
themselves is negative affect towards Blacks in general. Arguing that negative affective
evaluations serve as a proxy for Black blame, those respondents who engaged in more
Black blame were less supportive of group-based initiatives to change the status of
Blacks.

_Ideology and Political Parties_

High efficacy and issue support should lead to more civic engagement and
political involvement. Political parties have been a traditional venue for civic
engagement; however, Americans are less strongly attached to political parties than ever.
With the rise of candidates who are able to field competitive campaigns outside the party
structure and increased cynicism towards the government and its actors, contemporary
scholars are examining the relevance of modern political parties. Wattenberg (1996) has
suggested that the decline of political parties represents a movement towards neutrality.
Americans have moved towards independence because of discontent with party
institutions. Agreeing that partisanship has declined, Craig (1985, 75) argues that “high
levels of partisan independence” is the result of “changing attitudes about the institutions
of political parties.” Craig suggests that voters will not return their loyalties to traditional
party structures unless party leaders “engender confidence.” African Americans have
demonstrated strong loyalty to the Democratic Party since the 1960’s, but Katherine Tate
(1996) found that the strength of attachment to the Democratic Party (although still
higher than the general population) was lower than it had been in the 1984 and 1988
panels of the National Black Election Study.
This section will examine two party related questions. First, it asks whether strength of partisanship is impacted by ideology orientations. Are nationalists, who opt for weaker attachments to American institutions and society, also more likely to exhibit weaker attachments to parties? Second, it examines the relationship between integrationist nationalist ideology and endorsement of the formation of a third party composed solely of African Americans.

Turning first to partisan strength, a measure is created in which strong partisans from either party are assigned the same score, moderate partisans are placed in one category, and independents are grouped together. In this party strength measure a low score is assigned to those respondents who were self-reported independents and a high score is assigned to strong partisans, almost all of who were Democrats of course. In relation to integrationism and Black nationalism, it is expected that integrationists will exhibit stronger partisan strength. Party loyalty requires an implicit endorsement of the system as a whole. Nationalists, on the other hand, should be less strongly tied to parties of any kind. The previous OLS models are also employed here for comparison of predictive ability across multiple independent variables. This particular model is specified as follows:

\[
\text{PARTISAN STRENGTH} = \text{Constant} + \beta \text{Education} + \beta \text{Income} + \beta \text{Age} + \beta \\
\text{Gender} + \beta \text{Region} + \beta \text{Integrationist Nationalist Index} + \beta \text{Liberal} \\
\text{Conservative Ideology} + \beta \text{Linked Fate} + \beta \% \text{Poverty} + \beta \% \text{Black} + \beta \\
\text{Religiosity} + \beta \text{Black Thermometer} + \beta \text{White Thermometer} + \beta \text{Perceived Race of Interviewer} + \beta \text{Relative economic positioning} + \beta \text{Achieve Full Equality} + \beta \\
\text{Political church attendance}
\]
The results (Table 7.5) indicate that numerous factors push respondents toward independence. The majority of these factors are conventional SES variables such as education levels, age and gender. Additionally, religiosity and neighborhood context prove to be statistically significant. The index measuring integrationism and nationalism falls well short of statistical significance. Traditional liberalism-conservatism comes closer to significance, but it too falls far short. The results of the analysis are listed below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-.086</td>
<td>.032</td>
<td>.007*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>-.004</td>
<td>.020</td>
<td>.828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (18-34 Dummy= 1)</td>
<td>-.188</td>
<td>.092</td>
<td>.042*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (Female=1)</td>
<td>.194</td>
<td>.093</td>
<td>.037*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region (South =1)</td>
<td>.108</td>
<td>.096</td>
<td>.262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrationist-Nationalist Index</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>.922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal/ Conservative Ideology</td>
<td>-.035</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>.125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linked Fate</td>
<td>-.015</td>
<td>.042</td>
<td>.721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Poverty</td>
<td>-.010</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.083*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Black</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling Thermometer: Blacks</td>
<td>-.0002</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling Thermometer: Whites</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Race of the Interviewer</td>
<td>-.105</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td>.295</td>
</tr>
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<td>.036</td>
<td>.764</td>
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<tr>
<td>Will Blacks ever achieve full equality</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.049</td>
<td>.933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religiosity</td>
<td>-.167</td>
<td>.059</td>
<td>.005*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Church Attendance</td>
<td>.005</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>3.044</td>
<td>.404</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Adjusted $R^2$                         | .081  |
| $N$                                     | 283   |

Table 7.5: OLS Model of Partisan Strength. Significant variables are in bold type. ** Indicates significance at p < .01 level. * Indicates significance at p < .05 level. b indicates significance at p < .10 level.
The findings demonstrate that there is a tendency for the least educated participants in the sample to also exhibit the weakest attachment to the two main parties. Additionally, the youngest cohort (18-34) is more likely to self-report as independents rather than having strong or even moderate attachments to the two major parties. This finding is not surprising given the fact that the youngest voters are also the least politically developed or entrenched in a party tradition. Women exhibit the strongest partisan ties. Black women have been found to be more politically participatory and knowledgeable than their male counterparts (Verba et. al. 1995), and also, Black women turn out to vote at greater rates than Black men. In 1996, 50 percent of Black men voted as opposed to 42 percent of Black men (AP 2000). Respondents who reside in areas that have lower numbers of people living in poverty also boast more independent voters. Cohen and Dawson (1993) note that voter mobilization efforts played an important role in increasing turnout in poorer areas. The Democratic Party and its allies, by far, support these efforts. Thus it would make sense that the least educated who also tend to be less wealthy are inclined towards strong Democratic Party loyalty. Also more educated people tend to be more aware of news and events and better able to critically scrutinize party rhetoric. Consistent with other political attitudes and behavior, the importance of religion in the lives of respondents significantly influences strength of party loyalty. People who see religion as important in their lives are also more likely to support independence.

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40 This is a generally accepted finding in political science scholarship; however, Sniderman and Piazza (2002, chapter 5) have found that support for certain forms of nationalism, especially those based on Afrocentrism, leads even the most educated African Americans to accept popular conspiracy theories about the origin of AIDS, the planting of drugs in urban Black communities and other theories that travel through Black communities. They refer to this as a “blunting of critical standards.” According to them, educated Blacks like other educated Americans should be able distinguish outlandish theories from actual fact. It is important to note that some scholars might question the outlandishness of theories pointed to by Sniderman and Piazza.
The structure of the American political system prevents the development of sustained third parties; however, there are periods in history in which major parties have become vulnerable and withered away or when new parties have developed to address crucial cleavages and gain popular support (Rosenstone Behr and Lazarus 1984). During the Civil Rights Movement and the subsequent Black power era, there was some effort to change the nature of party politics in America. Organizations such as the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party and the Black Democrats broke down the segregated delegate selection process and there were also attempts to form an independent third party. This effort led to more political influence for Blacks in the Democratic Party epitomized by the candidacies of Jesse Jackson in 1984 and 1988 (Barker, Tate, and Jones 1999; Tate 1991). Given the success of candidates in recent elections who have worked outside of the party system (often relying on personal funding as a campaign source) and the popularity of Reform Party in the 1990’s, third parties may seem a more viable avenue for influencing the political system. An OLS model was created to measure support for the formation of a Black third party and is specified below.

\[
\text{BLACK THIRD PARTY} = \text{Constant} + \beta \text{ Education} + \beta \text{ Income} + \beta \text{ Age} + \beta \\
\text{Gender} + \beta \text{ Region} + \beta \text{ Integrationist-Nationalist Index} + \beta \text{ Liberal} \\
\text{Conservative Ideology} + \beta \text{ Linked Fate} + \beta \text{ Poverty} + \beta \% \text{ Black} + \beta \\
\text{Religiosity} + \beta \text{ Black Thermometer} + \beta \text{ White Thermometer} + \beta \text{ Perceived Race of Interviewer} + \beta \text{ Relative economic positioning} + \beta \text{ Achieve Full Equality} + \beta \\
\text{Political church attendance}
\]

Respondents were asked whether or not they supported the formation of a Black third party. Those respondents who supported a third party were assigned a score of one; those who did not were assigned a score of zero. A third of respondents approved the
formation of a Black party and two thirds were opposed. (Frequency distributions are reported in Table B.25.) Citizens who are the least involved in politics and exhibit the least political experience should be more likely to take on new party attachments. Thus younger respondents should be more likely to endorse a Black third party. Additionally, Black nationalists who support only partial withdrawal might prefer an independent third party because it invokes greater solidarity among Blacks in general, strong linked fate should lead individual to endorse an all Black third party as well. Nationalists should be more likely to endorse the formation of a third party because it fosters Black independence by breaking from traditional, majority white parties.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td>-.035</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>.071*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td>-.018</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>.136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age (18-34 Dummy = 1)</strong></td>
<td>.166</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>.003*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender (Female = 1)</strong></td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>.782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Region (South = 1)</strong></td>
<td>-.153</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>.008*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integrationist-Nationalist Index</strong></td>
<td>-.084</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>.008*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Liberal/Conservative Ideology</strong></td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td>.774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Linked Fate</strong></td>
<td>-.035</td>
<td>.026</td>
<td>.171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>% Poverty</strong></td>
<td>-.006</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.099*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>% Black</strong></td>
<td>-.0005</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Feeling Thermometer: Blacks</strong></td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Feeling Thermometer: Whites</strong></td>
<td>-.0009</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perceived Race of the Interviewer</strong></td>
<td>-.034</td>
<td>.059</td>
<td>.561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic Position of Blacks vs. Whites</strong></td>
<td>-.041</td>
<td>.022</td>
<td>.063*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Will Blacks ever achieve full equality</strong></td>
<td>-.011</td>
<td>.030</td>
<td>.710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Religiosity</strong></td>
<td>-.009</td>
<td>.032</td>
<td>.786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political Church Attendance</strong></td>
<td>-.010</td>
<td>.026</td>
<td>.705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Constant</strong></td>
<td>1.211</td>
<td>.245</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Adjusted $R^2$</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.102</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.6: OLS Model of Support for a Black Third Party. Significant variables are in bold type. ** Indicates significance at $p < .01$ level. * Indicates significance at $p < .05$ level. $b$ indicates significance at $p < .10$ level.
From this analysis we get a clear sense of which groups support the formation of an independent party composed solely of African Americans. First, those respondents with less education are more supportive of a Black third party. Increased education should lead to generally heightened level of awareness. This heightened level of awareness could include knowledge about the nature of the political system and the lack of viability of most third parties; hence, they should be less likely to support efforts to create a third party. This could also be related to the fact that the less educated demonstrate lower levels of attachment to the two traditional parties, which makes them ripe for exploitation by any new party. Like the less educated, the youngest cohort of respondents also have less attachment to political parties and are more supportive of a Black third party. This could be tied into similar arguments about the less educated, since younger people are also often less politically knowledgeable. In addition, younger citizens have had fewer opportunities to participate politically in ways that increase party loyalty. Those respondents who reside outside of the South and live in more affluent communities are also more supportive of a Black third party. Although the actual numbers of respondents who believe that Blacks are better off economically than whites are small, those who express this belief are also more likely to support the formation of a third party. Last, subscription to nationalism leads to greater support for the formation of a Black third party. The formation of a separate party represents a move towards greater self-determination and independent influence as a community on the political process. Thus Blacks nationalists should be more supportive of a separate party for Blacks.
Ideology and Political Participation

There has been a general decline in levels of political participation in America. In his now famous thesis, Putnam (2000; 1995a; 1995b) made the claim that political participation has waned because of a lack of civic engagement by Americans in organizations of any kind. In fact, according to Putnam, Americans choose to “bowl alone” rather than engage in activities that increase social capital and ultimately encourage political involvement. An alternative perspective is presented by Ladd (1999), which makes the argument that civic engagement is not diminishing. Indeed, it is stronger than ever. Social capital is important because citizens gain the skills and impetus required to become involved in politics.

Since the 1960's decreased civic voluntarism and party loyalties have been coupled with decreasing voter turnout. Americans simply do not choose to go out to the voting booths as much as they did in the past. Abramson and Aldrich (1982, 519) note that,

“The combined effect of the decline in partisan strength and the decline in beliefs about government responsiveness appears to account for between two-thirds and seven-tenths of the decline in presidential turnout.”

Although voting does not represent the only form of political participation, it is seen as especially important because it is viewed as a simple, low cost, one-shot effort to participate. Thus, individuals should be more inclined to turn out to vote even if they don’t want to engage in more high-cost political activities. Traditional SES variables go far in explaining turnout; however, Verba et. al. (1995, 272) note that SES models do “an excellent job of predicting political participation. Yet SES models fail to specify the
mechanisms linking statuses to activities.” Those links could include psychological attachments such as ideology, economic outlook, and religiosity. Understanding why some people turn out and others do not on Election Day has become particularly important given the closeness of recent elections and slim margins of control in the U.S. Congress.

African Americans play a pivotal role in swaying elections. As other groups who have traditionally voted in bloc continue to diminish (e.g. unions), African Americans remain a core source of support for the Democratic Party. Like other groups, African American levels of participation have decreased. “Black turnout was just over 52 percent in 1964 and was just over 46 percent [in 1996]” (AP 2000). Timpone (1998) found that in the 1980’s controlling for other political factors such as partisanship and SES status African Americans registered more but turned out less. It has been found that other factors are important in explaining African American political participation that are different from other racial or ethnic groups. The first, and most studied, is that of linked fate. Group closeness is a strong catalyst for political participation. In addition, Leighley and Vedlitz (1999) find that feelings of intergroup proximity are also important in determining whether Blacks participate. African Americans who feel more distant from other races are less likely to participate. Bobo and Gilliam (1990) have found that Blacks participate at similar rates as whites from similar backgrounds and more than their white counterparts when they are empowered (as measured by Black mayor representation).

The section will examine the important factors related to political behavior and support for specific kinds of participation. It will examine the decision to turn out to vote
and its relationship to ideology. Then, it will take up the relationship between political behavior and subscription to integrationism and Black nationalism.

Like ideological views and political alienation, political parties should play an important role in the decision to vote. The decision to go to the voting booth is impacted by many factors including social acceptance. As is typical there were more people reporting that they voted than actually did. According to the 1996 NBES, three quarters of respondents reported turning out to vote. The Federal Elections Committee places that number at 50.6 percent (www.fec.gov). A high level of overreporting is not surprising for several reasons. First, Abramson and Claggett (1984) found that African Americans are more likely than whites to report that they voted when they, in fact, did not. A second cause of overreporting may be the Hawthorne Effect in which people who are aware that they are being studied behave differently than they would have if they were not being observed. For instance, simply asking individuals about politics makes them more prone to paying attention to politics, at least in the short run (Granberg and Holmberg 1992). Also non-voters are also less likely to respond to political surveys. Those respondents who said they voted in the 1996 presidential election were assigned a score of one and those respondents who did not vote were assigned a score of zero. The model is specified below.
VOTE = Constant + β Education + β Income + β Age + β Gender + β Region +
β Integrationist-Nationalist Index + β Liberal Conservative Ideology\(^{41}\) + β
Linked Fate + β % Poverty + β % Black + β Religiosity + β Black Thermometer
+ β White Thermometer + β Perceived Race of Interviewer + β Relative
economic positioning + β Achieve Full Equality + β Political church attendance

SES factors should do a good job of predicting whether or not individuals choose
to exercise their right to vote. Better-educated, older, and wealthier as well as female
respondents should be more likely to vote. Additionally, increased linked fate should
play a role in the decision to vote. Respondents with increased linked fate are more
likely to engage in political activity. Last, because of the important role the church has
played in the political history of Black America, measures of religiosity and political
church attendance should be statistically significant. The results are reported in the table
below.

\(^{41}\) It is arguable that positioning on the liberal conservative continuum is not as important to political
behavior as whether or not individuals fall at the extreme poles or somewhere in the middle. Those
individuals with extreme ideological views should be more likely to participation. The model of voting and
the political behavior model were run with a measure that folds adherents to extreme ideological beliefs in
a high category, weak ideological adherents in the middle category, and moderates in a low category. This
measure proved not to significant as well.
Variables | $\beta$ | Standard Error | Sig. |
--- | --- | --- | --- |
**Education** | .034 | .215 | .043* |
Income | .001 | .010 | .896 |
**Age (18-34 Dummy = 1)** | -.119 | .049 | .016* |
Gender (Female = 1) | -.003 | .049 | .957 |
**Region (South = 1)** | -.090 | .050 | .074 b |
Integrationist-Nationalist Index | .005 | .027 | .843 |
Liberal/Conservative Ideology | -.011 | .012 | .375 |
**Linked Fate** | .039 | .022 | .082* |
% Poverty | -.00003 | .003 | .993 |
% Black | .0006 | .001 | .401 |
Feeling Thermometer: Blacks | .0005 | .001 | .696 |
Feeling Thermometer: Whites | -.001 | .001 | .399 |
Perceived Race of the Interviewer | -.083 | .052 | .113 |
Economic Position of Blacks vs. Whites | .015 | .019 | .432 |
Will Blacks ever achieve full equality | .002 | .026 | .935 |
Religiosity | -.068 | .029 | .019* |
**Political Church Attendance** | .078 | .022 | .001** |
Constant | .591 | .215 | .006 |

| Adjusted $R^2$ | .097 |
| N | 297 |

Table 7.7: OLS Model of Voting. Significant variables are in bold type. ** Indicates significance at p < .01 level. * Indicates significance at p < .05 level. b indicates significance at p < .10 level.
As expected several of the variables hypothesized to be significant turn out to be. Overall SES variables play the most important role in predicting whether or not respondents voted. Like in other racial groups, greater education, increased age, and non-South residency lead to greater turn out. These are all factors one would expect to significantly impact the decision to vote; however, gender does not achieve expected significance. As has been demonstrated before, increased linked fate leads to increased turn out. African Americans who feel connected to other African Americans are also more likely to go out to the polls. Additionally, religion plays a central role in respondents’ decision to vote. Those respondents who reported that religion is important in their lives and that they attended a church that encouraged political participation were also more likely to say that they voted.

Examining voting only is a narrow and incomplete way of examining participation. This is especially true for African Americans who have been barred from the voting process for the great majority of their time in the United States. In an effort to move beyond voting, this last set of analysis examines the role of ideology in predicting varied political behavior. There are four measures of general political behavior that record whether or not respondents performed various activities. Respondents are asked whether they contacted a public official or agency, whether they signed a petition, whether they attended a protest meeting or demonstration, and whether they participated in picketing, a boycott or a sit-in in the last five years. (See frequency distributions for each item in Appendix B.) Initially, it seemed this combination of mainstream forms of political behavior such as contacting a public official, low effort political behavior such as signing a petition, and non-traditional forms of political behavior such as picketing and
sit-ins might be misguided because they didn’t account for differences in types of behavior. Further analysis demonstrates that these items are related in important ways. Three decades ago, participating in a sit-in essentially revolutionized American politics through the efforts of the Civil Right Movement. In the current political climate of terrorism and biological warfare, however, these behaviors appear quite tame. Social movement scholar Sydney Tarrow (1997) has suggested that we are now seeing a movement society in which tactics and organizing principles once seen as radical are now commonplace forms of political participation. Given the changing definition of “acceptable or appropriate” political behavior, it is still important to note that protest activities in the form of picketing, sit-ins and boycotts consistently yielded the lowest correlation to the other items and the weakest loadings in the factor analysis. The following, however, serves as tests of the relationship between these items.

The items laid out above are statistically associated in several ways. First, these items are both significantly and positively correlated with one another. As the propensity to participate in one of these activities increases so does the propensity to perform other of these particular activities.
Table 7.8: Correlation Matrix of Four Items Used in Political Behavior Measure.  **
Indicates significance at the .01 levels.

Additionally, the reliability of this measure was tested using Chronbach’s alpha. The alpha coefficient was .657, which falls within the acceptability range for considering these items a cohesive measure of one phenomenon—in this case propensity to participate in politics. Last, these items were subjected to a factor analysis using principal component analysis. This analysis suggests that there is one underlying factor that accounts for nearly fifty percent (49.5%) of the variance among these items.
Table 7.9: Factor Analysis of Political Behavior Index Items. Extraction Method: Principal Component Method.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale Items</th>
<th>Principal Components</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contacted a public official or agency</td>
<td>.765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signed a petition</td>
<td>.740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended a protest meeting/demonstration</td>
<td>.726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picket, boycott, sit-in</td>
<td>.568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance Explained</td>
<td>49.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So it is justifiable to combine these items in a five-point, additive index ranging from zero to four. A score of zero means that individual respondents performed none of these four political activities: alternatively, a score of four means that the respondent performed all of these activities. Most respondents fall on the low end of this participation index. More than one-third (39.3%) of the respondents reported participating in none of these activities. At the other end of the spectrum less than five percent (4.2%) of respondents participated in all of these activities. This measure is created with the purpose of understanding the role racialized ideology plays in determining the level of political behavior that individual respondents perform.

This measure is used as the dependent variable in a model in which both the traditional measure of ideology based on liberalism and conservatism and the new measure argued for here are inserted as behavioral predictors. The initial argument of this project was that African Americans are more likely to use a race specific ideological construct rather than conventional ideologies to make political decisions and judgments.
Since all of these political activities involve making demands on and attempting to adjust the current structure of the political system, it is hypothesized that integrationists would be significantly more likely to engage in these behaviors. On the other hand, Black nationalists, who are more likely to reject the American political system and see it as inflexible and unfair, are significantly less likely to even bother making demands for political change. Thus, the INI measure should be both significantly and positively related to political behavior. A concurrent hypothesis tested here is that the standard ideology used in behavioral analysis based on adherence to liberalism and conservatism will not be statistically significant. Two models are used—one with INI scores included and liberal conservative scores in the other. This will allow for comparisons of the predictive ability of each item.

The models specified below are used in both cases. It is also very similar to models used previously and all variables are coded the same. The only new variable used for this model is a measure for respondents who reported attending a political church. A high score on this measure indicates that the church the respondents attends strongly encourages its members to get involved in political activity. Alternatively, a low score is indicative of a church that does not encourage political activity among its parishioners at all. The models used to test these hypotheses are the same except for the inclusion or exclusion of either the liberal conservative measure or Integrationist Nationalist Index.42

For descriptive statistics associated with each of these variables are reported in Appendix B. Additionally, the item of major concern in this analysis are in bold print.
Political Behavior Index = $\text{Constant} + \beta \text{Education} + \beta \text{Income} + \beta \text{Age} + \beta$

$\text{Gender} + \beta \text{Region} + \beta \text{Liberal Conservative Ideology} + \beta \text{Linked Fate} + \beta \% \text{Poverty} + \beta \% \text{Black} + \beta \text{Religiosity} + \beta \text{Black Thermometer} + \beta \text{White Thermometer} + \beta \text{Perceived Race of Interviewer} + \beta \text{Relative economic positioning} + \beta \text{Achieve Full Equality} + \beta \text{Political church attendance}$

or

Political Behavior Index = $\text{Constant} + \beta \text{Education} + \beta \text{Income} + \beta \text{Age} + \beta$

$\text{Gender} + \beta \text{Region} + \beta \text{Integrationist Nationalist Index} + \beta \text{Linked Fate} + \beta \% \text{Poverty} + \beta \% \text{Black} + \beta \text{Religiosity} + \beta \text{Black Thermometer} + \beta \text{White Thermometer} + \beta \text{Perceived Race of Interviewer} + \beta \text{Relative economic positioning} + \beta \text{Achieve Full Equality} + \beta \text{Political church attendance}$

Consistent with traditional findings related to political behavior, both education and income are significantly related to the level of political participation. Respondents with more education and in higher income brackets are more likely to engage in multiple and varied forms of political participation as measured by the Political Behavior Index. Additionally, decreased belief in linked fate also diminishes political participation. Blacks who reside in locations other than the south are more likely to be more politically active. Lastly, respondents who attended places of worship that encourage political participation are significantly more likely to be politically active. All of these findings are consistent with conventional wisdom about what factors impact individual decisions to become involved in politics.
Table 7.10: OLS Model of the Predictive Ability of Liberal Conservative Ideology on Political Behavior Index. Significant variables are in bold type. ** Indicates significance at \( p < .01 \) level. * Indicates significance at \( p < .05 \) level. \( ^b \) indicates significance at \( p < .10 \) level.
At the outset, it was hypothesized that African Americans, like other Americans, will not rely on standard liberalism and conservatism to make political decisions. Therefore, it will not be a significant predictor of individual propensity to engage in politics. This hypothesis is confirmed. Adherence to liberalism and conservatism is not a significant predictor of political behavior. Interestingly, there is a negative relationship between scores on the Political Behavior Index and position along the liberal/conservative continuum. However, the relationship is very small. This suggests that Blacks who are more conservative are less likely to participate. This may be related to the fact that Black voters are concentrated in political districts that are both racially and politically homogenous—meaning they are often predominantly Black and strongly Democratic. Hence, Black conservatives may feel alienated from the immediate political process and sense the futility of voting for candidates who represent their views but have no chance of gaining elective office.

The second hypothesis tested is that the predictive ability of the INI measure will be both significantly and positively related to political behavior. Inherent in integrationist tenets is the belief that demand can be made on the system which result in change and the full incorporation of Blacks into the political system. Thus, integrationists should be more engaged and politically active. The opposite should be true for Black nationalists. The results of this model are reported in the table below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.223</td>
<td>.044</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>.050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>.404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.133</td>
<td>.796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>-.249</td>
<td>.133</td>
<td>.061^b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrationist/Nationalist Ideology</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>.071</td>
<td>.198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linked Fate</td>
<td>-.122</td>
<td>.059</td>
<td>.040*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Poverty</td>
<td>-.009</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>.908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Black</td>
<td>-.003</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling Thermometer: Blacks</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling Thermometer: Whites</td>
<td>-.005</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Race of the Interviewer</td>
<td>-.172</td>
<td>.136</td>
<td>.209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Position of Blacks vs. Whites</td>
<td>-.005</td>
<td>.050</td>
<td>.348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will Blacks ever achieve full equality</td>
<td>-.002</td>
<td>.070</td>
<td>.750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Church Attendance</td>
<td>.216</td>
<td>.059</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-.008</td>
<td>.576</td>
<td>.883</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$Adjusted R^2 = .206$  
$N = 318$

Table 7.11: OLS Model of the Predictive Ability of the Integrationist-Nationalist Index on Positioning on Political Behavior Index. Significant variables are in bold type.  
** Indicates significance at $p < .01$ level. * Indicates significance at $p < .05$ level.  
^b indicates significance at $p < .10$ level.
The second hypothesis related to the predictive power of the Integrationist Nationalist Index is not confirmed. The INI measure is not statistically significant. The INI coefficient moves in the expected direction, which demonstrates that as individuals become more integrationist their level of political activity increases. This direction was expected because the ultimate goal of integrationists is to become fully incorporated and equally participating citizens in the American political and social system. However, Black nationalists might be less likely to engage in political activity. Like other ideologies tested here and elsewhere, measures of adherence to integrationism and Black nationalism fall well short of achieving statistical significance.

The fact that neither of these ideological constructs is significantly related to political behavior is contrary to the theory posited here, but it confirms a long line of research that demonstrates that most Americans do not think ideologically and, therefore, that ideology is not an important consideration for political behavior. As early as Converse (1964), scholars were saying that Americans do not think ideologically. Converse was speaking directly to liberalism and conservatism, but it also appears to apply to other ideological continuums such as the one of major interest to this project—integrationism and Black nationalism. Although Black opinion is laced with various tenets of both Integrationist and Black nationalist ideology, they are not using those tenets as primary tools to make political judgments. When asked directly, it is obvious that members of focus group struggle with these ideological constructs and with the ambivalence they feel towards the American government and their own community. In analysis of the NBES data, there was no way to ask these kinds of questions directly. So an indirect measure was created, and individual respondents were assigned an ideological
attachment based on their response to items used in the index. This measure forces individuals into ideological categories through indirect measurement. What is demonstrated is that African Americans are similar to others Americans in that they do not make connections between separate attitudes and broad ideological views. Thus, glimpses of individual components of these ideologies can be detected, but there is very little sense that these components are constrained in ways from coherent ideologies. This lack of constraint then renders this measure (at least not in its current formulation) unable to significantly move beyond association to actual prediction.

**Summary**

After extensive analysis related to both attitudes and behaviors, it has been found that integrationism and Black nationalism (as measured by the Integrationist-Nationalist Index) have a significant impact on both trust and efficacy. Integrationists prove to be more trusting of the government to work in ways that are beneficial to them and people with similar values. Additionally it seems that they also exhibit higher levels of political efficacy. Conversely, nationalists exhibit lower levels of political efficacy and less trust in the federal government. On the surface, it would appear that nationalists should then be less prone to political participation. What may be demonstrated here is the outward rejection of American politics or, less extreme, disinterest on the part of those respondents who believe that the interests of African Americans are not at the heart of American political institutions or its elected representatives.

Another important finding is that nationalists are more likely to endorse the formation of an all Black third party. It has been shown here and elsewhere (Brown and
Shaw 2002; Dawson 2001) that Black Americans do not endorse complete withdrawal from the political system. However, moderate levels of withdrawal seem acceptable, even preferable, to complete racial integration. By separating from the two main parties without separating entirely from the system, Blacks are able to wield independent advantage in the form of separate negotiating and vote giving power from either party. Some of the members of the focus groups, rejected full separation simply because it seemed to lack viability. A third party might provide a more politically and socially comfortable distance. Additionally Tate (1993) has demonstrated that African Americans were reporting increased alienation from the Democratic Party because of perceived unfair treatment of Jesse Jackson. In the absence of an alternative (and despite increased attempts to woo Blacks and other minorities), Blacks may see the formation of third party as politically smart and necessary.
CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

No one can refute the fact that Blacks have spent their tenure in America on the receiving end of many of its pathologies and hostile policies. To be sure, African Americans are not the only ones; at various points in history there have been other aggrieved groups. This project began by arguing that the political result of this contentious relationship has been that Blacks use assessment tools other than traditional liberal and conservative beliefs to make their assessments of the political world in the United States. Working in the shadow of Phillip Converse and other public opinion scholars, the goal was to determine if Blacks use another “judgmental yardstick” to make political decisions.

After reviewing the evidence from existing literature we know that Blacks array themselves across the liberal conservative spectrum but behave in ways that do not demonstrate a strong adherence to any beliefs on that political spectrum. Arguing that African Americans instead use their beliefs about their individual and community’s relationship to the larger American political and social system in the form of adherence to integrationism or Black nationalism, this project attempted to demonstrate the nature of this relationship.
The main finding has been that, similar to Converse’s assessment, participants are not openly offering ideological considerations in discussion about their political beliefs. Like the respondents in NES surveys Converse analyzed, rarely did focus group participants ever mention ideological labels, even “Black” ideologies, as the predominant factor informing their beliefs and judgments. Unlike Converse’s assertions, however, many of these participants are using integrationist and nationalist calculations more implicitly in their expressed political beliefs. When examining the structure of individual beliefs, we see that many of the focus group participants’ beliefs are constrained by beliefs related to this race-specific ideological spectrum. Also, factor analysis demonstrates in the larger sample that respondents who support individual items on the Integrationist-Nationalist Index combine to form one coherent belief. This index significantly impacts both levels of political efficacy and trust, as well as support for the formation of a Black third party. More comprehensive analysis, unfortunately, suggests that it is not a significant indicator of partisan strength, voting or political behavior. From this starting assertion several interesting findings emerge that add to the way we—as political scientists and Black politics scholars—understand African American opinion holding.

**Major Findings and Contributions**

First, the changing nature of linked fate is clearly demonstrated in this analysis. For much of its existence as an explanatory variable, linked fate has not been parsed out in an effort to understand how it is used by African Americans when making political decisions. Sniderman and Piazza (2002) have looked at four types of shared identity among Blacks—shared common fate, building Black pride, desire for economic
autonomy, and Afrocentrism. They suggest that lumping all of these identities together gives the false impression that increased support for a shared identity leads to anti-white, especially anti-Semitic, attitudes. Even they, however, focus solely on instances of positive linked fate; they do not address any negative associations with linked fate.

In the course of this analysis, it is repeatedly demonstrated that participants are using linked fate in various ways. There are some who use their connection to Blacks in the ways traditionally believed. These participants believe their fate is tied to that of other Blacks and as a result they make all their political judgments based on the best outcome for the group. Other participants, however, see linked fate in a very different light. For some, their connection to Blacks is overshadowed by other identifying characteristics such as class or social status. In their political analysis, race is important, but it sometimes receives a lower priority than class interests. Additionally, we also see that when asked about their responsibility to their community many define community in geographic terms rather than in terms of a broader community. In a third category, participants sought to distance themselves from externally imposed connection to other Blacks. For various reasons, they do not want to be evaluated by the same rubric as other Blacks whom they believe are plagued by rampant stereotypical assumptions and actual internal problems.

These findings demonstrate not only the ways in which linked fate is recognized by the opinion-holder, but also how it is expanded to account for other considerations. This is expressly laid out in the focus group discussion. Participants openly wrestle with their own evaluations of the Black community as well as perceived judgments by others. If their overall assessment of Blacks is negative then individuals distance themselves
from strong ties to the Black community or at the very least prioritize other identities over race. When that assessment is positive, then they express beliefs and opinions that incorporate the needs of the larger Black community into their individual opinions.

This has important implications for the ideologies of concern in this project. When shared identities other than race are emphasized, individuals are more likely to support integrationist assumptions. When race is the prevailing identity then individuals become more concerned with nationalist sentiments. The way in which shared identity is conceptualized is an important factor for ideological subscription but not the only factor. Those African Americans who saw themselves as other than or more than Black were less likely to endorse a race specific ideology like Black nationalism. Emphasis on specific cultural heritages such as Caribbean ancestry, shared values and moral codes, or even class distinctions serves to reduce the impact racial identity has on ideological support and increase the likelihood of support for integrationist efforts.

For instance, an inter-related factor is assessments (positive or negative) of African American responsibility for their own circumstance, which leads to a second finding of this project. One theme that arose often from discussion in the focus group is the constant tug-of-war between Black blame and system blame, and the resulting impact on ideological thinking. Many of the focus group participants utilized some form of system blame or Black blame. Black blame occurs when individuals attribute the continued negative social statistics associated with Blacks to the poor behavior and failures of Blacks themselves. Alternatively, some participants employed system blame by putting the larger share of the responsibility on the American political system and its actors who have instituted racist policies and procedures that intentionally hinder Black
progress. Nearly all participants engaged in some degree of Black blame. However, the most severe and frequent invocations of Black blame came from participants who were most supportive of integrationism. Additionally, those participants with a lower frequency of Black blame and a higher frequency of system blame were more likely to opt for withdrawal from the American political and social system. Although, much of the arguments surrounding race relations in America are characterized by these two dynamics, discussions of how these arguments work in ideological development have not really occurred in a systematic way.

This project represents the first attempt to study this phenomenon in a systematic way and proves to be a significant contribution of this project to Black politics literature. As a surrogate for Black and system blame in the 1996 NBES, raw feeling thermometer scores of both Blacks and whites were used. Black feeling thermometer scores fail to achieve significance in models of both ideological orientation and political behavior. However, the white feeling thermometer is consistently a significant predictor of both ideological adherence and the propensity for political participation. Negative affective evaluations of whites are clearly associated with support for nationalist views. I argue, with some evidence from the focus group analysis that this is because many nationalist supporters are equating mistreatment by America with mistreatment by whites, writ large.

At surface level these two findings seem to demonstrate that subscription to these ideologies is more reactionary or post-hoc than is actually the case. These findings do not suggest that integrationist African Americans feel less “Black” and that Black nationalists feel more “Black”. It is more complicated than that. What may be occurring is a question of what Sylvan and Voss (1998) has termed “problem representation”.

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Although they apply the notion to the area of foreign policy decision-making, the concept might be appropriate here as well. Sylvan and Voss argue that differences in behavioral and decision-making choices can often be attributed to the way in which different actors define problems. The same is the case here. Actors who place the problem with Black pathology are simply not going to question or seek to redress the system in any way except to reform those parts of the system that prevent Blacks from having fair and equal chances to succeed. Additionally, their connection to Blacks in terms of linked fate may be lessened (but not eliminated) if they see themselves as individuals who do not engage in poor decision-making. It is that individual outlook that in turn leads them to believe (with all things being equal) in the power of individuals to change their circumstance, which is another component of the integrationist endorsement of American democracy. However, actors who place the problem with system pathology are more likely to rid themselves of any allegiance to that system and seek alternative systems. Also that sense of “groupness” that undergirds their assertions leads to a stronger connection to other Blacks. It is possible that actors who define the problems in such ways will not end with the behavior or ideological attachments prescribed above, but there seems to be a great tendency toward this connection.

Third, in the quantitative analysis we see that it is very difficult to get strong coefficients for independent variables that significantly impact subscription to integrationism and Black nationalism. There are many significant relationships found in analysis of the contingency tables. Linked fate and religiosity continue to be important variables in the political and ideological outlook of Black Americans. Connections to other Blacks and the importance of religion in the lives of Black Americans have
consistently played an important role in Black politics. The African American church has served as the political training ground and movement headquarters for many historical efforts of Blacks to change their circumstances, and it has helped to reinforce feelings of connectivity and common interests that many Blacks feel toward their own racial group. Demographic variables are significant in the contingency tables but do not stand up as well when other predictors are included. Beyond its political importance, Christianity continues to be the predominant religion among African Americans. Freedom and the equality of mankind have been overriding themes within Black churches for ages. Thus, people who are stronger adherents to religion should also be stronger proponents of ideas that reify the universal and equal nature of man. This serves to reinforce popular support for integrationism.

Respondents’ attitudes towards whites and the relative economic positioning of Blacks versus whites are also significant determinants of ideology. Lower feeling thermometers scores for attitudes towards whites and beliefs that Blacks are economically worse off than whites translate into support for more nationalist sentiments. Additionally, once the project begins to examine attitudes towards trust in government and efficacy, an important factor becomes how much individuals believe that Blacks will ever achieve full equality. Those who believe that inequality in persistent and unchangeable also trust the government less and believe that they cannot make changes or influence elected officials.

**Making Stronger Measurements to Produce Stronger Results**

The strength of relationships in this analysis is often mitigated by our inability to construct a stronger measure of this ideology. The Integrationist-Nationalist Index is a
good first step in measuring this ideology, but the inclusion of more questions that measure individual components could have made it stronger. At this point I must offer several suggests for how this measure can be improved in the implementation of future surveys. First, it would be helpful if surveys directly asked respondents whether or not they thought Blacks should work towards full integration into the American political system or whether they thought Blacks should be more separate and community centered. Asking direct questions, if nothing else, establishes a baseline for the level of interests Black respondents have in efforts to integrate.

Second, it would also be helpful to know several things about the level of associations Black respondents have with whites. This might be one of the sources of integrationism or Black nationalism. It is important to know, for instance, the racial makeup of the everyday activities. Do these respondents choose to live and function in all Black or racially mixed setting? Do they feel like they have quality interactions with the whites around them—meaning in what ways do you interact with people of different races? Are they your friends, co-workers, family members, adversary, etc? Knowing the answers to these questions can be helpful in determining the underlying power dynamics of those relationships. If most of your interactions with whites are based on relationships in which you feel put upon, oppressed, or mistreated, then that will have a profound impact on how much you will want to associate with whites. In the end it will also impact your ideological and political outlook. Third, the inclusion of some open-ended questions would be extremely helpful in letting Blacks, themselves, think aloud about these important questions. It would also allow for a content analysis of answers for the further detection of systematic differences.
There is a clear need for a different kind of survey instrument to be used on Black respondents. In political science and social psychological analysis of white attitudes, there have been many innovations in the use of survey research. There have been consistent gains made in the ability to tap opinions that are subconsciously held or that respondents are unwilling to offer because of concerns about social desirability. One example, used with interesting and unique results by Sniderman and colleagues (1993, 1991) is the development of experiment-imbedded surveys.\textsuperscript{43} Employing the same approach would be helpful in my analysis for several reasons. It would facilitate a better understanding of the mechanisms underlying both linked fate and the decision to use Black or system blame. What is not known is which issues, policies, or frames trigger concentration on groups over individuals or Black blame over system blame. Using experiments in which we can control which respondents get what treatment and maintain a large N would be helpful in making broader generalizations about the way Blacks filter political judgments. Additionally, in relation to triggers, it would be helpful in assessing the nature of support for integration and separation. Is there a double standard in which Blacks want to be fully integrated with other races while maintaining their own institutional structures separate and apart from other races? If so, what are the conditions under which nationalism is most strongly supported and Black institutions and social spheres are considered off limits?

Knowing which prompts lead to which ideological assumptions are also very important given the finding in both the quantitative and qualitative portions of this project that most Blacks do not subscribe to extreme ideological viewpoints. Many Blacks

\textsuperscript{43} This was also utilized in their latest project with an all Black sample.
simply fall into middle range categories in which they only partially accept each ideology. This was suggested as one of the possibilities for why there are so few nationalists were found in the NBES portion of the analysis and for why this task would be made more difficult. Like many other Americans, this project finds that African Americans are leery of the government and often feel alienated from the political process. Additionally, they want to embrace more moderate positions rather than taking radical stances. This is demonstrated by the overwhelming support of the benefits and importance of voting as a political strategy even by those who hold nationalist views. This movement towards the middle makes it more difficult to get a full understanding of why certain kinds of movements and organizations develop radical separatist organizations like the Republic of New Afrika mentioned earlier in the text. But it does give scholars a better sense that if we want to understand the majority of Black Americans and their political opinions we should focus on this large group in the middle. Are there systematic differences between even those huddled in the center? Is the moderation due to the fact that there are a few common principles that most Blacks agree are too extreme a position to take? For instance, we know that very few Blacks are willing to support the formation of a separate nation (Dawson 2001). Is there a reason why some Blacks shy away from full support of integration into American society?

The ambivalence of Black Americans captured here is not that surprising. African Americans are Americans, they are socialized like all Americans to be “good citizens,” and have long standing ties to the nation. So integrationism is the most likely choice for individual ideology. The ambivalence emerges when Blacks perceive that
attempted integrationist efforts are thwarted or delayed by whites and become disappointed or disenchanted with the prospect of successful integration.

Like early African American political thinkers, assertions could be made here about what Blacks ought to do as proxies for answers gained through systematic research. It is easy to believe in the correctness of arguments made based on historical analysis or even observations of the current political climate. However, the goal of this project, from its initial stages, has been to move beyond theoretical writings and historical accounts by letting ordinary Blacks citizens answer these questions using their own words and opinions. It was successful in the sense that the opinions of ordinary citizens were analyzed. The findings did not always turn up in expected ways, but we are closer to answering these questions than when we started. Like most research projects, there are exponentially more questions of interest stemming from this project. By way of conclusion, I make suggests of what are the next steps in this analysis.

Next Steps

The first question emerging from this project is how notions of race and racial sensibilities are transmitted from generation to generation. In both the focus group and survey research there are intriguing differences in ideological opinions based on age. Generations that came of age under Jim Crow laws are being replaced by a new generation of African Americans who were raised in the era of multiculturalism and political correctness. This will and does have a profound impact on how young people view whites and the issue of race more broadly, but also on the political direction of Blacks as a group. Racial sensibilities that were passed down between previous generations are potentially not useful for navigating current racial climates. Thus, what
parents are telling (or not telling) their children is important in understanding how
African American understand race and the future of race relations. Listening to students who participated in this project talk about differences between their views and their parents was very informative. Watching parents listen to their children’s’ beliefs, sometimes for the first time, was even more fascinating. It is apparent that experiences matter for how individuals process thoughts about race, identify and define racism, and move forward. Clearly this needs to be more systematically studied to get a sense of the long-term effects of these new racial sensibilities on Black politics goals and agendas.

Whereas understanding racial sensibilities and the transmitted attitudes about race is important, this study found it difficult to assess this issue with current large scale data. Having already discussed above the kinds of questions that would be helpful on new instruments, a few comments should be made about the way in which focus groups facilitate this and other research projects. The most obvious contribution to the research process is the ability to have a Black moderator. In the NBES analysis, we see that the race of the person asking the questions is important. One would expect whites to be more reticent to talk about controversial topics such as race in front of or to a Black person. The same seems to be the case for Blacks. Many statements made by focus group participants were prefaced with conditions and wariness about expressing certain opinions. Having a Black moderator in place that is consistently encouraging individuals to move past those preambles seemed to be important. Clearly more experimentation could be done, to assess whether or not this is the case.

Focus groups are extended discussions that give individuals time to think out their beliefs, go back to and amend previous statements, connect various beliefs in ways
simply not possible in survey interviews. Hence the time factor cannot be overstated. Political scientists are aware the low priority placed on politics and thoughts about politics in the everyday lives of most citizens. So for many participants in political studies, this represents the first time that they are making conscious efforts to think through their beliefs. To get to honest opinions, it takes time and perhaps some prompting. Focus groups allow for that.

Lastly, these focus groups proved to be important because it helped sort out the large group of opinion holders who simply fall into the neutral or moderate categories in the quantitative analysis. Many respondents fall in the middle because of real conflicting opinions which we are not fully able to sort out in the surveys. Listening to the discussions in the focus groups, one can gather a real sense of how that conflict is played out.

This project leads to many questions about socialization and its impact on ultimate political behavior. The “ordeal of integration” is important and so is getting a better understanding its impact on individuals. One area of research which might facilitate the better understanding the long term impact of integration is through studies of individual responses to busing. Busing of young Blacks from their home communities and schools to predominantly white schools has been strongly supported by both Civil Rights activists and the larger Black community. There have been popular movies made about the trials and triumphs of students who pioneered the integration effort through busing, but we know very little about the long term impact this has had on the attitudes of these students towards whites, other Blacks and politics. Did the busing process sever or lessen the ties that Blacks students had to their all Black communities? Or did the
hostilities associated with busing invoke anti-white sentiment and foster long term racial alienation? We don’t have a strong sense of the social impact of these policies on individuals. It is assumed that integration is a positive end, but was it positive for those young trailblazers who were in the trenches making it happen?

It is these kinds of questions, related to individual experience and socialization, which prove to be the most interesting next steps in this project. Race has been the most divisive issue in American politics and remains a key factor in deciding who gets elected, in how often you are stopped by the police, in whether you get the death penalty, in where and how you live and are educated and many other real world concerns. Knowing how race is experienced and processed by all racial groups becomes a central component to understanding and maintaining American democracy and the ability of groups to form policies and govern based on consensus. This project took up one small piece of that question by attempting to understand whether Black Americans use their own distinctive ideological yardstick in conceptualizing politics and forming opinions, but there are more questions to be asked and answered and more opinions of more groups to be studied.
APPENDIX A

FOCUS GROUP CHARACTERISTICS AND CONCLUDING SURVEY
There were a series of five focus groups. Each group was composed of six to eight adults who self-identified as Black or African American. Participants were recruited either by flyers distributed across the Columbus, Ohio area or by the hosts at a particular location. There were a total of thirty-two participants. Fourteen or seventy-five percent of them reported that they voted regularly. That sample was fifty six percent female. The largest income group (11 or thirty four percent) was between fifty and seventy five thousand dollars; the rest were evenly distributed across lower income groups. The ages range between nineteen and fifty five. Only two participants reported having absolutely no college experience at all. Below is a list of the places and dates of the sessions. Clearly these participants are more educated and wealthier than most Black Americans; however, steps were taken to make sure that there were diverse participants in the groups. Frequencies generated from the concluding questionnaire are reported in Appendix B to allow for more comparison between the NBES and the focus group samples.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>St. John Learning Center</td>
<td>8 Aug. 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>University Hall, Ohio State University</td>
<td>8 Aug. 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Natural Hair Salon/ Private Residence</td>
<td>16 Aug. 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Private Residence</td>
<td>19 Aug. 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Private Residence</td>
<td>20 Aug. 2002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants in the focus groups were asked questions to indirectly elicit individual feelings towards integrationism and Black nationalism. One of the drawbacks

44 In the case of private residences used for this research the owner’s names are not listed because they were participants as well as hosts.
of studying this issue in the NBES is that Blacks are not simply asked directly what they think. To begin to assess this, participants in the focus were asked whether they thought Blacks should separate or integrate into the American political system. Their responses are listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Integrate totally</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrate somewhat</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep same level of interaction</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separate somewhat</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separate totally</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table A.1: Do you think that Blacks should try to integrate into the American political system, try to separate totally from that system or keep the same level of interaction?

Additionally, participants were asked to fill out a survey at the conclusion of the discussion. Those questions are listed below.
SECTION ONE: Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability by circling your answer. Feel free to provide written comments about each question in the margin.

Which term do you prefer to use when referring to members of your racial group?  
1) Black  
2) African American  
3) Other, please specify____________________

Please rate yourself on the following scale:  
1) Strong Liberal  
2) Liberal  
3) Weak Liberal  
4) Moderate  
5) Weak Conservative  
6) Conservative  
7) Strong Conservative

Do you regularly vote? Why or why not?

Do you think voting is a good method for improving the status of Blacks? Why or why not?

How much of the time do you think that you can trust the government?  
1) Just about always  
2) Most of the time  
3) Only some of the time  
4) Very little of the time  
5) Never

About how many times a week do you attend a place of worship?___________

How would you characterize your religious affiliation?  
1) Baptist  
2) Catholic  
3) Pentecostal  
4) Seventh Day Adventists  
5) Non-denominational  
6) Muslim  
7) Anglican  
8) Episcopalian  
9) Other, Please specify___________  
10) Not Religious

How would you characterize your place of worship in relation to discussing political issues?  
1) Very political  
2) Somewhat political  
3) Not very political  
4) Not political at all

Will Blacks ever achieve full social and economic equality? Why or why not?  
Please put yourself in a category:  
1) Strong Republican  
2) Republican  
3) Weak Republican  
4) Independent  
5) Weak Democrat  
6) Democrat  
7) Strong Democrat

How much does what happens to other Blacks have to do with you?  

---

The questions used in Section Three of this survey are based on an established scale of African American acculturation. This measures “the extent to which ethnic-cultural minorities participate in the cultural traditions, values, beliefs, and practices of their own culture versus those of the dominant ‘White’ society.” Based on scores of this scale, respondents can range from traditional (or those more closely tied to the traditions etc. of their racial group) to acculturated (or those who are wedded to the dominant culture.) (Landrine and Klonoff 1996)
SECTION 2: FOR THE NEXT SECTION SIMPLY LIST BEFORE EACH STATEMENT WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING RESPONSES MOST APPLIES TO YOUR BELIEFS.

1) Strongly Agree  
2) Agree  
3) Neither Agree or Disagree  
4) Disagree  
5) Strongly Disagree

_____ Being Black determines how you are treated more than anything else.  
_____ In this country people are judged on their character more than their race  
_____ Black should work with other minorities to make political advancement.  
_____ Blacks should work with whites to make political advancement.  
_____ Black children should attend Afrocentric schools  
_____ Blacks should always vote for Black candidates when they run.  
_____ Black people should shop in Black owned stores if possible.  
_____ Blacks should have nothing to do with whites if they can help it.  
_____ Blacks would be better off if they were in a separate nation.  
_____ Blacks could survive without the help of whites.  
_____ Race is an important factor in how I view myself.  
_____ Race is an important factor in how I view others.

SECTION THREE: Please tell us how much you personally agree or disagree with the beliefs and attitudes listed below by placing the appropriate numbers on the line. There is no right or wrong answer. We want your honest opinion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I Totally Disagree</th>
<th>I Sort of Agree</th>
<th>I Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not True At All</td>
<td>Sort of True</td>
<td>Absolutely True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_____ One or more my relatives knows how to do hair.  
_____ When I was young my parent(s) sent me to stay with a relative (aunt, uncle, grandmother) for a few days, and then I went back home again.  
_____ When I was young, I shared a bed at night with my sister brother or some other relative.  
_____ When I was young, my cousin, aunt, grandmother or other relative lived with me and my family for a while.
When I was young, my mother or grandmother was the “real” head of the family.

When I was young I took a bath with my sister, brother, or other relative.

Old people are wise.

I often lend money or give other types of support to members of my family.

It’s better to try to move your whole family ahead in this world than it is to be out for only yourself.

A child should not be allowed to call a grown woman by her first name, “Alice.”

The child should be taught to call her “Miss Alice.”

It’s best for infants to sleep with their mothers.

Some members of my family play the numbers.

I know how to play bid whist.

Most of my friends are Black

I feel more comfortable around Blacks than around whites.

I listen to Black radio stations

I try to watch all Black shows on TV.

I read (or used to read) Essence magazine.

Most of the music I listen to is by Black artists.

I like Black music more than white music.

The person I most admire is Black.

When I pass a Black person (a stranger) on the street I always say hello or nod at them.

I read (or used to read) Jet magazine.

I usually add salt to my food to make it taste better.

I know how long you are supposed to cook collard greens.

I save grease from cooking to use it again later.

I know how to cook chitlins.

I eat grits once in a while

I eat a lot of fried foods

Sometimes I eat collard greens.

Sometimes I cook hamhocks.

People say I eat too much salt.

I eat chit’lins once in a while.

Most tests (like the SAT’s and tests to get a job) are set up to make sure that Blacks don’t get high scores on them.

Deep in their hearts most white people are racist.

IQ tests were set up purposefully to discriminate against Black people.

Whites don’t understand Blacks

Some members of my family hate or distrust white people.

I don’t trust most white people.

Most whites are afraid of Blacks.

There are many types of blood like “high,” “low,” “thin”, and “bad” blood.

I was taught that you shouldn’t take a bath and then go outside.

Illnesses can be classified as natural types and unnatural types.

I believe that some people know how to use voodoo.

Some people in my family use Epsom salts.

I know what “falling out” means.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not True At All</th>
<th>Sort of True</th>
<th>Absolutely True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some old Black women/ladies know how to cure diseases.

Some older Black women know a lot about pregnancy and childbirth

Prayer can cure disease.

I have seen people “fall out.”
If doctors can’t cure you, you should go to a root doctor or to your minister.
I have “fallen out.”
I believe in heaven and hell.
I like gospel music.
The church is the heart of the Black community.
I am currently a member of a Black church.
I have seen people “get the spirit” or speak in tongues.
I believe in the Holy Ghost.
I went to a mostly Black elementary school.
When I was young, I was a member of a Black church.
I grew up in a mostly Black neighborhood.
The biggest insult is an insult to your mother.
I went to a mostly Black high school.
Dancing was an important part of my childhood
I used to sing in the church choir.
When I was a child, I used to play tonk.
When I was young, I used to jump double-dutch.
I currently live in mostly Black neighborhood.
I used to like to watch Soul Train.
What goes around, comes around.
There’s some truth to many old superstitions.
I avoid splitting a pole.
When the palm your hand itches, you’ll receive some money.
I eat black-eyed peas on New Year’s Eve.

SECTION FOUR: PLEASE READ AND CIRCLE THE MOST APPROPRIATE ANSWER.

I subscribe or read a Black magazine or newspaper.
1) Yes, please specify______________
2) No

I listen to Black music
1) Yes, How often______________Types____________
2) No

I am a member of an organization to improve the status of Blacks.
1) Yes, specify______________
2) No

Ideally, I think that Blacks as a group should...
1) Integrate themselves totally into every aspect of American society
2) Integrate somewhat into American society
3) Keep the same level of interaction with American society
4) Separate themselves somewhat from American society
5) Separate totally from American society
Please explain your answer to the question above.

The following are for statistical purposes only:
Age____________
Marital Status____________
Highest level of education
1) Grade school 2) High school, No diploma
3) High school diploma 4) Some college no degree
5) Associates/ 2yr degree  
6) Bachelors/4 yr degree  
7) Some graduate school  
8) Masters Degree  
9) Doctorate or Law Degree  

**Household Income**  
1) Up to $10,000  
2) $10,000 to 19,999  
3) $20,000 to 29,999  
4) $30,000 to 39,999  
5) $40,000 to 49,999  
6) $50,000 to 74,999  
7) $75,000 to 89,999  
8) $90,000 and more  

**Gender**  
1) Male  
2) Female  

NAME_____________________________
APPENDIX B

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS
The survey data used in this paper come from the 1996 National Black Election Study conducted by Katherine Tate. The sample was composed of 1,216 Black respondents in the pre-election survey and 854 respondents in the post-election survey who were all randomly selected using Random Digit Dialing. For this project, I used questions from both the pre-election and post-election survey, so the N hovers around eight hundred for each question. As expected in any survey of African Americans, the respondents were overwhelmingly Democratic. Additionally, they were also mostly middle and working class.

This appendix includes questions, frequency tables and other descriptive statistics for items included in the text. All statistics generated using data from the 1996 National Black Election Study and the Concluding Survey from the focus group sessions.
### Integrationist-Nationalist Index Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NBES</th>
<th>Focus Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
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<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>51.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table B.1: Afrocentric Schools. Blacks should attend Afrocentric schools. (Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree?)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NBES</th>
<th>Focus Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>5.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>38.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>41.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table B.2: Black Candidates Support. Blacks should always vote for Black candidates when they run. (Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree?)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NBES</th>
<th>Focus Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>48.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table B.3: Shopping in Black-owned Stores. Blacks should always shop in Black owned stores whenever possible. (Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree?)
Table B.4: Blacks Having No Association with Whites. Blacks should not have anything to do with whites if they can help it. (Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree?)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NBES</th>
<th>Focus Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>35.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>65.7</td>
<td>48.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table B.5: Age Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Groupings</th>
<th>NBES</th>
<th>Focus Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>37.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 64</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table B.6: Gender Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NBES</th>
<th>Focus Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>37.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>62.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table B.7: Liberal Conservative Ideology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideological Category</th>
<th>NBES</th>
<th>Focus Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong Liberal</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>37.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderates</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>48.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Conservative</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table B.8: Income Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>NBES</th>
<th>Focus Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 10,000</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000-29,999</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30,000-49,999</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50,000 or more</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>42.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table B.9: Education Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Categories</th>
<th>NBES</th>
<th>Focus Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade School or Some High School</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College or Associates Degree</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>58.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelors Degree</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than Bachelors</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table B.10: Perceived Race of the Interviewer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>NBES</th>
<th>Focus Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two or More times a Week [Volunteered]</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every Week</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almost Every Week</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once or Twice a Month</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Few Times a Year</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table B.11: Church Attendance. Would you say you go to church or place of worship every week, almost every week, once or twice a month, a few times a year or never?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>NBES</th>
<th>Focus Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>43.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depends</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table B.12: Possibility of Full Equality. Will Blacks in this country ever achieve full social and economic equality?

---

46 Not applicable to focus groups. All of the group discussions were led by this author who is Black.

47 The middle range response for the focus group survey was “unsure” rather than “depends.”
Table B.13: Relative Economic Position of Blacks versus whites. On the whole, would you say that the economic position of Blacks is better, about the same, or worse than whites?48

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>NBES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Better</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About the Same</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worse</td>
<td>57.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table B.14: Common Fate. “What happens to Blacks in this country has a lot to do with what happens to me.” (Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree?)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Focus Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>42.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
<td>28.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Disagree</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table B.15: Think About Being Black. “Would you say you think about being Black a lot, fairly often, once in a while, or hardly ever?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hardly ever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once in a while</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairly often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A lot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

48 This question was not asked of the focus group participants.
**Political Behavior Introduction:** Now, I’m going to read a list of things people have done to protest something they felt needed to be changed in the nation, their neighborhood, schools or communities. Please tell me if you have done any of the following in the last five years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>64.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>35.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table B.16: Contacted a public official or agency?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>47.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>52.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table B.17: Signed a petition in support of something or against something?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>81.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table B.18: Attended a protest meeting or demonstration?
Table B.19: Picketed, taken part in a sit-in or boycotted a business or government agency?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>88.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table B.20: Political Church Attendance. Aggregate measure of political churches based on the following questions:

1) **Do you think churches or places of worship should be involved in political matters?**

2) **Have you heard any announcements or talks about the presidential campaign at your church or place of worship so far this year?**

3) **Has your church or place of worship encouraged members to vote in this election?**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only Some of the Time</td>
<td>71.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most of the time</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just about always</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table B.21: Political Trust. How much of the time do you think you can trust the government to do what is right? (Just about always, most of the time, only some of the time, or never)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
<td>29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Disagree</td>
<td>29.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table B.22: Political Responsiveness. “Public officials don’t care what people like me think?” (Do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree?)
Table B.23: Personal Influence. People like me don’t have a say about what the
government does? (Do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or
strongly disagree?)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
<td>22.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Disagree</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table B.24: Voting. “Did you vote in the recent presidential election?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>76.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table B.25: Support for a Black Third Party. “Do you think that Blacks should form
their own third party?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>66.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>33.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table B.26: Opinion on Government Effort Scale. “Some people feel the government in Washington should make every effort to improve the social and economic position of Blacks. Suppose these people are at one end of the scale, at point 1. Others feel that the government should not make any special effort to help Blacks because they should help themselves. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. (And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between at points, 2,3,4,5, or 6.) Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven’t you thought much about this?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gov’t should make effort to improve position of Blacks</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacks should help themselves</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table B.27: Integration Justifies Busing. “The racial integration of schools is so important that it justifies busing school children to schools outside of their neighborhood.” (Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree?)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>27.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
<td>28.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Disagree</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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