

**“It’s a terrorist organization” versus “A much needed movement”:**

**Exploring Predictors of Support and Opposition toward the Black Lives Matter Movement**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to examine the predictors of support of and opposition toward the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement. Relevant literature suggests numerous variables that may predict attitudes toward BLM, including: attitudes toward collective action participation, perceptions of the BLM movement as normative and nonnormative, attitudes toward the criminal justice system, endorsement of punitiveness beliefs, symbolic racism, and political ideology. I hypothesized that greater anger about police shootings of Black men, greater identification with BLM activists, greater perceptions of positive efficacy, perceptions that BLM protests are normative, perceptions of the criminal justice system as unfair, low symbolic racism, and greater political liberalism would all correlate with more support for the BLM movement. Additionally, lower anger about police shootings of Black men, less identification with BLM activists, greater perceptions of negative efficacy, greater perceptions of BLM protests as non-normative, perceptions that the criminal justice system is fair, preferences for greater punitiveness, greater symbolic racism, and greater conservatism would all correlate with more opposition toward the BLM movement. Furthermore, I hypothesized that symbolic racism would be a strong predictor of opposition toward the BLM movement. Participants (N=200) answered an online questionnaire measuring all of the aforementioned variables. Results indicated that all variables are correlated with one another and – moreover – predicted BLM opposition and BLM support. Furthermore, negative efficacy was the greatest predictor of opposition to the BLM movement, followed by symbolic racism and political orientation. Conversely, identity was the greatest predictor of support of the BLM movement, followed by positive efficacy, negative efficacy, punitiveness, anger, and White privilege.

**“It’s a terrorist organization” versus “A much needed movement”:****Exploring Predictors of Support and Opposition toward the Black Lives Matter Movement**

In the spring of 2020, the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement reignited after three high profile killings of Black people by law enforcement. Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd were murdered by police officers between February and May (Goldmacher, 2020). In the wake of their deaths, people mobilized to protest police brutality in numbers previously unseen, both in the United States and abroad (Buchanan et al., 2020). Most of these protests were peaceful whereas a small number evolved into riots, with law enforcement officials at times raising tensions (ACLED, 2021). Thousands of people were arrested in various states across the U.S. and were put in jail (Chan, 2020).

This massive social movement raised many questions such as what factors shaped people’s beliefs about the BLM Movement – including their support of or opposition toward the movement. This study investigated the factors that predict individuals’ attitudes toward the Black Lives Matter movement by assessing people’s collective action attitudes, criminal justice attitudes, attitudes about race and racism, political ideology, and other predictors. The study sought to answer the question of whether a person’s collective action attitudes, racial attitudes, and/or political ideology predict their attitudes toward the Black Lives Matter movement.

**The Black Lives Matter Movement**

The Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement focuses on many facets of inequality and poor treatment of Black people in the United States including but not limited to police brutality. BLM also focuses on discrepancies in health care, education, and politics (Ilchi & Frank, 2020). The BLM movement was founded in 2012 after George Zimmerman, a neighborhood watch officer, killed Trayvon Martin, an unarmed 17-year-old Black youth (Leach & Allen, 2017). The BLM

movement became especially visible in the spring and summer of 2020 with the murders of Ahmaud Arbery in Brunswick, Georgia, Breonna Taylor in Louisville, Kentucky, and George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Although the officer who killed Breonna Taylor was not charged in court, the officers who murdered Ahmaud Arbery (*State of Georgia v. Travis McMichael, Greg McMichael, and William R. Bryan*, 2021) and the officer who murdered George Floyd (*State of Minnesota v. Derek Michael Chauvin*, 2021) were found guilty. These killings led to collective action regarding police brutality and the policing system as a whole (Leach & Allen, 2017).

The prevalence of social media and the ability to spread information and videos quickly has been an important factor in the BLM movement. Videos of police officers killing unarmed Black people have frequently gone viral. This leads to greater awareness of the incident, so instead of one city protesting a specific incident, the entire country as well as people in other parts of the world respond to the situation (Buchanan et al., 2020). With each incident of police brutality that gains widespread attention, the public call for police reform reignites.

Protest movements such as BLM lay out an important agenda for social science researchers – researchers strive to understand the motivations and predictors of people’s reactions toward collective action movements in general and the BLM movement in particular. Examining predictors such as attitudes toward collective action, attitudes toward the criminal justice system, racism, and political orientation will help us understand how and why people reacted –and continued to react – so strongly to collective action movements such as BLM.

### **Collective Action**

Collective action is generally defined as actions taken by group members with the goal of improving conditions for the group as a whole. Typically collective action is focused on

enacting change regarding a collective disadvantage. (van Zomeren et al., 2012). Examples of collective action range from a peaceful march, like the Women's March in January of 2017 after the inauguration of Donald Trump, to riots, such as the Ferguson riots in August of 2014 after the murder of Michael Brown. Broadly speaking, there are two types of collective action: normative and nonnormative. Normative collective action is nonviolent efforts to spread a message, raise awareness, and make change such as a peaceful march or protest. Nonnormative collective action is using violent or illegal tactics to bring awareness to the cause, such as rioting and looting (Sweetman et al., 2019). Actions taken during normative and non-normative collective action differ, and the motivations behind them can be very different. For example, someone who supports the cause but does not identify as a part of the group may be more likely to participate in normative collective action than non-normative collective action because the risk to one's safety is much lower (see Morgan & Chan, 2016).

Theoretical understandings behind what drives a person's motivation to participate in collective action have changed and developed throughout time. Originally, the individual economist approach to collective action focused on basic cost-benefit analysis where people would weigh the costs of participating in the action against the potential benefits of participating (Olson, 1968). Another theory incorporated insights from the social identity perspective, where people view the world in subjective groups that they either do or do not belong to in some way (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Other theorists have focused on group efficacy beliefs: a group problem can be solved through a group effort (Bandura, 1997). Theorists noted that earlier theories of collective action failed to incorporate several important factors such as efficacy when explaining why people partake in collective action. Modern collective action theories integrate older theories to generate a more well-rounded and encompassing explanation of collective action

participation. Partially, collective action is fueled by social comparisons. When members of one group feel deprived, unfairly treated, dissatisfied, angry, or any other negative emotion, it becomes the fuel behind collective action (Smith & Ortiz, 2002). The leading contemporary collective action theory integrates all of these factors and is known as the Social Identity Model of Collective Action (SIMCA; van Zomeren et al., 2008). According to the model, the combination of anger, efficacy, and identity predict collective action participation. SIMCA is the most integrative explanation of the predictors of collective action. People's (a) anger and subjective sense of injustice (how wrong they find the collective disadvantage), (b) efficacy (how successful they believe the collective action could be in solving the issue) and (c) identity (how much they believe they belong to the group engaging in collective action) are strong predictors of collective action participation (van Zomeren et al., 2008).

Social scientists have learned much about the factors that shape people's own willingness to join in collective action movements (van Zomeren et al., 2012). We know much less, however, about people's attitudes regarding other people's decisions to engage in both normative and non-normative collective action – both in general and in the specific context of the Black Lives Matter movement.

SIMCA suggests several factors that may shape people's attitudes toward other people who participate in BLM collective action (van Zomeren, 2008). One predictor of a person's attitude could be whether or not they themselves feel anger about BLM issues, such as police brutality. Likewise, an individual's identification with BLM protestors could also shape their attitude toward BLM collective action. Finally, whether or not an individual believes that BLM protests can make a difference and enact change may influence their attitude. This study will shift the focus – not to examine whether each of these potential influences predict people's own

likelihood of engaging in collective action – but to investigate whether these factors shape people’s support or opposition toward others’ participation in BLM.

### **Attitudes toward the Criminal Justice System**

Collective action research alone does not capture essential features of the context related to the BLM Movement. Racial attitudes and attitudes toward the criminal justice system are also likely to be important factors in the context of BLM. The United States has a severely biased criminal justice system that favors White people and disproportionately imprisons Black people (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2019). Police shootings are one example of this racial bias; although Black people make up only 14% of the U.S. population, 28% of fatal police shootings between 2013 and 2018 involved a Black victim (Johnson et al., 2019). In fact, the ratio of fatal police shootings of Black people to fatal police shootings of White people is 3:1 (Mesic et al., 2018). This systemic racism can also be seen in the punishment given to convicted criminals. Assaultants in crimes against White people are punished more severely than assaultants in crimes against Black people. A criminal who murders a White person is more likely to be executed than a criminal who murders a Black person (Keil & Vito, 1995). These disparities are reflected in people’s attitudes toward the criminal justice system. Hurwitz and Peffley (2010) examined the perceptions that individuals have about the U.S. criminal justice system and found that, on average, white people have more positive attitudes and believe the system is non racist. Conversely, on average, Black people had more negative attitudes toward the criminal justice system and perceived it as biased and racist.

Racial disparities are also apparent in the prison system. From 1980 to the early 2000s the U.S. prison population more than quadrupled (Franklin & Pratt, 2006) and the trend has only continued. Furthermore, Black men are incarcerated at disproportionate rates that have

consistently grown (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2019). Due to the growing number of imprisoned people, prison crowding has become an issue (Vose et al., 2020). This crowding persists despite the general public's support for strategies to reduce prison crowding including community corrections programs and incentive good time programs (Skovron et al., 1987). Moreover, crowding has become especially perilous during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021 (Vose et al., 2020). Due to the systemically racist nature of the criminal justice system and the disproportionate percentage of Black men that are imprisoned, Black men therefore experience prison crowding at far higher rates, which can lead to sickness and death especially in the context of COVID-19 (Vose et al., 2020).

It is likely that criminal justice attitudes and attitudes about punishment may be linked to views of the BLM movement. There are two general justifications for using punishment: utilitarian and retributive. Utilitarian approaches within the context of the criminal justice system focus on deterrence and rehabilitation whereas retributive approaches emphasize punitive consequences. Although people generally claim to prefer deterrence, individual sentencing decisions are driven by retribution (Carlsmith et al., 2002). In recent years, the public has voiced support for preventative and rehabilitative approaches to lowering crime, which would decelerate the growth of prison crowding, as well as some support for reducing prison sentences (Sundt et al., 2015). These attitudes may be influenced by people's experiences with incarceration, the criminal justice system as a whole, and race. People who believe in harsh punishments may have limited experience with the criminal justice system and incarceration and therefore believe harsher punishments are more effective.

In examining criminal justice attitudes, two potentially important factors are the impact of previous exposure to incarceration and – given substantial disparities in criminal justice



outcomes – race. Whether a person has been incarcerated or has known someone who was incarcerated plays a role in their opinions of prison policy (Rose & Clear, 2004). Because incarceration disproportionately affects Black people (Page & Whetstone, 2014), race also plays a major role in support of or opposition to prison reform. In a similar vein, previous studies have shown that BLM protests are more common in cities where police more frequently killed Black people (Williamson et al., 2018). Attitudes toward police vary widely throughout the country, with only about 50% of Black people versus about 80% of White people agreeing that their local police do a good job combating crime. This disparity grows when it comes to people's agreement or disagreement that local police do a good job using appropriate force and treating all racial and ethnic minorities equally: only about 33% of Black people agree compared to about 75% of White people (Morin & Stepler, 2016).

In light of substantial research on racial disparities in the criminal justice system, this study will focus on people's criminal justice attitudes (including attitudes about police) and people's beliefs that the criminal justice system should be focused on punitiveness as potential predictors of support and opposition toward the BLM movement.

### **Racism**

The BLM movement is an explicitly anti-racist movement. It therefore seems plausible that people's own level of racism impacts their views of the BLM movement. There are two types of racism relevant to research, the first of which is termed old-fashioned racism and the other termed symbolic racism. Old fashioned racism includes three components: the desire for social distance between races, belief that Black people are biologically inferior, and support of policies that ensure racial segregation and formalized discrimination (ctd. in Tesler 2013).

Although old fashioned racism is still present, some have argued that it is now less prevalent and that it is also difficult to detect in survey research given social desirability biases.

Symbolic racism is a well-known example of contemporary racism that is comparatively subtle and covert. Symbolic racism is a syndrome of beliefs including beliefs that (a) racial discrimination is no longer a serious obstacle to Black people's prospects of a good life, (b) Black people's continued disadvantages are due to their own unwillingness to take responsibility for their lives, and (c) Black people's anger about how they are treated and the special attention given to them, such as affirmative action, are not justified (Henry & Sears, 2002). According to Kite and Whitley (2016), there are six underlying factors that contribute to symbolic racism. The first is anti-Black affect and negative stereotypes, essentially a belief that Black people are dangerous or criminal. The second underlying factor is a racialized belief in traditional values, or believing that Black people do not conform to traditional American values such as hard work, individuality, and self-restraint and instead ask for government handouts and act impulsively. The next factor that contributes to symbolic racism is a belief in equality of opportunity, abstractly believing in equality but finding programs such as affirmative action unnecessary and unfair to white people. The fourth underlying factor is low belief in equality of outcome, not believing that people should end up in comparably good situations. The next factor is group self-interest, with white people wanting to further themselves and people like them before people unlike them. The final underlying factor that contributes to symbolic racism is a low knowledge of Black people, that is, very little personal experience with Black people (Kite & Whitley, 2016).

This study will focus primarily upon symbolic racism rather than old fashioned racism as a predictor of BLM beliefs, due to the potential for people to lie about their overtly racist beliefs

because of social desirability pressures. In response to the BLM movement's attempt to eradicate symbolic racism, there are likely people high in symbolic racism who feel negatively toward the movement. In fact, I contend that opposition to BLM may be a modern-day expression of symbolic racism. I suggest that negative feelings and comments around the movement could be a sort of cover for people to disguise their actual racist beliefs. This may be particularly relevant when opposers discuss and condemn non-normative expressions of the movement as they can hide their adverse feelings toward Black people behind a dislike for the actions that occurred during some protests. This study will therefore focus on symbolic racism as a predictor of BLM beliefs.

### **Political Ideology**

Another possible predictor of BLM beliefs is political ideology. At the most basic level, political ideology is a "set of beliefs about the proper order of society and how it can be achieved" (Erikson & Tedin, 2003). According to Stimson (2004), political ideology has two parts: symbolic and operational. Symbolic refers to more abstract ideas and thoughts, as well as identifying with one party or another, such as Democrat or Republican. On an operational level, political ideology also refers to more concrete decisions such as positions on issues and identification as a liberal or conservative. One's political ideology and affiliation can influence one's ideas and opinions on many issues, potentially including the BLM movement. Ilchi Omeed and Frank (2021) found a correlation, albeit weak, between conservative ideology and negative attitudes toward BLM. However, their study used a non-randomized sample of college students. The current student will investigate the relation between political ideology and BLM beliefs using a convenience sample of people across the U.S. that includes people of various ages.

### **Current Research**

In light of the collective action following the murders of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and Ahmaud Arbery, studying predictors of people's attitudes toward the BLM movement has become increasingly important. Additionally, looking at variables such as collective action attitudes, criminal justice attitudes, racism, and political ideology at the same time may provide important information leading to a greater understanding of the general public and how they make decisions morally, politically, etc.

I hypothesize that greater anger about police shooting of Black men, more identification with BLM activists, greater perceptions of positive efficacy (that the BLM movement could change things for the better), perceptions that BLM protests are normative, perceptions of the criminal justice system as unfair, low symbolic racism, and greater political liberalism will all correlate with more support for the BLM movement. I also hypothesize that lower anger about police shootings of Black men, less identification with BLM activists, greater perceptions of negative efficacy (that the BLM movement could change things for the worse), greater perceptions of BLM protests as non-normative, perceptions that criminal justice system is fair, preferences for greater punitiveness, greater symbolic racism, and greater conservatism will all predict more opposition toward the BLM movement. Finally, I predict that symbolic racism will be a strong predictor of attitudes toward the BLM movement – perhaps the predictor that explains the most variability in attitudes toward BLM – because opposition toward BLM movement may be a form of veiled racism, that is, itself an example of symbolic racism.

## Methods

### Participants

I recruited 247 participants through Amazon Mechanical Turk (mTurk), a service where participants are compensated for each questionnaire they complete. Participants were compensated \$1 for completing the survey. All participants were at least 18 years of age. Of the 247 participants that completed the survey, I excluded any participants who failed at least one attention check ( $n=29$ ), any participants who copied and pasted internet definitions as responses to open-ended questions ( $n=5$ ), any participants who gave nonsense responses for open-ended questions (e.g. “really good product”) ( $n=3$ ), any participants who gave no response for open ended responses ( $n=1$ ), and any participants who had suspicious open responses ( $n=7$ ), which resulted in 200 participants for analyses.

The final sample ranged in age from 22 to 72 ( $M = 41.53$ ,  $SD = 12.00$ ), and included 103 (51.5%) males, 93 (46.5%) females, 2 (1%) people who identified as non-binary, and 2 (1%) people who declined to answer. In the final sample, 108 (54%) participants identified as Democrat, 43 (21.5%) participants identified as Republican, and 49 (24.5%) participants identified as neither. Thirteen (6.5%) participants identified as Black or African American, 156 (78%) participants identified as White, 15 (7.5%) participants identified as Asian, 1 (.5%) participant identified as American Indian or Alaska Native, 2 (1%) participants identified as Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, 9 (4.5%) participants identified their racial group as “Other”, 3 (1.5%) participants preferred not to say their racial group, and 1 (.5%) participant declined to answer. Fifteen (7.5%) participants identified as Hispanic, Latino, or of Spanish origin, 184 (92%) participants did not, and 1 (.5%) participant preferred not to say.

## Procedures

Participants completed a questionnaire that assessed a number of variables including their support of and opposition toward the BLM movement; anger, identity, and efficacy regarding the BLM movement; perceptions that BLM was normative or nonnormative; criminal justice attitudes; symbolic racism; and political orientation.

## Measures

**BLM Attitudes.** Participants answered multiple questions regarding their attitudes toward the BLM movement, such as “Do you support or oppose the Black Lives Matter Movement?” where participants could choose *Support*, *Oppose*, or *Neither*. If they responded with *Support* or *Oppose*, they were asked how strong that support or opposition is. Participants’ responses were coded as two variables. The first variable reflected participants’ support for the BLM movement, and ranged from 0 (those who indicated neither on the initial position question) to 3 (those who indicated they strongly supported BLM on the follow-up question). The second variable reflected participants’ opposition to the BLM movement, and ranged from 0 (those who indicated neither on the initial position question) to 3 (those who indicated they strongly opposed BLM on the follow-up question).<sup>1</sup> As a check to ensure participants were actively engaged in the questionnaire, they also wrote a few sentences to describe their attitude toward the BLM movement.

**Anger, Identity, and Efficacy.** One question measured participants’ anger regarding the BLM movement: “Think about the issues and events that have led to the Black Lives Matter movement protests (for example, police shootings of Black people). How angry do you feel

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<sup>1</sup> Participants also responded to numerous questions to assess the importance and moral conviction of their BLM positions. Because those items were not the focus of analyses, we do not focus on them here. See Appendix B for their text.

when you think about these issues and events?" The potential responses were: *Not at all angry*, *A little angry*, *Somewhat angry*, *Moderately angry*, or *Very angry*. To measure identification, participants responded to the following prompt: "In the pictures below, the circle labeled 'self' represents you, and the circle labeled 'other' represents BLM movement activists. Please choose the picture below that best describes your relationship with the BLM movement activists, where the more overlapping the circles are, the closer the relationship." Potential responses were seven different pictures of circles, each representing a level of overlap between the participant and BLM activists. Ten items measured perceived efficacy of the BLM movement, with the stem "How much do you feel that the Black Lives Matter protests could" and the following items: "send a positive message to others?", "send a negative message to others?", "make a positive difference?", "make a negative difference?", "change the situation in a positive way?", "change the situation in a negative way?", "have a positive impact?", "have a negative impact?", "influence events in the country for the better?", and "influence events in the country for the negative?" Participants responded with one of the following: *Not at all*, *Slightly*, *Moderately*, *Much*, or *Very much*. The items were then coded into two scales: positive efficacy (Cronbach's alpha = .98) and negative efficacy (Cronbach's alpha = .98).

**Perceptions of BLM as Normative and Nonnormative Collective Action.** Participants answered two questions measuring their perception of the BLM movement as normative and non-normative. The first question was, "When considering the BLM protests of the past few years, what percentage of the protests do you believe were peaceful, non-violent, etc. protests?" and the second was, "When considering BLM protests of the past few years, what percentage of

the protests do you believe were non-peaceful and included vandalism, looting, rioting, etc.?” Participants answered on a scale between 0% and 100%.<sup>2</sup>

**Perceptions of the Criminal Justice System as Fair/Unfair.** Participants indicated their agreement or disagreement with five statements that assessed their perceptions of the criminal justice system as being fair or unfair. The statements were as follows, “The justice system in this country treats people fairly and equally.” “The court system can usually be trusted to give everyone a fair trial.” “In general, I am confident in the police.” “The police regularly commit acts of misconduct (for example, excessive force, verbal abuse, corruption)?” and “I regularly hear or read about incidents of police misconduct (for example, excessive force, verbal abuse, corruption)?” (Cronbach’s alpha = .92). Participants answered the first two items on a 7-point Likert-scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. They then answered the final three items on a 5-point Likert-scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

**Punitiveness Ideology.** Participants indicated their agreement or disagreement with ten statements to measure their attitudes and beliefs about punitiveness and punishment within the criminal justice system. The items were “Crime has increased because society has become too permissive”, “Stiffer jail sentences are needed to show criminals that crime does not pay, and to make sure that they do not go into crime again”, “We should hire a lot more police and give them the power to catch criminals”, “If we really cared about crime victims, we would make sure that criminals were caught and given harsh punishments”, “We should stop viewing criminals as

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<sup>2</sup> Additionally, participants were asked to answer many questions that focused on the appropriateness of various protest techniques, with the stem: “Activists may use a number of strategies as part of their protests. Think about each of the following strategies. To what extent do you think it is appropriate or inappropriate for Black Lives Matter activists to use each strategy below?” Some examples of the items that followed were: “sign a petition,” “contribute a small amount of money,” “distribute flyers or information about the BLM movement,” “attend a protest,” “organize a protest,” “resist arrest,” “riot,” and “block highways,” among others. These items were not the focus of analyses because no hypotheses concerned the perceived appropriateness of various behaviors.



victims of society who deserve our help, and start paying more attention to the victims of these criminals”, “Criminals these days have too many legal rights”, “Even if prisons cannot deter or rehabilitate criminals, long prison sentences are needed so that we can keep habitual and dangerous offenders off of our streets”, “Juveniles are treated too leniently by our court system”, “Punishing criminals more harshly would reduce crime by setting an example and showing others in society that crime does not pay.” Participants responded on a 7-point Likert-scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Participants’ answers were averaged to get an overall punitiveness ideology scale (Cronbach’s alpha = .97) .

**White Privilege.** Participants indicated their agreement or disagreement with five items measuring their understanding and awareness of White privilege. The items were “White people have certain advantages that minorities do not have in this society”, “Status as a White person grants White people unearned privileges in today’s society”, “I feel that white skin in the United States opens many doors for White people during their everyday lives”, “I do not feel that White people have any benefits or privileges due to their race”, “Skin color is an asset to White people in everyday life.” The fourth item was reverse coded and then the items were averaged into a scale, with a higher score indicating a greater understanding and awareness of White privilege (Cronbach’s alpha = .98) .

**Symbolic Racism.** Participants responded to eight items that measured their level of symbolic racism. The items had slightly different response scales, with the first two items – “It’s really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if Black people would only try harder they could be just as well off as White people” and “Irish, Italian, Jewish, and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Black people should do the same” – having a 4-item response scale of *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. The third item – “Some

say that Black leaders have been trying to push too fast. Others feel that they haven't pushed fast enough. What do you think?" – had three possible responses: *Trying to push too fast*, *Going too slowly*, and *Moving at about the right speed*. The fourth item – "How much of the racial tension that exists in the United States today do you think Black people are responsible for creating?" – had four possible responses: *All of it*, *Most of it*, *Some of it*, and *None at all*. The fifth item – "How much discrimination against Black people do you feel there is in the United States today, limiting their chances to get ahead?" – had four possible responses: *A lot*, *Some*, *Just a little*, and *None at all*. The sixth, seventh, and eighth items – "Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for Black people to work their way out of the lower class.", "Over the past few years, Black people have gotten less than they deserve." and "Over the past few years, Black people have gotten more, economically, than they deserve." – also all had a 4-item response scale of *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. To create one symbolic racism score, I followed the instructions laid out by Henry and Sears (2002). Items 1, 2, 4, and 8 were recoded so that 1 = 4, 2 = 3, 3 = 2, and 4 = 1. Item 3 was recoded so that 1 = 3, 2 = 1, and 3 = 2. To compensate for the differences in the number of response alternatives, each of the items was recoded on a 0 to 1 scale. For item three, a 3 = 1, 1 = 0, and 2 = .50, and for the other items the high response is a 1, the next a .66, the next a .33, and the low response is a 0. Scores were then averaged together (Cronbach's alpha = .91).

## Results

### Intercorrelations Between Study Variables

To provide an initial test of the hypotheses that that greater anger about police shootings of Black men, more identification with BLM, perceptions of greater positive efficacy, perceptions of BLM as normative collective action, perceptions of the criminal justice system as

unfair, and greater liberalism would all predict more support of the BLM movement, I calculated bivariate correlations between study variables. Likewise, to initially test the hypotheses that perceptions of greater negative efficacy, perceptions of BLM as non-normative collective action, preferences for greater punitiveness, greater conservatism, and greater levels of symbolic racism would all predict more opposition toward the BLM movement, I calculated bivariate correlations between study variables. Descriptive statistics for and intercorrelations among study variables can all be found in Table 1. The bivariate correlations supported each of the hypotheses above.

### **Which Predictors Most Strongly Predicted Support and Opposition?**

To test which predictors were most important in predicting BLM beliefs – and the hypothesis that symbolic racism is a substantial if not the most important predictor of attitudes toward the BLM movement – I entered all predictors into two forward stepwise regressions. The first regression modeled predictors of opposition toward BLM and the second regression modeled predictors of support for BLM.

**BLM Opposition.** First, I entered anger toward police, identity with BLM, perceptions of positive efficacy, perceptions of negative efficacy, perceptions of normative BLM collective action, perceptions of non-normative BLM collective action, perception of fairness of the criminal justice system, attitudes toward punitiveness, White privilege, symbolic racism, and political orientation into a forward stepwise regression to predict BLM opposition. In each step, the variable was added that best improved the predictive value of the model, that is, that explained the most variability in opposition to BLM. Variables were no longer added when they did not significantly improve the model. As can be seen in Table 2, negative efficacy was the predictor added in step 1,  $F(1, 85) = 61.67, p < .001, \text{Adjusted } R^2 = .41$ . In step 2, symbolic racism was added to the model,  $F(2, 84) = 47.84, p < .001, \text{Adjusted } R^2 = .52, \text{change in } R^2 = .11, p <$

.001, and in step 3, political orientation was added to the model,  $F(3, 83) = 38.91, p < .001$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = .57$ , change in  $R^2 = .05, p = .002$ . No additional variables were added after Step 3. The first variable added, negative efficacy, also had the largest standardized regression coefficient,  $\beta = .44$ . In sum, the regression showed that negative efficacy, symbolic racism, and political orientation – but no other variables – were part of the model to predict opposition toward the BLM movement. People who believed that the BLM movement has negative effects on American society, had high levels of symbolic racism, and were more Republican were more opposed to the BLM movement.

**BLM Support.** To examine the strongest predictors of BLM support, I entered all predictors into another forward stepwise regression. Specifically, I entered anger toward police, identity with BLM, perceptions of positive efficacy, perceptions of negative efficacy, normative BLM collective action, non-normative BLM collective action, perception of fairness of the criminal justice system, attitudes toward punitiveness, White privilege, symbolic racism, and political orientation. Again, in each step, the variable was added that best improved the model and variables were no longer added when they did not significantly improve the model. As seen in Table 3, positive efficacy was the first variable added to the model,  $F(1, 148) = 135.24, p < .001$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = .47$ , change in  $R^2 = .48, p < .001$ . Identity with BLM was added in the second step,  $F(2, 147) = 102.59, p < .001$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = .58$ , change in  $R^2 = .11, p < .001$ . Punitiveness ideology was the variable added in the third step,  $F(3, 146) = 89.12, p < .001$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = .64$ , change in  $R^2 = .06, p < .001$ . White privilege was the variable added in the fourth step,  $F(4, 145) = 73.29, p < .001$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = .66$ , change in  $R^2 = .02, p = .002$ . Negative efficacy was the variable added in the fifth step,  $F(5, 144) = 62.43, p < .001$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = .67$ , change in  $R^2 = .02, p = .009$ . Finally, anger toward police was added in the sixth step,  $F(6, 143) = 55.18, p <$

.001, Adjusted  $R^2 = .69$ , change in  $R^2 = .01$ ,  $p = .011$ . No variables improved model fit after the sixth step. While the first variable added was positive efficacy, the variable with the largest standardized regression coefficient was identity,  $\beta = .32$ . In sum, this analysis showed that positive efficacy, identity, punitive ideology, awareness of White privilege, negative efficacy, and anger – but no other variables – were part of the model to predict support of the BLM movement. People who believed the BLM movement has positive effects on American society, identified more closely with BLM activists, had less punitive ideology, had greater awareness of White privilege, did not believe the BLM movement has negative effects on American society, and had greater levels of anger towards police were more supportive of the BLM movement.

### **Discussion**

These results demonstrate support for all of my hypotheses. Bivariate correlations indicated that greater anger about police shooting of Black men, more identification with BLM activists, greater perceptions of positive efficacy, greater perceptions that BLM protests are normative, perceptions of the criminal justice system as unfair, and greater liberalism each predicted more support for the BLM movement. Additionally, bivariate correlations indicated that greater perceptions of negative efficacy, greater perceptions of BLM protests as nonnormative, preferences for greater punitiveness, greater levels of symbolic racism, and greater conservatism each predicted more opposition toward the BLM movement. Finally, consistent with my final hypothesis, symbolic racism is a strong predictor of opposition toward the BLM movement – though it must be noted that symbolic racism is not the predictor that explains the most variability in opposition toward the BLM movement. Rather, the belief that the BLM movement has negative effects on American society explains the most variability in opposition toward the BLM movement, followed by symbolic racism and political ideology. It is

also noteworthy that low levels of symbolic racism did not remain in the model to predict support for BLM. Support for BLM was motivated by a different set of variables, including: positive efficacy, identity, punitiveness, White privilege, negative efficacy, and anger. Despite complexities, analyses largely supported my hypotheses regarding each of the individual predictors of BLM attitudes and regarding the importance of symbolic racism.

Although symbolic racism was not the single strongest predictor, analyses showed the power of symbolic racism in predicting BLM opposition. The higher a person's level of symbolic racism, the greater their opposition to the BLM movement. Of 11 predictors, symbolic racism was among only three that remained in the model to predict opposition to the movement. Examining the predictors of opposition toward the BLM movement suggests that BLM opposition may be a manifestation of antipathy toward BLM protestors in general, and racist beliefs in specific. BLM works toward equality, so the belief that BLM has a negative effect on American society is suggestive of symbolic racism (a possibility that is bolstered because perceptions that BLM is non-normative did not enter the model as a predictor of BLM opposition). Additionally, the finding that symbolic racism is the second strongest predictor further supports the possibility that BLM opposition may be a manifestation of racism.

One surprising finding of this study was the importance of efficacy in predicting both opposition and support toward the BLM movement. Efficacy was among the strongest predictors of people's attitudes toward the BLM movement, regardless of whether those attitudes were positive or negative. More specifically, the belief that the BLM movement has negative effects on American society was the strongest predictor of opposition toward the BLM movement – it was the first variable added in the stepwise regression and had the greatest standardized beta in the final model. Similarly, the belief that the BLM movement has positive effects on American

society was the first predictor added in stepwise regression and had the second largest standardized beta when predicting support for the BLM movement. These results show the power of efficacy and support previous theories such as Bandura's (1997) theory that group efficacy beliefs are central to solving group problems through a group effort.

Analyses also indicated the importance of identity in predicting support of the BLM movement. The more a person identified with the BLM movement, the greater their support of the BLM movement. In fact, identity was the strongest predictor of support based on its standardized beta, and was the second variable added in the stepwise regression. This finding is consistent with social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), which places people's group identities at the center of their psychological functioning, and also consistent with findings that people's criminal justice related beliefs are shaped by the degree to which they are directly and indirectly affected by the criminal justice system (Rose & Clear, 2004).

Taken together, these results support what SIMCA (van Zomeren et al., 2008) says about the motives underlying collective action: anger, identity, and efficacy beliefs predict people's willingness to engage in collective action themselves. These findings also build on this theory by examining people's responses to other people's collective action. Identification with the BLM movement, anger toward police brutality, and believing that protesting can have a positive effect each correlate with support of the BLM movement, and are also part of the regression model to predict support. This adds to the existing collective action literature, showing that these predictors not only shape how people feel about participating in collective action themselves, but also shape how people feel about other people's collective action participation.

Another somewhat surprising finding from this research is the relative non-importance of criminal justice attitudes. Given the centrality of the criminal justice system to the issues at the

heart of the BLM matter movement, one might expect that relevant attitudes would be strong predictors of BLM support and opposition. Although bivariate correlations showed that criminal justice factors shape how people feel about BLM when considered in isolation (as in Table 1), these attitudes were not included in the model to predict opposition to BLM. Furthermore, only one measure related to criminal justice beliefs – punitive ideology – was included in the model to predict BLM support. These results indicate that criminal justice factors are not a central predictor of attitudes toward the BLM movement when taken into consideration along with other factors. This could be for a number of reasons, particularly when considering that no criminal justice attitudes were predictors of opposition. Being that the criminal justice system is systemically racist and has foundations in racism, it may be that symbolic racism is the overarching theme that actually predicts opposition. Greater punitive ideology and perceptions of the criminal justice system as fair could potentially be born out of racist ideas without being explicitly racist, leading to the somewhat non-relevance of criminal justice attitudes in predicting attitudes toward the BLM movement.

It is also important to consider the relationship between political orientation and BLM attitudes. Political orientation is one of the three variables in the regression to predict BLM opposition. The more conservative a person, the greater their opposition toward the BLM movement. However, political ideology does not appear in the regression model to predict support of the BLM movement, indicating that greater liberalism is not a substantial predictor of BLM support. This might be due to conservatives viewing BLM activists as an outgroup due to American conservatism consisting largely of rural (Gimpel & Karnes, 2006) white people (Lichtman, 2008) and the BLM movement being a movement that takes place mostly in urban places (Buchanan et al., 2020), which is divisive. Meanwhile, political liberalism does not seem



to be a predictor of BLM support because other variables explain more meaningful variation in the motives that underlie BLM support.

One interesting implication of these findings is that support and opposition toward BLM (or toward other collective actions movements) may not be conceptual opposites. Although it was not tested in this study, it is possible that people may feel some degree of support and some degree of opposition toward BLM simultaneously. That is, people may feel ambivalence about the BLM movement. Furthermore, different predictors fuel support and opposition. For example, both support and opposition imply a certain degree of caring about the topic, that is, support implies caring that BLM succeeds and opposition implies caring that BLM is stopped. Support and opposition may not be conceptual opposites, although people who strongly support the movement may feel that they are opposite from people who strongly oppose the movement and vice versa. For many people, however, BLM attitudes may be a mix of support and opposition. The conceptual opposite of support and opposition may be apathy: a complete lack of care about what happens with the BLM movement. This idea that someone does not care about the movement one way or the other was measured to an extent in this study, however it was included as the low end of the support and opposition scores. This study did not look at apathy as a completely separate variable – to examine what motivates apathy toward the BLM movement. Examining the variables that motivate apathy could lead to potentially interesting findings and relationships, especially regarding criminal justice attitudes and symbolic racism.

Taken together, one takeaway from this research is that different sets of predictors matter when considering support of and opposition toward the BLM movement. When it comes to support for BLM, identity, positive efficacy, negative efficacy, punitive ideology, anger, and White privilege are the significant predictors. When it comes to opposition toward BLM,

negative efficacy, symbolic racism, and political orientation are significant predictors. When considering the different groups of predictors related to support and opposition, it becomes clear that support and opposition stem from a different constellation of thoughts, feelings, and beliefs. Support of the BLM movement seems to be motivated by traditional predictors of collective action (anger, identity, and efficacy) and low levels of punitive ideology. Contrastingly, opposition to the BLM movement seems to be fueled by antipathy toward BLM protestors. Opposition is fueled by the combination of a belief that BLM protests hurt the country and racism. The only predictor of opposition that does not explicitly and directly reflect negative attitudes toward BLM protestors themselves is political orientation. These clear distinctions in predictors of support and opposition toward the BLM movement are important to recognize as the predictors show that each attitude stems from feelings and beliefs of ingroup and outgroup conflict. Being that identity is the greatest predictor of BLM support, supporters likely see each other as ingroup members and therefore support each other. Conversely, antipathy toward BLM protestors is what predicts opposition, showing distinct outgroup hostility.

### **Limitations and Future Directions**

Although this study makes meaningful contributions toward our understanding of other people's collective action attitudes in general and BLM attitudes in specific, there were, of course, limitations. Primarily, this study only included data from people in the U.S.; it would be useful to examine the similarities and differences in the data from people throughout the world as the BLM movement was a worldwide movement (Buchanan et al., 2020). Additionally, numerous Amazon mTurk participants failed attention checks and wrote suspicious responses, such as "really good product" or copy pasting internet definitions, which reduced the sample size by almost 50. Future studies would benefit from having an even greater sample size with a more

even political orientation distribution, and with greater checks to ensure representativeness of the population.

Furthermore, the breakdown of racial demographics of participants showed a limitation in the diversity of the sample. Less than 7% of participants were Black or African American, demonstrating that the results cannot be justifiably generalized to people of all races. While there were some participants who did not identify as White, 78% of participants did. It is possible that with more diverse demographics, the results might have been different. Additionally, with a more diverse sample, it would be interesting to analyze data by race and then compare to see if there are differences in predictors of support and opposition between racial groups. It is possible that different motives operate for people of different races – something that would be vital to explore given the inherent centrality of race to BLM movement.

Further research regarding the BLM movement should examine whether similar results would be found when investigating people's actual participation in BLM protests or anti-BLM protests. This study examined people's support or opposition toward the BLM movement, that is *other* people's collective action participation. It would be interesting to investigate whether people who support BLM are more likely, less likely, or equally likely to participate in BLM-related collective action than people who oppose BLM. It would be interesting to look into whether similar predictors shape BLM support and BLM participation, and whether similar predictors shape BLM opposition and participation in anti-BLM counter protests.

Future research should also investigate the degree to which these findings generalize to people's attitudes about other collective action movements. This study examined perceptions of BLM protests – a collective action movement that focuses on identities, race, and the criminal justice system. Additionally, these protests take place in an explicitly intergroup context;

opponents may see BLM activists and participants as outgroup members, with responses toward the movement that are shaped by outgroup derogation. Furthermore, BLM supporters likely see one another as ingroup members, with responses toward the movement that are shaped by ingroup favoritism. The framing of BLM as an intergroup conflict is consistent with the findings that suggest antipathy motivates opponents, and that identity motivates supporters of the BLM movement. Future research should examine whether different sets of variables predict support and opposition to relevant collective action movements as they did in this study – especially collective action movements that are less framed around intergroup conflict such as climate change activism. This would provide even more insights about the motives that underlie collective action support and opposition.

### **A Closing Remark**

The BLM movement was born from unjust murders of Black people by police officers. Activists protested through both normative and non-normative action, though normative protesting was far more common. Reactions to these protests were strong– for both supporters and opponents of the movement. Previous literature suggested a number of variables that may relate to people’s attitudes toward BLM. The current research investigated these variables simultaneously to identify the strongest predictors of support of and opposition toward the BLM movement. This thesis found that traditional predictors of collective action participation and lower punitive ideology predicted support of the BLM movement. In contrast, antipathy towards BLM protestors including racism were the greatest predictors of opposition toward the BLM movement. In sum, this thesis indicated that support for the BLM movement is motivated by identification with protestors, a desire to change things for the better, anger in light of police killings of Black men, and preferences for a criminal justice system that is less punitive. In

contrast, opposition to the BLM movement is motivated by animosity toward Black people and perceptions that the BLM movement's mission for equality will somehow change the United States for the worse.

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Appendix A

**Table 1**  
*Descriptive Statistics and Correlations Among Study Variables*

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. BLM Opposition	1.77	1.79	1.00											
2. BLM Support	2.13	1.53	N/A	1.00										
3. Normative CA	65.30	32.50	-.48**	.56**	1.00									
4. Non-Normative CA	35.53	33.77	.47**	-.46**	-.93**	1.00								
5. Identity	2.62	1.79	-.38**	.67**	.55**	-.54**	1.00							
6. Anger	3.45	1.43	-.41**	.60**	.58**	-.54**	.61**	1.00						
7. Negative Efficacy	2.70	1.40	.65**	-.59**	-.75**	.73**	-.61**	-.58**	1.00					
8. Positive Efficacy	3.13	1.42	-.64**	.69**	.77**	-.73**	.70**	.69**	-.83**	1.00				
9. Political Orientation	-1.14	2.61	.53**	-.38**	-.60**	.59**	-.44**	-.55**	.56**	-.63**	1.00			
10. Punitiveness	3.54	1.78	.46**	-.41**	-.61**	.61**	-.33**	-.46**	.51**	-.53**	.62**	1.00		
11. Symbolic Racism	.36	.27	.57**	-.59**	-.70**	.65**	-.56**	-.69**	.68**	-.74**	.60**	.65**	1.00	
12. Criminal Justice Fairness	2.57	1.04	.39**	-.33**	-.48**	.47**	-.30**	-.51**	.37**	-.42**	.55**	.67**	.56**	1.00
13. White Privilege	3.62	1.27	-.42**	.59**	.66**	-.63**	.51**	.62**	-.64**	.70**	-.59**	-.53**	-.76**	-.53**

\*\* p < .01

**Table 2**

*Forward stepwise regression values with BLM opposition as the dependent variable*

	Step 1 Model				Step 2 Model				Step 3 Model			
	B	$\beta$	SE B	t	B	$\beta$	SE B	t	B	$\beta$	SE B	t
Negative Efficacy	1.05	.65	.13	7.85	.81	.50	.13	6.15	.71	.44	.13	5.48
Symbolic Racism					2.90	.37	.65	4.49	2.32	.29	.64	3.65
Political Orientation									.20	.26	.06	3.22

**Table 3**

*Forward stepwise regression values with BLM support as the dependent variable*

	Step 1 Model				Step 2 Model				Step 3 Model				Step 4 Model				Step 5 Model				Step 6 Model			
	B	$\beta$	SE B	t	B	$\beta$	SE B	t	B	$\beta$	SE B	t	B	$\beta$	SE B	t	B	$\beta$	SE B	t	B	$\beta$	SE B	t
Positive Efficacy	1.00	.69	.09	11.63	.67	.46	.10	6.99	.56	.38	.09	6.14	.45	.31	.10	4.71	.32	.22	.10	3.12	.26	.18	.10	2.50
Identity					.34	.40	.06	6.09	.35	.41	.05	6.79	.34	.39	.05	6.65	.32	.37	.05	6.33	.28	.32	.05	5.39
Punitiveness									-.26	-.26	.05	-5.15	-.19	-.19	.05	-3.58	-.18	-.18	.05	-3.33	-.16	-.17	.05	-3.17
White Privilege													.31	.19	.10	3.12	.31	.19	.10	3.19	.25	.15	.10	2.46
Negative Efficacy																	-.24	-.16	.09	-2.64	-.27	-.18	.09	-2.97
Anger																					.19	.16	.07	2.58

**Appendix B**

**Questionnaire**

Welcome! Thank you for your interest in our study. This survey will assess your beliefs about a variety of social issues.

[New page]

**To begin, we would like to ask you questions about your opinions about the Black Lives Matter Movement.**

Do you support or oppose the Black Lives Matter Movement?

Support	Oppose	Neither
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

[For participants who selected support or oppose.]

How strongly do you [support/oppose] the Black Lives Matter Movement?

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderately	Much	Very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

When you consider your position on the Black Lives Matter Movement, to what extent is your position on Black Lives Matter...

	Not at all	slightly	moderately	much	Very much
Important to you?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Something that you care about?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Important compared to other issues that you're dealing with right now?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Connected to your beliefs about fundamental right and wrong?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

A reflection of your core moral beliefs and convictions?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A moral stance?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Based on a moral principle?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Have you participated in Black Lives Matter protests/events?

Yes	No
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

[For participants who answer yes]

How many Black Lives Matter protests/events have you attended? \_\_\_\_\_

Think about the issues and events that have led to the Black Lives Matter movement protests (for example, police shootings of Black people). How angry do you feel when you think about these issues and events?

Not at all angry	A little angry	Somewhat angry	Moderately angry	Very angry
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Think about the Black Lives Matter protests that have occurred over the past two years. How angry do you feel toward the Black Lives Matter movement itself?

Not at all angry	A little angry	Somewhat angry	Moderately angry	Very angry
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

[new page]

In the pictures below, the circle labeled “self” represents you, and the circle labeled “other” represents BLM movement activists. Please choose the picture below that best describes your













Set public buildings on fire	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Set private property on fire	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please use a few sentences to describe your attitudes about the BLM movement.

**Now, we would like to ask you some questions about your opinions regarding crime and the criminal justice system. Indicate your agreement to the items below.**

The justice system in this country treats people fairly and equally

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Disagree Nor Agree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The court system can usually be trusted to give everyone a fair trial.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Disagree Nor Agree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In general, I am confident in the police.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree Nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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them the power to catch criminals.							
If we really cared about crime victims, we would make sure that criminals were caught and given harsh punishments.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
We should stop viewing criminals as victims of society who deserve our help, and start paying more attention to the victims of these criminals.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Criminals these days have too many legal rights.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Even if prisons cannot deter or rehabilitate criminals, long prison sentences are needed so that we can keep habitual and dangerous offenders off of our streets.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Juveniles are treated too leniently by our court system.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Punishing criminals more harshly would reduce crime by setting an example and showing others in society that crime does not pay.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

**Almost done! Please answer some questions about race relations and racism in the United States.**

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

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree Nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
White people have certain advantages that minorities do not have in this society.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Status as a White person grants White people unearned privileges in today's society.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel that white skin in the United States opens many doors for White people during their everyday lives.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I do not feel that White people have any benefits or privileges due to their race.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Skin color is an asset to White people in everyday life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please share whether you agree or disagree with the following items.

It's really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if Black people would only try harder they could be just as well off as White people.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Irish, Italian, Jewish, and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Black people should do the same.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Some say that Black leaders have been trying to push too fast. Others feel that they haven't pushed fast enough. What do you think?

Trying to push too fast	Going too slowly	Moving at about the right speed
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much of the racial tension that exists in the United States today do you think Black people are responsible for creating?

All of it	Most of it	Some of it	Not much at all
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much discrimination against Black people do you feel there is in the United States today, limiting their chances to get ahead?

A lot	Some	Just a little	None at all
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for Black people to work their way out of the lower class.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Over the past few years, Black people have gotten less than they deserve.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Over the past few years, Black people have gotten more, economically, than they deserve.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

To end, we would like to ask you some questions about yourself.

**Demographics**

**What is your gender?**

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to say
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**What is your age?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Are you of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin?**

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

**How would you best describe yourself?**

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Prefer not to say

**What best describes your political affiliation?**

- a. Democrat, Republican, Neither

**For those who answered Democrat/Republican:****How strongly do you identify as a Democrat/Republican?**

- b. Slightly, Moderately, Very Much

**For those who answered Neither: Are you closer to being a Democrat or Republican?**

- c. Closer to Democrat, Closer to Republican, Closer to being neither

**Are you a U.S Citizen?**

Yes

No

**What's the highest level of education you've completed?**

- No schooling completed
- Nursery school to 8th grade
- Some high school, no diploma
- High school graduate, diploma or equivalent
- Some college credit, no degree
- Trade/technical/vocational training
- Associate degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Professional degree
- Doctorate degree

**What is your employment status?**

- Employed for wages
- Self-employed
- Unemployed and looking for work
- Unemployed but not currently looking for work
- A homemaker
- A student
- Military
- Retired
- Unable to work

**What best describes your household information?**

- My household has a hard time buying the things we need.
- My household has just enough money for the things we need.

My household has no problem buying the things we need and sometimes we can also buy special things.

My household has enough money to buy pretty much anything we want.

**Thank you for completing our study!**