

THE SALIENCE OF RACE VERSUS SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN VOTERS

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INTRODUCTION

Michael Dawson's *Behind the Mule*, published in 1994, examines the group dynamics and identity of African Americans in politics.¹ Dawson gives blacks a collective consciousness rooted in a history of slavery and subsequent economic and social subjugation, and further argues that African Americans function as a unit because of their unique shared past.² Dawson uses data from the 1988 National Black Election Panel Survey to analyze linked fate—the belief that what happens to others in a person's racial group affects them as individual members of the racial group—and group consciousness among blacks in the political sphere, and then examines the effects of black group identity on voter choice and political leanings.^{5, 3}

Dawson's work is pertinent today in the years of the first African-American president, and even more so as African Americans become wealthier and more integrated into white America.⁴ Integration has bearings on the black group: group ties may become weaker, specifically in the political realm. As African Americans enter into the middle and upper classes, do they still identify with roots in slavery, segregation, and economic suppression? Are these roots abandoned for newly elevated class ties? Will most present-day African Americans side with the candidate who looks like them, but doesn't necessarily protect their personal economic interests?

Dawson's work piqued my interest, especially in an age in which some academics argue that the ideological gap between black and white Americans is shrinking.⁵ I want to expand on Dawson's work and see if his idea is still applicable today. I have previously conducted case studies of four townships in the state of New Jersey that represent cross sections of race and class.⁶ I categorized Carteret, New Jersey as majority white and lower class; Morristown, New Jersey as majority white and middle class; Willingboro, New Jersey

as majority black and middle class; and Orange, New Jersey as majority black and lower class.⁷ I analyzed the results of the 2008 presidential election in each of the four townships, and found that both majority black towns supported Obama at rates of over 90 percent.⁸ The majority white towns still supported Obama at high rates, but not as high as in the majority black towns.⁹ I was not surprised by these results, as they were in line with what Dawson had predicted about black group politics.¹⁰ However, I was unable to find more precise data than that found at the precinct level, so my results could not be specified to particular individuals.¹¹

The ecological inference problem piqued my interest in obtaining individual data to apply my findings at the personal level.¹³ This issue with ecological inference is that it assumes that individual-level analysis of results can be understood based upon aggregate or group results.¹² The aggregate data from my prior study was only useful at the township level. I wanted to view linked fate and candidate choice on a person-by-person basis. I felt this relationship would present a more accurate and complete picture of each group's voting decisions. Though the majority vote in each township went for Obama, I wanted to explore what subsets of the African-American group were likely voting for Obama, and which might be more inclined to vote for the Republican candidate.¹⁵ To do this, I decided to conduct a survey asking African-American voters about their adherence to linked fate and political leanings. In addition, I was interested in testing whether, in an electoral contest where candidate race is set against socioeconomic status, an African-American voter would be more likely to base his or her vote upon the candidate's race or class. I proposed an embedded experiment in my survey that would establish a hypothetical election between four different potential candidates of varying race and economic-policy leanings. This would force the respondent to choose

in race and fiscal policy crossed pair-ups whether a candidate's race or socioeconomic status would trump the other.

These different race and class pairings are telling because of the unique class and economic status typically attributed to African Americans as a group.¹³ Because of the history of slavery as well as the social, economic, and legal barriers placed on African Americans throughout U.S. history, African Americans have been dealt a less opportune political status. Lack of economic diversity aided in the formation of a black political group, as fiscal interests were generally the same.¹⁴ However, I argue that the economic interests of the black group have begun to vary. Increasing economic diversity has the potential to separate the group, and could render Dawson's findings of the late twentieth century less applicable now, twenty years later.

I also revisited the four townships I studied to find out the precinct-level results for the 2012 election, and whether these results are in line with my individual-level survey results. I conducted case studies of the four townships for the more recent election in order to see if group consciousness has strengthened or weakened. This may corroborate or contradict my survey results. Revisiting these townships was necessary to make insightful comparisons with the newer individual-level results.

I have discussed Claudine Gay's work on the effects of neighborhood status, quality, and segregation on feelings of linked fate, political group consciousness, and the black vote.¹⁵ I am interested in looking at how living in close proximity to other blacks affects the strength of group unity, and if this unity is lessened by living in more integrated or mostly white neighborhoods.

In conclusion, I find this research to be compelling due to its implications for understanding the black political community in the United States. I believe the study will contribute to a further comprehension of the factors affecting political integration and the status of blacks today. There may be further implications for the study of affirmative action, neighborhood integration, and more recently, the political effects of racially biased police brutality and mass incarceration. I hope that this study will shed light on the uniqueness of the African-American political group, both in the past and today.

Literature Review and Expectations

Dawson's *Behind the Mule* considers race and socioeconomic status among African Americans as factors for political choice. Dawson describes a certain "New Black Politics... characterized by the transformation of protest politics into electoral politics with high levels of black political unity... an image of profound political unity that transcends class."¹⁶ This "new" form of black politics defined by Dawson in 1994 places an emphasis on the group consciousness that accompanies African Americans in the political arena and at the polls. Dawson discusses this black political unity in terms of what he calls a "black utility heuristic"¹⁷:

It is quite clear that, until the mid-1960s, race was the decisive factor in determining the opportunities and life chances available to virtually all African Americans, regardless of their own or their family's social and economic status. Consequently, it was much more effective for African Americans to determine what was good for the racial group than to determine what was good for themselves individually. It was more efficient for them to use the status of the group, both relative and absolute, as a proxy for individual utility.¹⁸

This black utility heuristic historically assisted African Americans in choosing which ideologies and political values fit them best as a group. Because African Americans have a unique history with roots in slavery, segregation, and economic subjugation, voting as a group has meant more political power and typically has made sense for most black individuals struggling with similar fiscal, social, and political issues. By working as a group, blacks could advance further. Therefore, they would be communally furthering the interests of the entire group.¹⁹

However, I argue that in the years since Dawson's book was published, perhaps a newer black political functioning has emerged. Where race used to trump socioeconomic status, class status is now gaining increasing importance for African Americans in the political realm. In 1994, Dawson wrote:

Economic polarization among African Americans has indeed been increasing over the past twenty years. Both the middle class and the group of economically marginalized African Americans have grown... In the future, the new black middle class may not identify as strongly with the black community, the Democratic Party, or liberal causes... Many would argue that economic polarization within the black community will continue to in-

crease throughout the 1990s and will bring in its wake increasing political polarization.²⁰

I plan to investigate whether economic stratification in the black community has strained the historic political unanimity of African Americans. Dawson calls on the “black utility heuristic,” the strength and unity of the black network, and individually linked fate as reasons for sustained black political accord.²¹ However, I suggest that in recent years; political efficacy, ties to the black network, and the sense of common identity among blacks have all begun to dissipate. Furthermore, residential separation *within* the black community has become a more frequent occurrence. Taken together, these two factors may suggest that black political unity has begun to weaken.²²

The black middle class is distinct from the larger black community in the United States. Middle-class African Americans have separated themselves both from the lower class and the distant upper class. This has led to a ‘pulling away’ of the African American class structure at both ends as the top becomes a mainstream bourgeoisie and the bottom is condemned to “ever-widening poverty.”²³ The middle class is forced either into isolation in the middle or forced to draw closer to the upper or lower class. Dawson writes that the black middle class tends to mirror the black lower class economically in some ways, as the government largely employs the middle class. On the other hand, he cites Kilson (1983), who argues that the black middle class has begun a process of “status deracialization.”²⁴ Middle-class blacks have joined the ranks of higher-class workers, and, as such, the characteristic historical racial identity of economic subjugation becomes convoluted with higher-class economic interests.²⁵ Still, Dawson notes, “[t]he contradictory forces working in the black middle class have led to what Kilson (1983) has referred to as the ‘insider/outsider’ syndrome. He documents that over 80% of this class still feel racial obligations.”²⁶ Though the middle has separated itself economically from the African Americans as a group, overall it still feels a sense of loyalty to black political unity.

Linked fate is tied together with black group consciousness as well as with the black utility heuristic. This concept of linked fate causes African Americans feel their “fate,” or outcome, is impacted by and tied into that of the African American community as a whole.²⁷ Through my survey and the rest of my study, I seek to find how strong this sense of linked fate is

and whether it exists in different levels of intensity between different socioeconomic class levels. Dawson, in his later book (2001), *Black Visions: The Roots of Contemporary African-American Political Ideologies*, writes, “the great majority of blacks continue, my previous and current work shows, to see their fate linked to that of the race, but how that linkage gets interpreted is based partly on social position but also partly on ideological orientation.”²⁸ My study questions whether this notion still holds true today.

A Pew Research Center report from 2007, “Blacks See Growing Values Gap Between Poor and Middle Class,” argues that blacks are now more segregated because of widening class differences within the racial group:²⁹ “African Americans see a widening gulf between the values of middle class and poor blacks, and nearly four-in-ten say that because of the diversity within their community, blacks can no longer be thought of as a single race.”³⁰ This claim implies that members of the black community may perceive themselves as less of a cohesive group due to differences in class ideals. This is especially significant for black political unity. If values are divergent among economic classes, this separates the black vote both ideologically and economically. Not only might this affect black economic choices, but political choices as well. In addition, the Pew study found that, “blacks and whites concur that there has been a convergence in the values held by blacks and whites.”³¹ If ideologies between the races are becoming similar, this may imply a political integration as well, or at least a lessening of diversity along racial lines. Within the past twenty years, blacks have also begun to less fervently support black leaders in politics, religion, and the NAACP less fervently.³² In the past, these figures have been unifying individuals, but more recently, they have arguably lost some power in the black community.

The Pew study also cites an interesting contrast to Dawson’s work, which may imply that this change is generational:

A 54% majority of African Americans say that blacks who don’t get ahead are mainly responsible for their situation, while just three-in-ten say discrimination is mainly to blame. As recently as the mid 1990s, when Dawson’s book was published, black opinion on this question tilted in the opposite direction, with a majority of African Americans arguing that discrimination is the main reason for a lack of black progress.³⁵

Views on this feeling of linked fate seemed to change around the time Dawson's book was published in 1994. This could imply that Dawson's thesis is, in present years, not as salient due to the diffusion of the black group. But why would this potential switch occur in the mid-1990s? What changed within this time frame?

In Clemetson's 2003 article, "Younger Blacks tell Democrats to take Notice," the author takes notice of this same decline in strength of linked fate among blacks in recent years. Clemetson points to the age bracket of eighteen- to thirty-five-year olds that were not alive during the 1960s Civil Rights Movement.³⁴ This is significant in illuminating the pertinence, or lack thereof, of Dawson's work today. If eighteen- to thirty-five-year olds, the younger population of voting-age blacks, make up almost half of the total eligible black voter population—about 40%—then this age range is extremely important to the black vote as a whole.³⁵ In 1988, when the Black National Election Panel survey was taken, we find that a person aged twenty-seven, the median age for the eighteen to thirty-five cohort, would have been born in 1961. This means that this individual would have grown up during the Civil Rights Era. Further, his or her parents may have been active or instilled civil rights values in their children during this time of powerful black solidarity. However, a person that is twenty-seven in 2003, when Clemetson's article was written, was born in the late 1970s. They missed growing up in the Civil Rights Movement by a few years. This younger generation may have been further removed from the Movement, and may not have the same strength of black group unity as those of the previous generation.

Because the Civil Rights Movement roughly lasted from 1955 to 1968, any children born after this time frame may not have experienced a sense of the magnitude of the Movement.³⁶ Black National Election Panel survey, which surveyed many who had grown up in this time period, reveals strong black unity and linked fate among African Americans. If the following generation was more likely to take the gains made during the Civil Rights Movement for granted, then it is also possible that unity began to decline after this year. Perhaps African Americans are more satisfied with where they are today. As the time gap from the 1960s struggle increases and as African Americans perform better economically and socially, they may feel that there is less need for a new civil rights Movement or strategic

unity. I will analyze questions on linked fate, as well as hypothetical election results, by age range in order to see whether age makes a difference in strength of linked fate.

In Wypijewski's 2004 article "Black and Bruised," the changing political loyalties of African Americans are further corroborated. An interviewee in Wypijewski's article argued that "Many blacks stay home for the election because they feel that neither party is attending to their needs... [The] divide in America ain't black and white; it's the haves and the have-nots, and that's the truth, darling."³⁷ Some African Americans perceive this divide along class lines as being even stronger than that along racial lines. In addition, neither party always satisfies the entirety of African American voters. Still, one of the women interviewed in the article states, "No one I met in the 18-to-35-year-old cohort said, as did James Sulton, at eighty the lion of one of Orangeburgs' grand families, 'I'd vote for the Devil if he was a Democrat.'³⁸ This level of commitment to the Democratic Party is arguably strongest among the older members of black America, as these members grew up through the Civil Rights Movement and saw what the Republican Party failed to do at that time. Today, it may seem that "the only thing anyone knows for sure about 'the black vote' is that it's not monolithic."³⁹ What once used to be a seamless, stable voter group may now be more divided among different classes, identities, and values.

In their 2010 article, "Is Racial Linked Fate Unique? Comparing Race, Ethnicity Class, Gender, and Religion," Claudine Gay and Jennifer Hochschild discuss the weakening of this group feeling of linked futures. Their article states, "In seven surveys from 1984 through 2008, the proportion of Blacks who perceive racial commonality ranged between 65 and 83percent, trending downwards in the 2000s compared with earlier decades."⁴⁰ The fact that linked fate has weakened in the 2000s points again toward the idea that the Civil Rights Movement may have had strong linked-fate effects for those born during that time. As a result, in more recent years, these effects have waned and have resulted in a collectively weaker sense of linked fate. In addition, the authors write that the strength of linked fate may increase and lessen based on social class.⁴¹ I agree that group consciousness and shared fate among African Americans may be lessened because of differences in economic preferences and demands. This will be tested in the survey as well.

Gay and Hochschild acknowledge that for blacks, “cultivating or recognizing the fact that one’s own life chances are likely to rise and fall as Blacks gain or lose political and social standing enables one to use a few strong cues to make sense of the complex American racial arena. Perhaps ironically, linked fate in this logic is as much a matter of self-interest as of group well-being.”⁴² The article demonstrates that perhaps linked fate is decreasing among the African American population. The authors also found that lower-class blacks do not necessarily show stronger linked fate than upper-class blacks.⁴³ The authors conclude with an interesting inquiry: is linked fate “primarily a heuristic or primarily an identity?”⁴⁴ Asking whether black linked fate functions solely as an agent for the black community, or whether it also *defines* such community brings us closer to understanding how this characteristic affects the political arena. The authors claim that “linked fate perceptions are neither consistently nor highly politicized,” but I disagree.⁴⁵ Especially in the past, linked fate has arguably had a strong impact on African-American voters, even though this impact could potentially be decreasing.

Claudine Gay, in her article “Putting Race in Context: Identifying the Environmental Determinants of Black Racial Attitudes,” discusses the effects of racial segregation in neighborhoods on black political unity. She argues that segregation might have significant effects on the perpetuation of these feelings of linked fate and group consciousness.⁴⁶ Because different levels of socioeconomic status typically experience differing degrees of neighborhood quality, neighborhood quality may have an effect on how African Americans view themselves in relation to the larger group. For example, even middle-class African Americans will, on average, live in worse conditions than white people of similar income levels: “For African Americans...the inability to secure favorable residential circumstances may encourage the belief that race still defines and limits the prospects for socioeconomic attainment.”⁴⁷ On the other hand, African Americans of high-income and class status are less likely to be surrounded by poor living conditions. In turn, they may be less inclined to think that being black means suffering injustice.⁴⁸ This could potentially lead to a decline in linked fate among high-income blacks. Therefore I have included a section in my survey asking respondents about neighborhood quality, and I analyze these questions by income brackets.

From the previous literature on African Americans and linked fate, there are many different camps that attempt to describe African-American political behavior and linked fate. Through my experimental survey, I will attempt to discern which of these claims are correct and which are unsupported. I hypothesize that linked fate has decreased to a degree, especially among younger African Americans, and to some degree among middle- and upper class African Americans. By analyzing vote choice, linked fate ascriptions, and neighborhood quality, I will test levels of linked fate among different groups of the African American community today. I plan to find whether race or socioeconomic status is more politically salient for African Americans.

JUNIOR PAPER: REPLICATION OF RESULTS

My junior independent work analyzed whether race or socioeconomic status is more salient for African American voters. To approach this question, I analyzed the 2008 presidential election results within four townships of New Jersey. The aggregate results showed very high levels of linked fate among blacks. The results of my junior paper aligned with Dawson’s 1994 results; however, I believe that looking at individual level data may show that social class ties have begun to trump race after all, at least in some black socioeconomic groups.

Results: 2008 Election

In my junior case study, I analyzed four New Jersey townships that crossed different majorities of race and socioeconomic status in order to discern if one was more important for black voters than the other.⁴⁹ I looked at Orange, Carteret, Willingboro, and Morristown. The townships were all comparable in population size, and each had similar numbers of blacks and whites as a majority, respectively. The socioeconomically similar townships were similar in income level as well. Morristown and Carteret were majority white townships, and Willingboro and Orange were majority black. I categorized Morristown and Willingboro as middle class, and Orange and Carteret as lower class. By crossing both race and class, I could compare African American group voting habits to white voting habits, and middle class to lower class group choices.⁵⁰

Township	Population Size	% Black	% White	Median Household Income (\$)	Poverty rate (%)
Morristown	18,411	14.0	62.5	64,279	9.5
Carteret	22,844	14.85	50.68	58,614	13.0
Willingboro	31,629	72.7	17.3	66,479	8.6
Orange	30,134	71.83	12.8	40,818	18.1

My hypothesis was that, due to black group consciousness, feelings of linked fate, and ascribing to the black utility heuristic, the African American townships would vote for Obama at similar, very high rates. The lower class white township, Carteret, would probably vote along socioeconomic lines. The upper class white township, Morristown, would do so as well, and as a result, they would split Obama and McCain, respectively.⁵¹

For my results, I used precinct-level data taken from an ArcGIS map created by Stanford University in 2008. The precinct-level results are in the table below.⁵²

Election Summary Tables (2008)

Carteret (Lower class, majority white)

Year	Obama	McCain
2008	67.2%	32.8%

Orange (Lower class, majority black)

Year	Obama	McCain
2008	95.1%	4.9%

Willingboro (Middle class, majority black)

Year	Obama	McCain
2008	90.9%	9.1%

Morristown (Middle case, majority white)

Year	Obama	McCain
2008	69.9%	30.1%

As expected, Orange was extremely supportive of Obama at over 95 percent. Willingboro was a bit lower around 90 percent, perhaps due to the middle-class fiscal values of many voters fervently clashing with Obama’s liberal economic policies. The results of Morristown and Carteret were both a bit surprising. I assumed that Morristown would vote along racial as well as economic lines. However, Morristown turned out at majority rates for Obama. Carteret, which I assumed would turn out for Obama at high rates due to liberal economic ties, was less supportive of him than the wealthier Morristown.⁵³

Replication of Results: 2012 Election

I chose to extend the results of my junior paper by replicating it for the 2012 election. I found the 2012 general presidential election results for each of the above four townships and analyzed this data for any trends. I then compared it to the 2008 results. The data found for the recent 2012 election was taken from the county clerk’s records for each county of each township at the precinct level. The results were as follows.

Election Summary Tables (2008 and 2012)

Morristown

Year	Obama	Republican Opponent
2008	69.9%	30.1%
2012	66.67%	31.47%

Carteret

Year	Obama	Republican Opponent
2008	67.2%	32.8%
2012	73.81%	24.64%

Willingboro

Year	Obama	Republican Opponent
2008	90.9%	9.1%
2012	91.24%	7.60%

Orange

Year	Obama	Republican Opponent
2008	95.1%	4.9%
2012	96.07	2.84%

Comparing the 2008 data to the 2012 data, the following trends were apparent. First, in Morristown, support for Obama and the Republican opponent each year (John McCain in 2008 and Mitt Romney in 2012) remained about the same. In the Carteret elections, support for Obama increased about 7 percentage points, and support for the Republican opponent decreased by about 8 percentage points. In Willingboro, there was not much change; the support for Obama only increased by about half of 1 percentage point, and the support for the Republican decreased by about 1.5 percentage points. And in Orange, the support for Obama and the Republican stayed about the same. This data tells us that there was not much change in support for Obama or the Republican opponent outside of Carteret. Still, the fact that there was not much change in support for Obama in the majority black towns of Orange and Willingboro is not conclusive evidence for either an increase or decrease in linked fate at the individual level.

EXPERIMENTAL SURVEY EXPLANATION

The survey portion of this study provides the individual results required to combat the ecological inference problem.⁵⁴ There were 940 completed surveys in total. The survey was internet-based and was sent out to African Americans of voting age across the United States by the distributor Survey Sampling International (SSI). The survey asked simple demographic questions concerning linked fate, neighborhood quality, and the hypothetical election. Most of the survey questions were taken from the 1988 National Black Election Panel Survey, the same survey used as Dawson's dataset for his 1994 book.⁵⁵ The survey shed light on African-American feelings of linked fate, the quality of their neighborhoods, and whom they would vote for in a hypothetical election. I chose to analyze the questions among brackets of income and age to see if different age and income brackets feel differently about their connection to the black group or their feelings about their neighborhood.

Demographic Information

The survey begins by asking demographic information of the respondents in order to create a profile of each individual answering the survey. The highlighted questions in this section are income, social class, race, zip code, and political party. These questions reveal some of the targeted information I am looking for from individual respondents.

Questions on Linked Fate

The linked fate questions of the survey ask whether respondents ascribe to the idea of African American group consciousness and common destiny. These questions are taken from Jackson's 1988 National Black Election Panel Study, used in Dawson's 1994 book, which asks whether African Americans have a sense of racial group identity that applies to political unity and consciousness.⁵⁶ The respondent will answer most of the linked fate questions by ranking how much they agree with a certain statement.

Questions on Neighborhood Quality

The neighborhood questions included in the survey are linked to Claudine Gay's work on neighborhood quality and racial composition as it affects group consciousness, specifically among African Americans.⁵⁷ The questions from this part of the sur-

vey are also taken from Jackson's 1988 National Black Election Panel Survey.⁵⁸ I hypothesize that neighborhood racial dynamics may have varying influences on different classes of African Americans.

Experimental Design

The experimental portion of the survey helps uncover the main purpose of this study. I wanted to find out whether Dawson's work on African Americans and political linked fate still holds true today. The experiment is set up as a hypothetical presidential election in which the candidates vary by race and economic ideology.

There are six experimental conditions that arise from crossing race and economic ideology variables. In the experiment, the race manipulation is simple. Each condition varies a name indicating the race of the candidate as black (Kiara Jackson/Imani Williams) or white (Katherine Miller/Molly Harris) along with economic ideology (liberal/conservative). I chose these names based on reports of the most common first and last names given to Caucasians and African Americans in the United States.^{59,60,61} The economic ideology will vary between liberals (Imani Williams/Molly Harris) and conservatives (Kiara Jackson/Katherine Miller). A fiscally liberal candidate is described as solving the budget deficit by raising taxes on the wealthy. The conservative candidate supports solving the budget deficit by reducing wasteful spending on big government programs. The survey asks respondents which of two hypothetical candidates they would more likely vote for. The names of the candidates and listings of the pair-ups are shown in the tables below.

Candidate Breakdown

Name of Candidate	Perceived Race	Ideological leaning	Fiscal policy	Abbreviation
Katherine Miller	White	Conservative	Reduce government spending	WC
Imani Williams	Black	Liberal	Increase taxes	BL
Kiara Jackson	Black	Conservative	Reduce government spending	BC
Molly Harris	White	Liberal	Increase taxes	WL

Candidate Matchups

Candidate	Imani Williams	Katherine Miller
Race	Black	White
Fiscal leaning	Liberal	Conservative
Candidate	Imani Williams	Kiara Jackson
Race	Black	Black
Fiscal leaning	Liberal	Conservative
Candidate	Kiara Jackson	Katherine Miller
Race	Black	White
Fiscal leaning	Conservative	Conservative
Candidate	Katherine Miller	Molly Harris
Race	White	White
Fiscal leaning	Conservative	Liberal

SURVEY RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

I chose to analyze the data by separating them into three income brackets: high, middle, and low-income. These three brackets result in fairly equal sample sizes and represent three differing levels of income to analyze for linked fate and for the hypothetical election questions. The range of incomes collected within my study was between \$0 and \$100,000. By breaking down the income brackets into thirds, I came up with a rough definition of the three income brackets for my study. Low-income status is defined as earning an annual income of \$0 to \$29,999; middle-income status is defined as having a yearly income of \$30,000 to \$59,000; and high-income status is defined as earning an annual salary of \$60,000 to \$100,000 or more.

I created age brackets as well for the three designated age ranges. The oldest bracket includes birthdays from 1900 to 1962. The middle bracket includes birth dates from 1963 to 1980, and the last range is those 1981 to 1994. The last and youngest bracket is around the eighteen-to thirty-five year old range of “young” African Americans who were born after the Civil Rights Movement. This group is composed of those who did not grow up during or in the immediate aftermath of the Civil Rights Movement. These respondents have been fairly removed temporally from the Civil Rights Movement. The middle and older ranges both include those born during the Movement. These age groups were chosen because they each made up about one third of the total respondents’ ages, making the samples about equal, and because each represents a different relation to the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s.

Experimental Results

I created tables that cross each hypothetical candidate with her three opponents. The tables show how well each candidate fared in the election compared to her three opponents and if varying the identity of the opponent affected the respondent’s vote in the election involving that fixed candidate. The null hypothesis is that the identity of the opponent has no relationship to the candidate that is held fixed. To test the null hypothesis, I conducted chi-squared tests on each race for all the candidate-opponent tables to check for independence. The results are as follows. Note also that each table repeats one of the elections.

By Income

Imani Williams (BL) Elections

I analyzed the elections by low, middle, and high-income brackets for each candidate table. For the Imani Williams (BL) table, among low-income respondents, Imani Williams won against all three opponents. The margin was about 20 percent between Imani Williams (BL) and Katherine Miller (WC) (as expected among low-income voters), and the margin between Imani Williams (BL) and Kiara Jackson (BC) was smaller, at about 10 percent. There was a significant difference between Imani Williams (BL) and Molly Harris (WL), with Imani Williams winning 64 percent of the vote, and Molly Harris just winning 36 percent.

For the middle-income category of respondents in the Imani Williams (BL) elections, Imani Williams beat all of her candidates, and the only significant margin was between Imani Williams and Kiara Jackson. This race yielded a significant p-value, as Imani Williams won about 66 percent of votes, and Kiara Jackson (BC) won about 34 percent. For the high-income respondents in the Imani Williams elections, Imani Williams again won all of the elections, but not by a high enough margin to be significant in any of the three elections. The results for each income group in the Imani Williams elections are shown in the tables below.

Support for Imani Williams (Black liberal)

All income levels

Opponent name	Vote for Imani Williams	Vote for opponent	p-value
Katherine Miller (WC)	59%	41%	0.01771**
Kiara Jackson (BC)	59%	41%	0.02146**
Molly Harris (WL)	62%	38%	0.001855***

Low-income

Opponent name	Vote for Imani Williams	Vote for opponent	p-value
Katherine Miller (WC)	61%	39%	0.1088
Kiara Jackson (BC)	54%	46%	0.5151
Molly Harris (WL)	64%	36%	0.03565**

Middle-income

Opponent name	Vote for Imani Williams	Vote for opponent	p-value
Katherine Miller (WC)	57%	43%	0.3363
Kiara Jackson (BC)	66%	34%	0.01109**
Molly Harris (WL)	61%	39%	0.1025

High-income

Opponent name	Vote for Imani Williams	Vote for opponent	p-value
Katherine Miller (WC)	61%	39%	0.1235
Kiara Jackson (BC)	55%	45%	0.5164
Molly Harris (WL)	61%	39%	0.1317

Note: * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Percent values approximated to nearest whole number.

Kiara Jackson (BC) Elections

Next, I analyze the Kiara Jackson (BC) elections for each income bracket. For the low-income category, Kiara Jackson took 45.8 percent of the votes, and her opponent, Imani Williams (BL), took 54.2 percent of the vote. Low-income respondents who were given the Kiara Jackson and Katherine Miller (WC) matchup voted 62.3 percent for Kiara Jackson and 37.7 percent for her opponent. In the low-income category, for the race between Kiara Jackson and Molly Harris (WL), Kiara Jackson received 27.9 percent of the vote, while Molly Harris received 72.1 percent. In addition, the significance for this test showed a p-value of 0.001091, meaning these results were significant at the 0.01 level. Only the election between Molly Harris and Kiara

Jackson was significant at the 0.01 level.

In the middle-income category, for the Kiara Jackson (BC) contests, respondents ranged from making \$30,000 to \$59,999 annually. In the race between Kiara Jackson and Imani Williams (BL), Kiara Jackson took 33.9 percent, while Imani Williams took 66.1 percent. In the race between Kiara Jackson and Katherine Miller (WC), Kiara Jackson took 56.0 percent and Katherine Miller took 44.0 percent. And in the race between Molly Harris (WL) and Kiara Jackson, Kiara Jackson took 30.2 percent of the vote, and Molly Harris took 69.8 percent. There was statistical significance for the margin between Imani Williams (BL) and Kiara Jackson, and well as for the Molly Harris (WL) and Kiara Jackson election.

The results for the middle-income respondents for the Kiara Jackson elections show that middle-class blacks prefer liberal over conservative candidates. Kiara Jackson lost to Imani Williams, with Imani Williams (BL) taking two-thirds of the vote. The results were not so different between Kiara Jackson (BC) and Katherine Miller (WC), although Kiara Jackson (BC) still took the majority. And in the Molly Harris (WL) versus Kiara Jackson contest results among middle-class respondents, Kiara Jackson took 30.2 percent and Molly Harris took 69.8 percent. These numbers were about the same rates that Kiara Jackson and Molly Harris took in the low-income bracket.

For the high-income category, respondents voted for Kiara Jackson (BC) 44.7 percent over Imani Williams' (BL) 55.3 percent of the vote. In the same income range, the race between Kiara Jackson and Katherine Miller (WC) came out to be 60 percent for Kiara Jackson and 40.0 percent for Katherine Miller. And for the race between Kiara Jackson and Molly Harris (WL), Kiara Jackson received 43.5 percent of the vote, and Molly Harris received 56.5 percent. The chi-squared test for the high-income table, among all three races, was insignificant. The tables for each income group in the Kiara Jackson elections are found below.

Support for Kiara Jackson (Black conservative)

All income levels

Opponent name	Vote for Kiara Jackson	Vote for opponent	p-value
Imani Williams (BL)	41%	59%	0.02146**
Katherine Miller (WC)	59%	41%	0.017**
Molly Harris (WL)	33%	67%	0.00001963***

Low-income

Opponent name	Vote for Kiara Jackson	Vote for opponent	p-value
Imani Williams (BL)	46%	54%	0.5151
Katherine Miller (WC)	62%	38%	0.07415*
Molly Harris (WL)	28%	72%	0.0005462***

Middle-income

Opponent name	Vote for Kiara Jackson	Vote for opponent	p-value
Imani Williams (BL)	34%	66%	0.01109**
Katherine Miller (WC)	56%	44%	0.3961
Molly Harris (WL)	30%	70%	0.003919***

High-income

Opponent name	Vote for Kiara Jackson	Vote for opponent	p-value
Imani Williams (BL)	45%	55%	0.5164
Katherine Miller (WC)	60%	40%	0.138
Molly Harris (WL)	43%	57%	0.3763

Note: * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

Molly Harris (WL) Elections

The next set of tables I chose to analyze among different income levels were those pertaining to the elections involving Molly Harris (WL) as a candidate. For respondents who were low-income, 36.2 percent voted for Molly Harris in the race between Molly Harris and Imani Williams (BL), and 63.8 percent voted for her opponent. In the Molly Harris versus Katherine Miller (WC) contest, Molly Harris took 67.8 percent of the vote, while Katherine Miller took 32.2 percent. And in the third election between Molly Harris and Kiara Jackson (BC), Molly Harris took 72.1 percent, and Kiara Jackson took 27.9 percent of the vote. The results for all of the low-income tests on Molly Harris elections were statistically significant.

In the middle-income division, Molly Harris took 38.9 percent of the vote, and her opponent Imani Williams took 61.1 percent. In the race between Molly Harris and Katherine Miller (WC), Molly Harris took 59.6 percent of the vote, and Katherine Miller took 40.4 percent. And in the race between Kiara Jackson (BC) and Molly Harris, Molly Harris took 69.8 percent, and Kiara Jackson took 30.2 percent. The p-value for the Molly Harris versus Kiara Jackson election was 0.0039, rendering the results for the race significant. The other two races were statistically insignificant. In this class division, Molly Harris took around the same numbers as in the lower income bracket, and Imani Williams (BL) did the same; however, the votes were a few percentage points higher for Molly Harris (WL) and a few lower for Imani Williams. In the election between Molly Harris and Katherine Miller (WC), Molly Harris took only around 60 percent of the votes, compared to her 72 percent in the lower income elections. Katherine Miller, among middle-class respondents, took around 40 percent of the votes, but for lower class voters, she won only a little over 30 percent of the votes.

For the high-income respondents who voted in elections in which Molly Harris (WL) was a candidate, the race between Imani Williams (BL) and Molly Harris turned out 38.6 percent for Molly Harris and 61.4 percent for Imani Williams. In the race between Molly Harris and Katherine Miller (WC), Molly Harris took 58.3 percent of the vote, and Katherine Miller took 41.7 percent. And in the election between Molly Harris and Kiara Jackson (BC), Molly Harris took 56.5 percent of the vote, and Kiara Jackson took 43.5 percent. The p-values for the high-income respondents in the Molly Harris races were not statistically significant. These results showed that high-income respondents preferred Imani Williams (BL) to Molly Harris at about the same rate as the lower two income groups. The tables below show the results for the Molly Harris elections.

Support for Molly Harris (White liberal)

All income

Opponent name	Vote for Molly Harris	Vote for opponent	p-value
Imani Williams (BL)	38%	62%	0.00185***
Katherine Miller (WC)	62%	38%	0.002663***
Kiara Jackson (BC)	67%	33%	0.00001963***

Low-income

Opponent name	Vote for Molly Harris	Vote for opponent	p-value
Imani Williams (BL)	36%	64%	0.03565**
Katherine Miller (WC)	68%	32%	0.006258***
Kiara Jackson (BC)	72%	28%	0.0005462***

Middle-income

Opponent name	Vote for Molly Harris	Vote for opponent	p-value
Imani Williams (BL)	39%	61%	0.1025
Katherine Miller (WC)	60%	40%	0.1655
Kiara Jackson (BC)	70%	30%	0.003919***

High-income

Opponent name	Vote for Molly Harris	Vote for opponent	p-value
Imani Williams (BL)	39%	61%	0.1317
Katherine Miller (WC)	58%	42%	0.2482
Kiara Jackson (BC)	57%	43%	0.3763

Note: * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01
 Values approximated to nearest whole number.

Katherine Miller (WC) Elections

Finally, the results for the Katherine Miller (WC) elections among income brackets are as follows. For the low-income bracket, Katherine Miller's opponents beat her in each race. The most significant margin was between Molly Harris (WL) and Katherine Miller. This margin was 32 percent for Katherine Miller and 68 percent for Molly Harris, which is not very surprising among low-income candidates. Katherine Miller still lost to each of her opponents. And for the high-income bracket, Katherine Miller still lost handily, but no p-value showed significance in any race. The tables for the Katherine Miller elections are shown below.

Support for Katherine Miller (White conservative)
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All income levels

Opponent name	Vote for Katherine Miller	Vote for opponent	p-value
Imani Williams (BL)	41%	59%	0.01771**
Kiara Jackson (BC)	41%	59%	0.017**
Molly Harris (WL)	38%	62%	0.002663***

Low-income

Opponent name	Vote for Katherine Miller	Vote for opponent	p-value
Imani Williams (BL)	39%	61%	0.1088
Kiara Jackson (BC)	38%	62%	0.07415*
Molly Harris (WL)	32%	68%	0.00625***

Middle-income

Opponent name	Vote for Katherine Miller	Vote for opponent	p-value
Imani Williams (BL)	43%	57%	0.3363
Kiara Jackson (BC)	44%	56%	0.3961
Molly Harris (WL)	40%	60%	0.1655

High-income

Opponent name	Vote for Katherine Miller	Vote for opponent	p-value
Imani Williams (BL)	39%	61%	0.1235
Kiara Jackson (BC)	40%	60%	0.138
Molly Harris (WL)	42%	58%	0.2482

Note: * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01
 Values approximated to nearest whole number.

By Age

Imani Williams (BL) Elections

I will now evaluate candidate choice across different age brackets. I chose to test if those born before and during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s ascribe to stronger feelings of linked fate than those born after. The youngest age bracket, removed from the Civil Rights Movement, is the age range from twenty to thirty-three. The middle age bracket consists of those ages thirty-four to fifty-one, and the oldest group consists of respondents over age of fifty-two. These respondents chose Imani Williams in each election she took part of, each electing Williams at a rate of sixty percent. In each of these elections, the margin between Imani Williams and her opponent was statis-

tically significant.

For the middle age group, Imani Williams still won each race but by lesser margins, and the margins were not great enough to be more than minimally significant in any of the races. For the youngest age group, Imani Williams won each race handily. The races between Katherine Miller (WC) and Imani Williams and Molly Harris (WL) and Imani Williams were both significant. The race between Kiara Jackson (WC) and Imani Williams was not statistically significant. Imani Williams won almost 73 percent of the vote over Molly Harris (WL), and 67 percent over Katherine Miller (WC).

Support for Imani Williams (Black Liberal)

All ages

Opponent name	Vote for Imani Williams	Vote for opponent	p-value
Katherine Miller (WC)	59%	41%	0.01771**
Kiara Jackson (BC)	59%	41%	0.02146**
Molly Harris (WL)	62%	38%	0.001855***

Born 1900-1962

Opponent name	Vote for Imani Williams	Vote for opponent	p-value
Katherine Miller (WC)	55%	45%	0.5465
Kiara Jackson (BC)	63%	37%	0.05084*
Molly Harris (WL)	60%	40%	0.1213

Born 1963-1980

Opponent name	Vote for Imani Williams	Vote for opponent	p-value
Katherine Miller (WC)	53%	47%	0.5994
Kiara Jackson (BC)	53%	47%	0.6803
Molly Harris (WL)	56%	44%	0.4561

Born 1981-1994

Opponent name	Vote for Imani Williams	Vote for opponent	p-value
Katherine Miller (WC)	67%	33%	0.01041**
Kiara Jackson (BC)	62%	38%	0.1495
Molly Harris (WL)	72%	28%	0.00319***

Kiara Jackson (BC) Elections

For the Kiara Jackson (BC) races, the oldest age group only preferred Kiara Jackson over Katherine Miller, the white conservative, but only by a margin of four percentage points. Kiara Jackson lost the rest of the races. Older respondents strongly preferred Molly Harris (WL) to Kiara Jackson, voting for Molly Harris at a rate of 75 percent to 25 percent. Similarly, they preferred Imani Williams (BL), the economically liberal candidate, to Kiara Jackson.

For the middle age group in the Kiara Jackson (BC) races, Kiara Jackson won the race only against Katherine Miller (WC), by 63 percent. Kiara Jackson lost to Imani Williams, but only by a slim margin of 53 percent to 47 percent. Similarly, Kiara Jackson lost 61 percent to 39 percent to Molly Harris, the white liberal. The older respondents preferred Molly Harris to Kiara Jackson at a rate of 75 percent to 25 percent.

The youngest age group in the Kiara Jackson elections chose Kiara Jackson over Katherine Miller (WC) at a rate of 66 percent, and this margin was significant. When Kiara Jackson was against Imani Williams (BL), respondents chose Imani Williams at a rate of 62 percent to 38 percent. In the election of Kiara Jackson against white liberal Molly Harris, respondents chose Molly Harris 61 percent to 39 percent. Below are the results tables for the Kiara Jackson elections.

Support for Kiara Jackson (Black conservative)

All ages

Opponent name	Vote for Kiara Jackson	Vote for opponent	p-value
Imani Williams (BL)	41%	59%	0.02146**
Katherine Miller (WC)	59%	41%	0.017**
Molly Harris (WL)	33%	67%	0.00001963***

Born 1900-1962

Opponent name	Vote for Kiara Jackson	Vote for opponent	p-value
Imani Williams (BL)	37%	63%	0.05084*
Katherine Miller (WC)	52%	48%	0.7098
Molly Harris (WL)	25%	75%	0.000464***

Note: * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01
 Values approximated to nearest whole number.

Born 1963-1980

Opponent name	Vote for Kiara Jackson	Vote for opponent	p-value
Imani Williams (BL)	47%	53%	0.6803
Katherine Miller (WC)	63%	37%	0.07684*
Molly Harris (WL)	39%	61%	0.1235

Born 1981-1994

Opponent name	Vote for Kiara Jackson	Vote for opponent	p-value
Imani Williams (BL)	38%	62%	0.1495
Katherine Miller (WC)	66%	34%	0.03481**
Molly Harris (WL)	39%	61%	0.1235

Note: * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01
 Values approximated to nearest whole number.

Molly Harris (WL) Elections

In the oldest age bracket, those born between 1900 and 1962, white Liberal Molly Harris only lost to black Liberal Imani Williams, with 60 percent of the votes. Molly Harris won over both white conservative Katherine Miller and black conservative Kiara Jackson by 72 percent and 75 percent, respectively. Both of these margins showed the significance of opponent economic identity, meaning that older middle-class blacks may value a specific liberal economic ideology over the candidate's race.

For the middle age group in the elections involving Molly Harris, Molly Harris still won against white conservative Katherine Miller and black conservative Kiara Jackson, but not quite as handily. Molly Harris took 61 percent of the vote against Kiara Jackson, and 67 percent of the vote against Katherine Miller. The margin between Katherine Miller and Molly Harris was statistically significant. The race between Molly Harris and black Liberal Imani Williams was fairly close, around 45 percent to 55 percent.

In the youngest age group, Molly Harris lost to black liberal Imani Williams. Imani Williams won 72 percent to 28 percent, making this race results statistically significant. Molly Harris and white conservative Katherine Miller tied exactly, and Molly Harris won against black Conservative Kiara Jackson, gaining 60 percent of the vote. In comparison, for the two older age groups, Molly Harris won in a landslide. The tables for the Molly Harris elections crossed with age bracket are below.

Support for Molly Harris (White liberal)

All ages

Opponent name	Vote for Molly Harris	Vote for opponent	p-value
Imani Williams (BL)	38%	62%	0.00185***
Katherine Miller (WC)	62%	38%	0.002663***
Kiara Jackson (BC)	67%	33%	0.00001963***

Born 1900-1962

Opponent name	Vote for Molly Harris	Vote for opponent	p-value
Imani Williams (BL)	40%	60%	0.1213
Katherine Miller (WC)	72%	28%	0.00319***
Kiara Jackson (BC)	75%	25%	0.000464***

Born 1963-1980

Opponent name	Vote for Molly Harris	Vote for opponent	p-value
Imani Williams (BL)	44%	56%	0.4561
Katherine Miller (WC)	67%	33%	0.01041**
Kiara Jackson (BC)	61%	39%	0.1235

Born 1981-1994

Opponent name	Vote for Molly Harris	Vote for opponent	p-value
Imani Williams (BL)	28%	72%	0.00319***
Katherine Miller (WC)	50%	50%	1
Kiara Jackson (BC)	61%	39%	0.1235

Note: * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01
 Values approximated to nearest whole number.

Katherine Miller (WC) Elections

Finally, white conservative Katherine Miller's election results are as follows, as analyzed by age range. Among the oldest age range of respondents, Katherine Miller lost each election. The greatest margin was between her and white liberal Molly Harris, where Katherine Miller took 28 percent of the vote and Molly Harris took 72 percent of the vote. This margin was significant. Black liberal Imani Williams and black conservative Kiara Jackson won over Katherine Miller by very slight margins.

Among the middle age group of respondents, Katherine Miller still did not win any of the races. Between white conservative Katherine Miller and white

liberal Molly Harris was the largest margin of defeat, where Molly Harris took 67 percent of votes and Katherine took 33 percent. This margin of difference was statistically significant. Similar to the oldest age group, black liberal Imani Williams took only about 53 percent of the vote over Katherine Miller, who took 47 percent. Black conservative Kiara Jackson took about 63 percent of the vote against Katherine Miller's 37 percent.

Finally, among the youngest age group in the contests with Katherine Miller, Katherine Miller lost the elections between black liberal Imani Williams and black conservative Kiara Jackson, but there was a draw between Katherine Miller and white liberal Molly Harris. Imani Williams won by a fairly large margin, enough to render the difference significant. And Kiara Jackson also won handily against Katherine Miller, with 66 percent of the vote, and the results were also significant. Both Katherine Miller and Molly Harris received 50 percent of the vote from the youngest group of respondents. The results for the Katherine Miller elections analyzed by age are shown below.

Support for Katherine Miller (White Conservative)

All ages

Opponent name	Vote for Katherine Miller	Vote for opponent	p-value
Imani Williams (BL)	41%	59%	0.01771**
Kiara Jackson (BC)	41%	59%	0.017**
Molly Harris (WL)	38%	62%	0.002663**

Born 1900-1962

Opponent name	Vote for Katherine Miller	Vote for opponent	p-value
Imani Williams (BL)	45%	55%	0.5465
Kiara Jackson (BC)	48%	52%	0.7098
Molly Harris (WL)	28%	72%	0.00319***

Born 1963-1980

Opponent name	Vote for Katherine Miller	Vote for opponent	p-value
Imani Williams (BL)	47%	53%	0.5994
Kiara Jackson (BC)	37%	63%	0.07684*
Molly Harris (WL)	33%	67%	0.01041**

Born 1981-1994

Opponent name	Vote for Katherine Miller	Vote for opponent	p-value
Imani Williams (BL)	33%	67%	0.01041**
Kiara Jackson (BC)	34%	66%	0.03481**
Molly Harris (WL)	50%	50%	1

Note: * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

LINKED FATE AND NEIGHBORHOOD QUALITY RESULTS

Neighborhood Quality Questions
By Income

The eight questions that I chose to analyze regarding neighborhood demographics and quality in the survey were taken from the National Black Election Panel Survey from 1988.⁶² The choice of questions was inspired by Claudine Gay's 2004 article "Putting Race in Context: Identifying the Environmental Determinants of Black Racial Attitudes," which concerns the relation between neighborhood quality and make-up to linked fate.⁶³ The questions were each analyzed across income groups by high, middle and low-income respondents. The first question asked was a question about the racial makeup of the respondent's neighborhood. The answers to this question were "all black," "mostly black," "half black," and "less than half black." For the high-income group, about 53 percent of respondents said that they lived in neighborhoods that were half or more black, while about 47 percent said they live in neighborhoods that are less than half black. In the middle-income group, 64 percent of respondents live in half or more black neighborhoods, while 36.25 percent of middle-class respondents live in neighborhoods with less than half blacks. The percentages for "mostly black" and "less than half black" 30 and 36 percent respectively, are similar in the case of middle-income respondents. The next question will show what perceived "class" of neighborhood each respondent lives in. The lower-income respondents answered that 67 percent live in half or more black neighborhoods, and 33 percent live in less than half black neighborhoods. The low-income group has the highest percentage of respondents that live in both all black and mostly black neighborhoods, but not by a very large margin. For the low-income blacks, the percentage of those who live with less than

half blacks is surprisingly not much lower than that percentage for the middle class.

Neighborhood racial make-up

Income	All black	Mostly black	Half black	Less than half black
High	7%	26%	20%	47%
Middle	10%	30%	24%	36%
Low	11%	32%	23%	33%

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

The second question in the neighborhood section asks about the socioeconomic status of a respondent's neighborhood. The answers to this question include "poor," "working class," "middle-class," "upper middle-class," "upper-class," and "I don't know." The results across all incomes are as follows. Respondents from poor neighborhoods made up 4.19 percent of the total respondents. Those from the working class totaled 33.68 percent. In turn, 30.68 percent responded that they were middle class, and 8.46 percent said that they were upper middle class. Upper-class neighborhood respondents made up 0.94 percent of the total respondents, and those who didn't know their neighborhood's social class responded 19.32 percent of the time. The analysis for those of high-income showed that about 31 percent lived in lower class neighborhoods, 46.26 percent lived in a middle-class neighborhood, and about 21 percent lived in upper class neighborhoods. In sum, high-income respondents said that they lived in middle-class neighborhoods more than any type of neighborhood. For the middle class, almost 50 percent said they live in lower-class neighborhoods, and 39.50 percent responded that they lived in a middle-class neighborhood. About 10 percent lived in upper-class neighborhoods. 1.88 percent of respondents said they did not know what class of neighborhood they lived in. In conclusion, most middle-income respondents said they live in lower class neighborhoods.

For low-income respondents, almost 60 percent said they live in lower-class neighborhoods, whereas 30 percent said they live in a middle-class neighborhood, and about 6 percent said they live in more upper-class neighborhoods. 5.8 percent of respondents did not know what kind of neighborhood they live in.

Neighborhood class status makeup

Income	Poor	Working class	Middle class	Upper middle class	Upper class	I don't know
High	2%	29%	46%	19%	2%	2%
Middle	3%	45%	39%	9%	1%	2%
Low	10%	49%	30%	5%	1%	6%

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

The next set of neighborhood questions asked about the quality of different resources and institutions in the respondent's neighborhood. This set included questions about police protection, road maintenance, parks and playgrounds, public schools, and garbage collection. The first question asked about the quality of the police protection in each respondent's neighborhood. The answer choices were "very dissatisfied," "somewhat dissatisfied," "somewhat satisfied," and "very satisfied." The high-income respondents were, on the whole, happier with their neighborhood's police protection than low-income respondents.

Satisfaction with neighborhood police protection

Income	Very dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied
High	5%	12%	54%	28%
Middle	10%	15%	52%	23%
Low	9%	19%	52%	20%

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

The next question regarding neighborhood quality dealt with residents' satisfaction with neighborhood parks and playgrounds. The answer choices were the same as above. In terms of the highest income voters, about 18 percent were unhappy with the park and playground quality in their neighborhoods, while about 82 percent were satisfied with their neighborhood parks. Overall, the high-income respondents were very pleased with the status and quality of their local parks and playgrounds. For the middle-income respondents, about 32 percent were unhappy with the state of their parks. About 68 percent were happy with their neighborhood's park and playground quality. And as for the low-income respondents, about 31 percent were dissatisfied, and about 69 percent were happy with park quality. The middle- and lower- class respondent answers were similar, and if anything, the middle class was more satisfied. The upper-class respondents were almost 15

percentage points happier with their neighborhood parks and playgrounds.

Satisfaction with neighborhood parks and playgrounds

Income	Very dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied
High	6%	13%	49%	32%
Middle	10%	22%	40%	28%
Low	13%	18%	46%	23%

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

The next question regarding neighborhoods asked about respondent satisfaction with neighborhood public schools. The answer choices were the same as the about neighborhood quality questions. For the high-income bracket, around 28 percent of respondents were dissatisfied with their public schools, and 72 percent were satisfied. For the middle-income bracket, the figures were fairly similar, 29 percent and 71 percent, respectively. And among the low-income respondents, the satisfaction was about the same: 30 percent were dissatisfied, whereas 70 percent disagreed.

Satisfaction with neighborhood public schools

Income	Very dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied
High	9%	19%	44%	28%
Middle	13%	16%	44%	27%
Low	11%	19%	45%	25%

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

For the next question, which gauged satisfaction with respondent neighborhood health clinics and hospitals, the answers were the same as the above. For high-income respondents, 15 percent were dissatisfied with health clinics and hospitals in their neighborhoods, and 85 percent were satisfied. For the middle-income respondents, these numbers were 18 percent dissatisfied and 81 percent satisfied. And lastly, for low-income respondents, 23 percent were unhappy with their local healthcare, and 76 percent were satisfied. There is a small jump from low-income to high-income dissatisfaction, from 15 percent to 23 percent. This reveals that the quality of healthcare in low-income black neighborhoods may be slightly lower than in high-income neighborhoods.

Satisfaction with neighborhood health clinics

Income	Very dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied
High	6%	10%	51%	34%
Middle	5%	14%	41%	40%
Low	8%	16%	45%	32%

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

The last neighborhood quality question in the survey was about respondent satisfaction with neighborhood garbage collection. Again, the answer choices are the same as above, and the overall percentages for all income levels are as follows. Overall dissatisfaction with garbage collection is 16 percent, whereas general satisfaction is 83 percent. In the high-income bracket, the dissatisfaction is around 10 percent, and the satisfaction is around 90 percent. For the middle-income respondents, the dissatisfaction is around 17 percent, and the satisfaction is near 83 percent. And among low-income respondents, the overall dissatisfaction is around 23 percent, and the satisfaction is around percent. Not surprisingly, the low-income respondents have the lowest-quality garbage collection services, and the high-income respondents have the highest quality.

Satisfaction with neighborhood garbage collection service

Income	Very dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied
High	5%	5%	38%	52%
Middle	3%	10%	37%	50%
Low	6%	10%	40%	44%

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

Overall, we see that the low-income respondents have the lowest-quality resources available in their neighborhoods, while higher-income respondents have access to higher-quality resources and are on average more satisfied with their neighborhood quality. This satisfaction, or lack thereof, has implications for strength of linked fate among each socioeconomic class.

Linked Fate Questions
By Income

The questions on linked fate come from the 1988 Black National Election Panel Survey.⁶⁴ These questions ask about the extent to which black respondents ascribe to Dawson’s notion of linked fate

and African American group consciousness. I chose eight questions to analyze by both income and age. The three income groups are those used previously. The age brackets are the same brackets described above as well. First, I will analyze the linked fate-themed questions by income bracket. The first question asks black respondents if they think that what happens to blacks in the United States affects them. The answers are “yes, a lot,” “yes, some,” “yes, not very much,” and “no, not at all.” I first looked at the answers for all the respondents. For the high-income bracket, those that agree with this description of linked fate and whose answers were “yes, a lot” or “yes, some,” make up 73 percent of the total high-income bracket. For the middle-income group, those who agree that what happens to other blacks affects them, make up 70% of the bracket, and those who don’t really agree make up 30%. And among low-income voters, 73% have a sense of linked fate, and 27% do not.

Do you think that what happens generally to black people in this country will have something to do with what happens to your life?

Income	Yes, a lot	Yes, some	Yes, not very much	No, not at all
High	28%	45%	13%	14%
Middle	31%	39%	12%	18%
Low	32%	41%	11%	16%

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

The second linked fate question asks respondents to answer whether they think that if black people don’t do well in life, it is because of their race. The answer choices for this question were “agree strongly,” “agree somewhat,” “disagree somewhat,” “disagree strongly,” and “neither agree nor disagree.” For the high-income section, 56 percent agree that blacks are kept back by their race, 39 percent disagree, and 4.3 percent neither agree nor disagree. The middle-income section answered that 48 percent agree, 42 percent disagree, and 9.6 percent did not agree or disagree. Interestingly, the middle class seems to ascribe less to this notion of linked fate than does the upper class, by 8 percentage points. Among the low-income voters, 53 percent agree, 38 percent disagree, and 9 percent are neutral. So, the high-income respondents show the highest degree of linked fate for this question, then low-income respondents, and the middle-income voters show the lowest degree.

Agree or disagree: In the United States, if black people don't do well in life it is because they are kept back because of their race.

Income	Agree strongly	Agree somewhat	Disagree somewhat	Disagree strongly	Neither agree nor disagree
High	14%	42%	26%	13%	4%
Middle	13%	36%	25%	17%	10%
Low	15%	38%	21%	16%	9%

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

The third question asks if blacks as a whole are getting along well, and to what degree. The answer choices for this question are “very well,” “fairly well,” “not too well,” and “not well at all.” Again, I group the two “well” choices together and the “not well” choices together to get a more comprehensible depiction of respondent answers. For those in the high-income group, 60 percent believe that blacks are getting along well, and 40 percent believe the opposite. For middle-income blacks, 62 percent believe that blacks are getting along well, and 38 percent believe that they are not. And among low-income voters, 63 percent believe that blacks are getting along well, and 37 percent believe that they are not.

Would you say that blacks as a group are getting along very well, fairly well, not too well or not well at all?

Income	Very well	Fairly well	Not too well	Not well at all
High	10%	50%	35%	5%
Middle	9%	53%	31%	6%
Low	13%	50%	28%	9%

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

The fourth question asks if respondents think that blacks as a group are getting along *economically*. The answer choices are the same as above. Among the high-income respondents, 43 percent said that blacks are getting along well, and 57 percent said that blacks are not getting along well. The middle-income group responded 43 percent of the time that blacks are getting along well, and 57 percent said that they are not. The low-income respondents answered that 49 percent think blacks are doing well, and 51 percent answered that they are not.

Would you say that blacks as a group are getting along economically very well, fairly well, not too well or not well at all?

Income	Very well	Fairly well	Not too well	Not well at all
High	6%	37%	48%	10%
Middle	8%	35%	45%	12%
Low	10%	38%	39%	13%

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

The fifth question asks again about the economic position of blacks, but in comparison with that of whites. The five choices for this question were: “much better,” “somewhat better,” “about the same,” “somewhat worse,” and “much worse.” Overall, 19 percent of respondents think the economic position of blacks is better than whites, 21 percent said the position is the same, and 59 percent said that blacks are worse off economically than whites. For high-income respondents, 18 percent said that the black position is better, 17 percent said that the black position is the same, and 65 percent said that the black position is worse than whites economically. Among the middle-income respondents, 20 percent said that the black position is better, 20 percent said it is the same, and 60 percent said that blacks are worse off than whites in the fiscal realm. And for low-income respondents, 20 percent said the black position is better than whites, 26 said the position of blacks is the same as whites, and 54 percent say that the black financial position is worse than whites.

On the whole, would you say that the economic position of blacks is better, about the same, or worse than whites?

Income	Much better	Somewhat better	About the same	Somewhat worse	Much worse
High	8%	11%	17%	42%	23%
Middle	5%	14%	20%	38%	22%
Low	6%	14%	26%	35%	19%

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

The next question is whether the Movement for black rights has affected respondents. The answers to the question are “a lot,” “some,” “not very much,” and “not at all.” The results for the high-income class are as follows: 74 percent of respondents believe that the Movement did affect them, while 26 percent did not really feel that the Movement affected them. For the middle-income respondents, the percentages were

exactly the same. And for low-income respondents, 72 percent of respondents believe that the black Movement affected them, while 27 percent believe that the Movement did not affect them.

Do you think that the Movement for black rights has affected you personally, and if so, how much?

Income	A lot	Some	Not very much	Not at all
High	32%	42%	20%	6%
Middle	29%	44%	17%	9%
Low	33%	40%	17%	10%

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

The next question asks if respondents feel close to other blacks, and if so, how close they feel. The answers are “very close,” “fairly close,” “not too close,” and “not close at all.” Again, I group responses by generally feeling close versus not generally feeling close. Eighty-five percent of upper class respondents feel close to other blacks, while 14% do not feel so close to other blacks. Eighty percent of middle-class respondents feel that they are close to other blacks, while 20 percent do not feel close to other people of their race. Eighty-three percent of lower-class respondents feel close to other blacks, while 18 percent do not feel as close.

Do you feel very close, fairly close, not too close, or not close at all to black people in this country?

Income	Very close	Fairly close	Not too close	Not close at all
High	33%	53%	13%	1%
Middle	33%	47%	18%	2%
Low	37%	45%	15%	3%

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

The final linked fate question asked respondents about a hypothetical mayoral election between two black candidates. The question asks what characteristic of one candidate would make the respondent vote for that candidate over their opponent. The options were: “qualification/experience,” “stand on issues,” “honesty/integrity,” “cares for all people/whole city,” “cares for black people first,” “competence/leadership,” “personality/charisma,” “Democrat,” “supports equal opportunity/no discrimination,” “cares for poor/homeless,” and “other (please specify).” High-income respondents answered that they would choose the candidate based on their stand on issues 18 percent of the time, and 17 percent of the time they would

vote for the candidate who shows honesty/integrity. Sixteen percent of the time high-income respondents would vote for the candidate who cares for the whole city, and only 0.7 percent of the time would high-income respondents vote for the candidate who puts black concerns first. Eleven percent of high-income respondents would vote for the Democratic candidate. Middle-income respondents had very much the same ages for the above listed vote-choices. For low-income respondents, the percentages also did not vary much. However, 2% of respondents of low-income would vote for the candidate who cares about black people first, but 18% would vote for those who care most for the people's and the city's welfare.

Income	Qualification/ experience	Stand on issues	Honesty/ integrity	Cares for all people/ whole city	Cares for black people first
High	9%	18%	17%	16%	1%
Middle	13%	18%	17%	17%	2%
Low	6%	17%	15%	18%	2%

Competence/ Leadership	Person- ality/ Char- isma	Democrat	Equal opportunity/No discrimination	Cares for poor/ Home- less	Other
14%	2%	11%	8%	3%	0%
9%	2%	10%	9%	4%	0%
9%	1%	15%	10%	6%	1%

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

By Age

For the first question on linked fate, asking about how much respondents feel that what happens to other blacks will affect them, 48 percent of older respondents ascribed to this sense of linked fate, while 52 percent did not really identify with it. For the middle-income group, 47 percent of respondents said that they believed in this kind of linked fate, while 53 percent did not really feel it too much. And for the youngest group, 43 percent of respondents said that they feel linked to other blacks, while 57 percent said that they do not feel this type of linked fate. It is interesting to note that around 40 percent of respondents in all age groups answered that they felt "some" linked fate. However, about a third of the oldest bracket of respondents said that they felt "a lot" of linked fate, compared to 30 percent and 28 percent of middle age and lower age bracket respondents, respectively.

Do you think that what happens generally to black people in this country will have something to do with what happens to your life?

Age	Yes, a lot	Yes, some	Yes, not very much	No, not at all
Elder	34%	41%	11%	15%
Middle	30%	41%	12%	17%
Young	28%	43%	14%	16%

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

For the question: "In the United States, if black people don't do well in life it is because they are kept back because of their race", respondents were asked how strongly they agree with this statement. Analyzing for age groups, the oldest age group responded that 54% agree with this definition of linked fate, 39 percent of them did not agree, and 7 percent neither agreed nor disagreed. In the middle age group, 52 percent agreed, 38 percent disagreed, and 10 percent neither agreed nor disagreed. And for the youngest age group, 51 percent agreed that if blacks don't do well, it is because of race, and 42 percent did not agree with this statement. Seven percent neither agreed nor disagreed. Although these numbers are fairly similar, the oldest group, born before and during the Civil Rights Movement, has the highest degree of linked fate, though only by 3 percentage points.

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: In the United States, if black people don't do well in life it is because they are kept back because of their race.

Age	Agree strongly	Agree somewhat	Disagree somewhat	Disagree strongly	Neither agree not disagree
Elder	14%	40%	27%	12%	7%
Middle	13%	39%	21%	17%	10%
Young	13%	38%	23%	18%	7%

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

The question that asks if blacks as a group are getting along well yielded the following results in the test across age brackets. For the oldest bracket, respondents said 45% of the time that blacks are doing well, and 55 percent of the time that blacks are not doing well. For the middle age group, 41 percent of respondents said that blacks as a group are getting along well, and 59 percent said that blacks are not getting along well. And for the youngest group, 49 percent of respondents said they feel that blacks

are getting along well in the United States, while 51 percent said that blacks are not getting along as well.

Would you say that blacks as a group are getting along very well, fairly well, not too well or not well at all?

Age	Very well	Fairly well	Not too well	Not well at all
Elder	4%	41%	44%	11%
Middle	10%	31%	46%	13%
Young	11%	38%	40%	11%

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

The next question is similar to the one above, but asks if respondents think blacks are economically doing well. For those born between 1900 and 1962, 45 percent said that blacks are getting along well economically, and 55 percent said that blacks are not getting along well in the financial realm. Those in the middle age realm say 41 percent of the time that blacks are getting along well economically, and 59 percent of the time that black and not getting along so well economically. And in the young age group, those born between 1981 and 1994, 49 percent of respondents say that blacks are fine fiscally, while 51 percent do not feel this way about the economic situation of the black group.

Would you say that blacks as a group are getting along economically very well, fairly well, not too well or not well at all?

Age	Very well	Fairly well	Not too well	Not well at all
Elder	4%	41%	44%	11%
Middle	10%	31%	46%	13%
Young	11%	38%	40%	11%

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

The next question concerns a similar topic, but asks if this economic position is worse, better, or the same as whites. In the oldest age range, 16 percent of respondents feel that the economic position of blacks is better than whites, 20 percent feel that the position is about the same, and 64 percent believe that economically, blacks are worse off than whites. For the middle age group, 20 percent of respondents believe that blacks are better off than whites, 20 percent believe they are about the same, and 60 percent believe that blacks are worse off than whites economically. In the youngest age bracket, 22 percent feel that blacks are better off economically, 24 percent feel they are

about the same, and 60 percent feel that blacks are worse off. Again, these numbers are not too different, although the older group agrees by 4 percent more than younger age groups that blacks are financially worse off than whites.

On the whole, would you say that the economic position of blacks is better, about the same, or worse than whites?

Age	Much better	Somewhat better	About the same	Somewhat worse	Much worse
Elder	3%	13%	20%	45%	19%
Middle	6%	14%	20%	35%	25%
Young	9%	13%	24%	35%	19%

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

The next question is very salient for whether and how much each age group feels that the black rights Movement affected them personally. The existing would suggest that the older group to respond that they were more affected by the Movement than the younger respondents. The oldest group responded that 72 percent felt affected by the Movement, and 28 percent did not feel as affected by it. Among the middle age respondents, 70 percent said they felt affected by the Movement, and 30 percent did not feel very affected by the Movement for black rights. And for the lowest age group, 79 percent said that they felt affected by the Movement, and 21 percent did not feel affected by the Movement.

Do you think that the Movement for black rights has affected you personally, and if so, how much?

Age	A lot	Some	Not very much	Not at all
Elder	29%	43%	21%	7%
Middle	28%	42%	18%	12%
Young	38%	41%	15%	6%

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

The next question asks respondents how close they feel to other blacks in the country. For the oldest age group, 85 percent say that they feel close to other blacks, and 15 percent say they do not feel as close to other blacks. For the middle age group, 82 percent said they feel close to other blacks, and 18 percent said they do not feel as close to other blacks. Conversely, 79 percent of young blacks say that they feel close to other people of their race, and 21 percent do not feel as close. The oldest age group seems to feel more of a

connection to other blacks than do other age groups of African Americans.

Do you feel very close, fairly close, not too close, or not close at all to black people in this country?

Age	Very close	Fairly close	Not too close	Not close at all
Elder	41%	45%	13%	1%
Middle	31%	51%	15%	3%
Young	31%	48%	17%	4%

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

The final linked fate question about the hypothetical election between the two black candidates was analyzed in age brackets. The results are as follows. For the eldest age group, those respondents born between 1900 and 1962, just 0.3 percent answered that they would vote for the candidate who puts black people first, while 18 percent said that they would vote for the candidate who cares about the whole city. Thirteen percent said they would vote for the Democratic candidate. For the age group born between 1962 and 1980, 1 percent said that they would vote for the candidate who prioritizes black issues, while 16 percent said they would choose the candidate who takes the whole city’s needs into consideration. Twelve percent of the middle age group said they would vote for the Democrat. In the youngest age bracket, 3.6 percent said they would vote for the candidate who takes on black needs first, and 17 percent said that they would choose the one who looks at the needs of the whole city. Eleven percent said they would vote for the Democratic candidate.

If there were only two black candidates running against each other for mayor in your city or town, what would be the most important factor that would make you vote for one over the other?

Age	Qualification/ experience	Stand on issues	Honesty/ integrity	Cares for all people/ whole city	Cares for black people first
Elder	12%	13%	17%	18%	0%
Middle	7%	21%	17%	16%	1%
Young	9%	19%	14%	17%	4%

Competence/ Leadership	Personality/ Charisma	Democrat	Equal opportunity/No discrimination	Cares for poor/ Homeless	Other
12%	0%	13%	9%	5%	0%
11%	1%	13%	9%	3%	1%
9%	4%	11%	9%	4%	0%

Values approximated to nearest whole number.

DISCUSSION

By Income

What can be concluded about different income and age groups of African Americans? For the low-income group, overall, it seemed that economic policy was more important than just the perceived race of the candidate. Among these low-income respondents, Molly Harris, the white liberal, won handily over Kiara Jackson, the black conservative. Under the idea of racial linked fate, these results would not hold. Nevertheless, economic linked fate seems to be tying together the lower class of African Americans. However, in accordance with Dawson’s explanation of the “new Black Politics” as emerging from the roots of slavery and economic oppression, the black community has historically experienced a lower economic status.⁶⁵ Thus, that African Americans of low-income voted for a white candidate with a liberal fiscal policy is perhaps not so surprising. It would most likely go against the majority of the black group to vote for a fiscally conservative candidate as Kiara Jackson, even though she is black. Voting for the liberal candidate, no matter what the race, seems to still be aligned with the black political community.

Low-income respondents are generally more likely to view the black position as slightly better than both the middle and high-income groups view it. The level of linked fate among low-income blacks could result from both being around only African Americans and thus not feeling like an out-group, in addition to low-income neighborhoods being less socially and politically active and thus potentially less united in these areas.

About two-thirds of low-income respondents live in half or more black neighborhoods, about 60 percent say they live in lower or working class neighborhoods, and 30 percent say they live in middle-class neighborhoods. In terms of satisfaction with neighborhood amenities, low-income blacks are happy enough with their police protection, parks and playgrounds, neighborhood schools, healthcare, and

garbage collection. Though the average satisfaction rate was a bit lower than that of middle-income respondents, the lowest percentage of satisfaction was 69 percent. Gay writes that, "In lower-status neighborhoods, where the absence of economically stable and secure families may erode a community's organizational strength, the dearth of informal and formal institutions leaves residents largely disconnected from the 'networks of communication and community learning' (Cohen and Dawson 1993, 290) so critical to the development and diffusion of African Americans."⁶⁶

Lower income respondents thus may have a lower degree of black group unity, but above discussed is the high economic unity stressed by low-income African Americans. Indeed, though, the low-income respondents do not seem to display as strong of a racial group consciousness. This may also be because they live around mostly other African Americans, and so don't feel as singled out as a higher status blacks might.

Middle-income voters are in a unique position within the African American community. Because they are on an economic rise, voting for fiscally liberal policies may not always benefit or suit them. However, being African-American may make middle-class black voters more adherent to liberal fiscal policies. The middle class voted more strongly in favor of Imani Williams over Kiara Jackson than did both the lower and upper classes. In addition, in the race between Kiara Jackson and Molly Harris, middle-class respondents voted for Molly Harris nearly as strongly as did the lower class. However, the split between the votes for Katherine Miller versus Kiara Jackson among the middle class was low—Kiara Jackson won by just 55 percent. The middle class still preferred the black conservative over the white conservative, but not by much. And in the race between the white conservative and white liberal, the results were 60 percent to 40 percent for the white liberal, but these were around the same percentages as the high-income respondents. In the first two races, the middle class respondents seemed to have the highest sense of linked fate of all the income groups, but in the second two cases, it seems like the middle class shows less concern for the black group as a whole. The middle class takes on both characteristics of the upper class and the lower class. Perhaps depending on where a middle-class respondent lives, their sense of linked

fate may depend on where they work, or where on the income spectrum they lie.

Middle-income respondents said that 64 percent of them live in neighborhoods that are half or more black. Almost half said that they lived in lower class or working class neighborhoods, while about 40 percent said they lived in a middle-class neighborhood. Middle-income respondents are generally satisfied with their neighborhood police protection, public schools, hospitals and health clinics, and garbage collection services, with the lowest rate of satisfaction being 68 percent. Again, the middle class finds itself in the middle of black ideologies. They are generally satisfied with the available resources, but they live in mostly lower-class neighborhoods around other blacks. Thus, they may keep company with both middle- and low-income blacks, which most likely increases a sense of shared fate. However, Gay writes that, "African Americans who enjoy access to the resources and opportunities available in better neighborhoods may identify only weakly with the history of racial suffering that underlies notions of shared fate and predisposes blacks to view race as the defining interest in their lives."⁶⁷ As a result of these two contrasting environmental factors, it is difficult to predict how middle-class blacks will act politically.

For middle-income respondents, it seems that linked fate is not quite as strong. For the first few linked fate questions, middle-income respondents ascribed to the lowest degree of linked fate of both low and high-income respondents. In addition, they feel the least close to other blacks of all three income groups. Still, middle-income respondents feel as connected to the black group as do high-income respondents, and agree in a couple more areas with the high-income respondents. It is difficult thus to pin down middle-income blacks, because of the countering forces of environmental factors. The sample of middle-class blacks in my study seemed to be more on the lower-middle-class end of the spectrum but were fairly satisfied with the quality of their neighborhoods. In addition, they lived mostly among other blacks. However, there was a fairly broad spectrum of incomes included in this subset, and there was a substantial portion of middle-class blacks that lived among a minority of blacks. Perhaps these two ends of the middle-class spectrum had differing levels of linked fate, and thus cancelled each other out on some of the survey questions. The fact that most middle-class

respondents live amongst other blacks may increase sense of linked fate, but the fact that middle-class neighborhood resources are acceptable would negate this sense of linked fate. This is somewhat seen in the ambiguity of middle-class results, though there still exists a fairly strong sense of linked fate among middle-class respondents overall; it is just not as consistently shown as either the upper or lower classes.

Among the high-income respondents, trends included a seemingly high sense of linked fate. High-income respondents voted for Imani Williams over Kiara Jackson at about the same rate as did low-income respondents. This seems economically counterintuitive for high-income respondents, but perhaps this group still identifies strongly, in racial terms, with the black group. Otherwise, perhaps these economic policies might be helpful for the part of the spectrum that makes closer to \$60,000, rather than the end that makes \$100,000. In addition, the high-income respondents chose Molly Harris (WL) over Kiara Jackson (BC), even if only by a statistically insignificant margin. The high-income respondents also preferred Imani Williams over Katherine Miller, by a 61 percent margin, demonstrating again that race may be more important to high-income black voters than economic policy.

On the whole, high-income respondents were almost split on the number of blacks in their neighborhood, although just over half said that they were in mostly black neighborhoods. High-income respondents also reported that almost 50 percent of them lived in middle-class neighborhoods. High-income respondents were happy with the police protection, parks and playgrounds, public schools, health clinics, and garbage collection services at rates of 72 percent or higher. Claudine Gay writes that since this sector of the black community has access to such good neighborhood resources, they should share a weaker sense of linked fate with the rest of the black community.⁶⁸ Gay posits, "African Americans in neighborhoods with few amenities are more likely than African Americans in high-quality neighborhoods to view race as the defining interest in their lives."⁶⁹ This aspect of Gay's hypothesis suggests that high-income African Americans will show a weaker sense of shared fate with other blacks. But, there are reasons to believe that high-income African Americans show a strong sense of shared destiny with African Americans.

High-income respondents tend to have about

as strong a sense of linked fate as do low-income respondents. These respondents also have the highest tendency to believe that the black group as a whole is not doing well. High-income respondents also believe that blacks as a whole are worse off economically, over ten percentage points more so than do low-income respondents. Those of high-income also say they feel the closest to other blacks, closer than do both middle and low-income respondents.

In conclusion, linked fate seems to be a salient factor among black voters of all incomes, but seems highest among high-income voters. This could confirm Claudine Gay's hypothesis that, "African Americans in neighborhoods with high-status black residents are more likely than African Americans in low-status neighborhoods to view race as the defining interest in their lives."⁷⁰ Thus, those high-income African Americans who live amongst other high status blacks are likely to have a stronger sense of linked fate. This is because these higher status neighborhoods often have more group activities that unite the community and foster the sharing of ideas, and lower income neighborhoods are less likely to have these institutions.⁷¹ However, the reason for strong linked fate among high-income blacks may be due to discrimination faced by inhabiting mostly white areas and frequently interacting with whites. High status blacks may be more willing to ascribe to the black group because they feel a stronger sense of group consciousness and unity with other blacks than among whites.⁷² These explanations involve the environmental reasons for linked fate, which are discussed further below in the neighborhood demographics and quality section of the analysis.

By Age

For the oldest age group, around half of respondents said they did ascribe to linked fate, and over half said that blacks are not getting along well economically. The oldest age group is also the most likely to believe that blacks are worse off economically than whites. Interestingly enough, the youngest age group expressed that the Movement for black rights affected them personally, more so than did the oldest age group. I had hypothesized that older blacks would have felt more moved by the rights Movement. Nevertheless, my survey questions did not specify which particular Movement for black rights was referred to. If the question had specified the Civil

Rights Movement of the 1960s, perhaps responses may have been different. Still, those born between 1900 and 1962 demonstrate high levels of linked fate in general, and perhaps some of this could be linked to the fact that these respondents grew up before and during the Civil Rights Movement.

The middle age group had high linked fate, but did not take a clear side on whether it thought the black group is getting along well. This group also felt the least affected by the Movement for black rights, even though most in the age bracket were born during or right after the Movement. Overall, the middle age group had high levels of linked fate, though the oldest group was slightly higher.

The youngest age group showed slightly lower levels of linked fate and connectedness to the black group overall, but, as mentioned above, those in the eighteen to twenty-five age bracket said they felt most moved by the Movement for black rights. In addition, 3.5 percent of young respondents said they would vote for the black candidate who cares for black people first, while the other age group chose this option less than 1 percent. Perhaps younger black voters are more likely to ascribe to a black candidate, but do not really feel as close to other blacks as do older blacks.

Concluding from the results of the hypothetical elections as analyzed by age, the older two age groups showed more economic linked fate, while the youngest group in fact showed more racial linked fate. This was interesting, as I had expected that the groups born before and during the Civil Rights Movement would have had more racial linked fate, meaning that they would have voted for the candidate who was black. However, instead, these two groups voted at high rates for the candidates who exhibited the liberal fiscal policy, with the oldest group voting at even higher rates than the middle group. The youngest group was the most adamant about voting for the black candidate, and voted for Kiara Jackson and Imani Williams at higher rates than both the older groups. For the oldest group, it didn't matter as much whether the liberal candidate was black or white, though the black liberal still won by a 20 percent margin. What seemed to have mattered most was that the candidate was economically liberal. Like the lowest income group analyzed above, it seems that economic policy was more important in the elections than just the candidate's race, likely because of Dawson's explanation of the black group as one which

comes from a background of economic subjugation.⁷³ Thus, African Americans of the older age groups may be more in tune with the liberal economic policy. Still, it is interesting that the younger group of voters had such strong racially linked fate. However, the Clemetson article referred to above discusses the race of a black Republican, Michael Steele, winning 30 percent of the black vote in Baltimore by making radio ads on the Baltimore hip-hop stations.⁷⁴ This black political leader's appeal to young blacks is somewhat similar to what is seen in the younger contingency of survey respondents in the hypothetical elections, as they voted at fairly high rates for the black candidate no matter what fiscal policy they supported.

CONCLUSION

It can still be argued that because there was not an overwhelming amount of significant difference overall in strength of linked fate between incomes or age groups among the black community, black politicians can still appeal to a fairly unified black political group. All of the age and income groups ascribed to high levels of linked fate, and demonstrated that being African American is still more important than one's economic status when choosing a political candidate. Still, emphasizing economic liberality seems to be an important facet of the black vote, regardless of race. We saw that the high-income respondents still strongly preferred a white liberal candidate to a black conservative candidate, one who in fact matches along both racial and fiscal lines. All things considered, the black group seems to be a solidly unified and unique political unit with a tendency toward economic liberality.

Some parts to further the scope of this project would be to analyze survey questions across education level as well as neighborhood quality. Claudine Gay analyzed the neighborhood makeup via education level in her 2004 article, and Gay also wrote about the effects of neighborhood quality and resources on one's sense of linked fate.⁷⁵ I hinted at the potential that neighborhood quality might have on linked fate, but did not run a cross-tabulation with my own data to test this hypothesis. There are several other cross-tabulations that would bring more light to the question of the salience of race versus socioeconomic status, such as crosses with perceived social class, and zip code. In addition, visiting the four New Jersey townships directly and conducting an in-person,

qualitative study on resources and conditions of each town would inform the neighborhood/linked fate correlation as well. With the dataset, there is much more that can be learned about African Americans, linked fate, and politics.

In conclusion, it remains to be seen whether the monolithic black group will ever break up. It has in some ways, but the core of the African American political group remains strong. Dawson writes in his 2001 book, *Black Visions: The Roots of Contemporary African-American Political Ideologies*:

On issues of taxes, partisanship, the role of government, fiscal policy, and the like, blacks remain on the left and unified—more unified across class than whites, but on issues of strategy, tactics, and norms of the black quest for social justice, large cleavages can be detected even using the crude instrument of the public opinion survey.⁷⁶

Arguably, some of the “institutions and networks within the black community that reinforce racial schema,” which Dawson discusses in his 2001 book, could include recent police brutality as well as mass incarceration. Both the extreme overrepresentation of blacks in the criminal justice system, and the “Black Lives Matter” Movement in response to recent police brutality, exemplify the way that blacks still face racial distinction. These two phenomena demonstrate an existing racial structure, which arguably contributes heavily to the monolithic nature of the black political group. With distinctly racially biased events still occurring, it makes sense that African Americans would continue to stick together politically on terms of race.

By better understanding the black community, its history, and its politics, we can know more about how such a politically bonded group exists. This can inform political leaders, activists, and group members about how to further engage black politics. Race is still pertinent in American politics, as much, if not more so than economic ideology, and this is something worth paying attention to. Ultimately, we cannot truly know or understand American politics without furthering our knowledge of black politics.

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