political representation. Research that addresses the simultaneous function and influence of interlocking identities such as race, gender, and party in legislative institutions is best suited to answer these questions.

Intersectional research in legislative studies also must address the distinction between institutional presence and power. As decades of research and practice have proven, the effects of increasing the numbers of women in legislatures depend on the power that those women have to alter policy agendas and debates as well as institutional norms and practices. Women of color continue to confront racism and sexism within the institution of Congress and from voters and constituents. However, they also have been integral in disrupting those institutional power dynamics, telling us that they refuse to tolerate the inequity that has so deeply informed their histories. In addition to assessing the proportional presence of women within parties, racial groups, and Congress overall, legislative studies must consider the variance in women legislators' individual and institutional power.

Analyzing legislative institutions through the interlocking lenses of gender and race allows us to better interrogate the representational effects of long-standing institutional norms and practices. Although our research described in this article focused specifically on women, it also provides a framework for understanding the gendered and racialized realities that have long advantaged white men in US legislatures. Far from being neutral spaces of deliberation and policy making, US legislatures are raced-gendered institutions[8] that women of color are learning to navigate and working to change. We call on scholars to continue to build on our research by delving deeper into the myriad ways that intersecting identities shape individual and collective priorities, perspectives, and policy outcomes of legislators. ■

NOTES

1. Exceptions include Brown (2014); Garcia Bedolla, Tate, and Wong (2005); Hawkesworth (2003); and Smooth (2008).
2. See https://cawp.rutgers.edu/research/impact-women-public-officials.
3. See https://cawp.rutgers.edu/fact-sheets-women-color.
4. Representative Maxine Waters (D-CA) chairs the Financial Services Committee. Representative Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX) chairs the Science, Space, and Technology Committee. Representative Nydia Velazquez (D-NY) chairs the Small Business Committee. See https://cawp.rutgers.edu/women-congress-leadership-committees.
5. Representatives Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), Mia Love (R-UT), and Jaime Herrera Beutler (R-WA) served in the 114th Congress. Currently, there are two Latinas, two Asian American women, and one multiracial woman in Congress who identify as Republicans. No Black women who identify as Republicans currently serve in Congress.
6. See www.cawp.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/resources/conglead-hist.pdf.
7. In the 114th Congress, Representative Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) served as chair of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa within the House Foreign Affairs Committee.
8. See Hawkesworth (2003).

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COSTLY PROTEST AND MINORITY REPRESENTATION IN THE UNITED STATES

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Inequalities in representation persistently disadvantage racial and ethnic minorities, but this disadvantage is not absolute. My research proposes a context in which legislative behavior favors historically excluded groups.

I demonstrate that protest characterizes an exceptional circumstance in which reelection-minded legislators are motivated to represent low-resourced groups more often than their higher-resourced counterparts (Gause 2020). Although the argument applies to a wide range of protesters' resource disparities, this article focuses on those that assist in understanding the representation of racial and ethnic minority groups.

Protest is an opportunity for aggrieved populations to express their concerns. It is especially valuable for politically marginalized groups that do not find traditional, institutional channels responsive to their needs.

Whereas a growing literature finds that protest effectively influences legislative behavior (Gillion 2013; Wouters and Walgrave 2017), my work demonstrates that who is protesting matters for whether legislators support protesters' preferences. Indeed, I find that legislative behavior following protest advantages the groups with the most to gain from representation. Why might this be the case when US legislatures generally underrepresent the interests of racial and ethnic minorities?

Reelection-minded legislators are concerned that citizens with salient concerns will punish them during the next election for their (in)action regarding their salient preferences. Whereas public opinion polls and elections can inform legislators about the direction of their constituents' preferences, these tools are insufficient in conveying the intensity of those preferences. Protest is remarkable. It can inform legislators when issues are salient, even when protesters do not focus their efforts on legislators. For example, employment strikes for increased wages may not directly target legislators, but they can communicate to legislators the salience of minimum-wage increases for their constituents at the time of the protest.

Nevertheless, legislators' ability to discern issue salience from protest varies with the protesting group. Some groups can protest regardless of issue salience because their protest costs are sufficiently low. Others can protest only when they have high issue salience because their protest costs are relatively high (Banks, White, and McKenzie 2018; Klandermans 1984). In general, white protesters are among the former group and protesters from a racial and ethnic minority group are among the latter.

For racial and ethnic minorities, protest is exceptionally costly. They tend to pursue representation on issues that challenge the status quo, such as equal-employment opportunities, criminal-justice reforms, and anti-discrimination policies. Protest by racial and ethnic minorities also is more likely to be discouraged than protest by white groups. For example, public support for protest issues decreases with the presence of a foreign flag (Wright and Citrin 2011). Furthermore, demonstrations of white anger are encouraged whereas Black anger is dissuaded or delegitimized (Phoenix 2019). To be sure, Black protest is more likely than white protest to encounter police presence and arrests (Davenport, Soule, and Armstrong 2011).

Consequently, members of racial and ethnic minority groups must be motivated by salient issue preferences, and they must have an intense desire for representation to overcome the protest costs that are unique to their social and political marginalization. Conversely, protest by white groups is possible even if issue salience is low because their protest costs are relatively low. Reelection-minded legislators, therefore, are more likely to legislatively support interests communicated during protest by racial and ethnic minorities than by white groups because it provides a more credible signal of issue salience than white protest.

This argument emerges from a formal theory. I empirically evaluate it using the roll-call votes of US House of Representatives members in the 102nd through 104th Congresses, along with data on protests reported in the *New York Times* from 1991 through 1995. The empirical findings confirm that legislative behavior after protest supports protesting racial and ethnic minorities' interests more often than the interests of white protesters.

Book Project

I expand on this argument in my book, *The Advantage of Disadvantage: Costly Protest and Political Representation for Marginalized Groups* (Gause 2022). The book explores various protester resource disparities, but in this article, I focus on what the book reveals about minority representation.

In the 2020 article, I assess the difference in the probability of legislative support for nonwhite protesters compared to their white counterparts. Although protest by Black, Latino, Asian American, and other racial and ethnic minority groups is more costly, on average, than protest by white groups, the circumstances defining their protest costs differ. Consequently, the book theoretically and empirically disaggregates racial and ethnic minority groups to ascertain legislative behavior following protest.

Even when evaluating racial and ethnic minority groups separately, legislators remain more likely to legislatively support the interests of Black, Latino, and Asian American protesters than those of white protesters. These findings suggest that no one racial or ethnic minority group is driving the relative legislative advantage associated with racial and ethnic minority protesting groups on protest-related legislation.

After establishing the pervasiveness of minority representation following protest, the book explores the role of descriptive representation in improving the representation of racial and ethnic minorities. Indeed, one reason for the underrepresentation of racial and ethnic minorities is a lack of descriptive representation in Congress. Constituents are more likely to be represented by legislators who share their race or ethnicity, but there are fewer racial and ethnic minorities in Congress than in the general population. However, the book demonstrates that the strategic representation of protesters' interests is different. The empirical findings suggest that Black and white Democrats are motivated to legislatively support Black protesters' preferences more often than white protesters' interests. Moreover, although the coefficient size is smaller than for Democrats of any race, white Republicans also are more likely to support Black protesters than white protesters.

The book then engages an original dataset of protests reported in newspapers in 2012 from 20 major US cities to understand how digital technologies might complicate the ability of legislators to discern the salient interests of their constituents revealed during protest. Since the advent of the Internet, protests have increasingly shifted from marching in the streets and picketing in front of storefronts to signing online petitions and sharing hashtags on social media pages. Digital technologies also facilitate the ability to attend in-person protests, such as when websites share information about when and where protests will occur or provide space for people to discuss their grievances and preferences.

Nevertheless, even with digital technologies, protest is more costly for racial and ethnic minorities than for white groups. Racial and ethnic minorities have relatively less access to the Internet, which impedes their ability to benefit from the reduced costs of participation as a result of digital technologies. Furthermore, whether in physical or virtual spaces, racial and ethnic minorities continue to encounter efforts to delegitimize and criminalize their protest.

Accordingly, the book demonstrates that legislators still find the costly protest of racial and ethnic minorities informative—and that costly protest demands representation, particularly when compared to relatively less costly protest by white groups. After offline and online protests, legislators are more likely to vote in support of the interests of Black protesters than white protesters. They also are more likely to support the preferences of offline protests by Latinos than by white protesters.

Discussion

As a whole, my research suggests that legislators are likely to support protest by racial and ethnic minorities more often than protest by white groups. However, this strategic support is secondary to legislative behaviors that contribute to the underrepresentation of racial and ethnic minorities.

Protest is an opportunity for aggrieved populations to express their concerns. It is especially valuable for politically marginalized groups that do not find traditional, institutional channels responsive to their needs.

To be sure, many legislators strategically support protesters' interests on a roll-call vote only so they can appear responsive to constituents with salient concerns. They may give some support to protesters' concerns, but they are unlikely to champion the protesters' goals beyond strategically placed roll-call votes. Some

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legislators are sympathetic supporters of protesters' efforts. They demonstrate their support for protesters' concerns in public statements and by introducing and (co)sponsoring legislation, among other activities. They also are likely to vote in support of protesters' preferences long before and after specific protest events.

Although this research highlights the agency of racial and ethnic minorities who participate in protest, it simultaneously underscores the struggles that minorities must endure to receive even marginally improved representation. Indeed, even as racial and ethnic minorities brave costly protest to increase their representation, they remain underrepresented by US legislatures. ■

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RACE AND SYMBOLIC POLITICS IN THE US CONGRESS

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The legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., often is invoked to justify political positions only tangentially (and dubiously) linked to issues of justice and civil rights. For example, White House counselor Kellyanne Conway referenced Dr. King in defending President Trump from impeachment by saying, "I don't think it was within Dr. King's vision to have Americans dragged through a process where the president is not going to be removed from office… And I think that anybody who cares about 'and justice for all' on today or any day of the year will appreciate the fact that the President now will have a full-throttle defense on the facts, and everybody should have that." Similarly, on July 13, 2021, House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) denounced the teaching of critical race theory in schools by saying, "Critical race theory goes against everything Martin Luther King has ever told us, don't judge us by the color of our skin, and now they're embracing it."

As these examples make clear, politics often is symbolic (Sears 1993; Sinclair-Chapman, 2018). Yet, scant attention has been given to the ways legislators use symbols to engage with and represent their constituents (but see Hill and Hurley 2002). This oversight is particularly problematic when considering the representation of racial and ethnic minorities in general and African Americans in particular. Because African Americans are both a numeric minority and historically underrepresented in government, achieving significant substantive progress in the form of new bills and laws often can be extremely challenging without sympathetic white allies. As a result, alternative forms of politics, from symbolic politics to protest, often are used to make progress on racial issues when traditional legislative avenues remain closed (Gillion 2013, 2016; Tate 1994, 2003).

We can see this importance from Senator Carol Mosely-Braun's pivotal speech against Confederate flag patents to Representative Bobby Rush's iconic donning of a hoodie in response to Trayvon Martin's killing. In our view, understanding Black political representation requires us to investigate the important role of symbolic politics, especially on issues closely tied to race. Our ongoing research contributes to this understanding by providing the most comprehensive analysis conducted to date of race and symbolic rhetoric in the US Congress. We first collected every speech on the floor of the House of Representatives from 1996 to 2014, almost 800,000 in total (Dietrich and Hayes 2022). To examine symbolic politics in the domain of racial issues, we focused on speeches that mentioned civil rights. Although this is not an exhaustive collection of speeches in Congress on racial issues, the issue of civil rights remains central to most African American voters and legislators. Legislation on this issue often is used as a proxy for attention to racial issues by legislative scholars. To identify the use of symbolic rhetoric in these speeches, research assistants hand-coded the 5,545 speeches that mentioned civil rights for symbolic content. We identified every instance in which symbols of the Civil Rights Movement were invoked. These included references to important civil rights leaders, such as Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, and Medgar Evers, as well as prominent civil rights actions, such as the March on Washington and Selma. Because references to past sacrifices can be an important influence on African Americans' political attitudes (Wamble 2019) and behaviors (Anoll 2018), we believe these symbolic references should be particularly powerful in shaping how Black voters evaluate representatives.

In our view, understanding Black political representation requires us to investigate the important role of symbolic politics, especially on issues closely tied to race.

Focusing on these symbols of the struggle for African Americans' civil rights, we found that speeches invoking symbolism play an important role in the behavior of members of Congress. Across the almost 800,000 floor speeches in our data, we found striking racial differences in how often, and how, members of Congress speak about the issue of civil rights. Our data show that Black representatives mention civil rights in about one of 35 speeches.