

LINKING BLACKNESS OR ETHNIC OTHERING?

African Americans' Diasporic Linked Fate with West Indian and African Peoples in the United States

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Abstract

Dawson (1994) submits Black linked fate is a major predictor of Black political behavior. This theory conjectures that the experiences of African Americans with race and racial discrimination in the United States unify their personal interests under a rubric of interests that are best for the Black racial group. With increasing Black ethnic diversity in the United States, however, it becomes important to ascertain how African Americans perceive linkages across Black ethnic groups. This study examines African Americans' linkages with West Indian and African peoples in the United States, referred to here as diasporic linked fate. The study tests the influence of parent-child, intra-racial socialization messages on these linkages. Results suggest that, while a majority of African Americans acknowledge Black linked fate, they distinguish these linkages based on ethnicity and have more tenuous linkages with West Indians and Africans in the United States. While intra-racial socialization messages offer some import in explaining perceived differences in Black ethnic groups' living experiences, more frequent experiences with racial discrimination, and membership in a Black organization offer more import in explaining diasporic linked fate.

Keywords: Black Linked Fate, Black Diaspora, Intra-racial Identity, Racial Socialization, West Indian, African, African American

INTRODUCTION

U.S. racial construction treated Black ethnic differences indistinctly, amalgamating people of African descent into a pseudo-scientific "Black" racial category (Davis 1991). This historical racial categorization still has meaning today, as many African-descended people in the United States still identify as "Black." According to Dawson

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(1994), *Black linked fate* is the racial identification that Black Americans feel with other Blacks based on their shared historic experiences with race in America. Further, in Dawson's examination of Black racial identification, Black racial group interests generally supplant group members' individualized, political interests, indicating race trumps class interests.

Dawson's premise, however, rests on Americanized racial discrimination experiences with slavery and Jim Crow, which have politically motivated native-born Blacks (African Americans) to group-identify, protest, and advocate political inclusion on behalf of their interests (McAdam 1982; Tate, 1993). Such an examination may offer limited import for ascertaining African Americans' identification with Black ethnic group members from the West Indies or Africa.

According to 2004 American Community Survey estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, approximately eight percent of Blacks in America are either foreign-born or naturalized citizens (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007). These estimates also indicate that 32.5 percent of the Black, non-Hispanic foreign-born household population and 64.1 percent of the Black, non-Hispanic foreign-born household population were born in Africa and Latin America, respectively. The largest concentration of the Black foreign-born population is in the Northeast, with the Census reporting the state of New York with the densest population concentration (Rogers 2000, 2006). Thus, with the more recent upsurge in Black ethnic immigration among West Indian and African Blacks, increasingly "Black" experiences in the American context are becoming more diverse (Alex-Assensoh 2000; Jackson and Cothran, 2003; Waters 1994, 1999) and potentially challenging for what Cohen (1999) describes as "the boundaries of Blackness."

There is also evidence that Black immigrant group members have lasting attachments to their ethnic identities, thus, trumping their racial identities (Rogers 2006; Waters 1999). Contextually, this presents a potential dynamic among "Blacks" wherein native-born Blacks (African Americans) may perceive ethnic identity distinctions in ways that unify or disunite Black linked fate across these groups. These attitudes may take the form of linked fate with ethnic-identified "Blacks" being perceived as (1) fellow racial group members that, despite ethnic differences, share a commonality with African Americans or (2) fellow racial group members that, despite racial commonality, seem ethnically distanced from African Americans.

Such dynamics lend themselves to important inquiries about how African Americans negotiate their Black identity with West Indian and African Blacks in the United States Black Diaspora—*Black diasporic linked fate*. Therefore, gauging African Americans' identification with West Indian and African Blacks in America proves beneficial for understanding cross-ethnic identities and intra-racial relations.

Using a national, web-based survey developed by the author—the National Politics and Socialization Survey (NPSS)—this paper examines how African Americans perceive linked fate with West Indians and Africans in the United States and how they assess differences in the lived experiences of these groups. Racial socialization experiences about the influence of race on the lives of Blacks in America are important factors determining Black identity development (Dawson 1994; Demo and Hughes, 1990; Sanders Thompson 1994). Further, racial discrimination experiences are critical for linking Blacks' identification with other Blacks (Dawson 1994). Distinctive patterns of racial socialization about relating to other Black group members and frequency of racial discrimination should influence how much African Americans feel diasporically linked to other Blacks in the United States. Theoretically, this paper tests the relevance of both factors in explaining African Americans' identification with diverse Black ethnic groups in the American context.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Who Is “Black” in the United States

Race is a socially-constructed concept, historically enforced by the judicial system’s interpretation of whom constituted “non-Whites” and by society’s understanding about whom was “White” (Haney-Lopez 2006). Race is embedded with social conflict, and it comprises a hierarchical, racial stratification between Whites and non-Whites, situating “non-Whites” as inferior compared to “Whites” (Omi and Winant, 1994). One of the most stringent indicators of race depended upon blood quantum and the “one-drop rule” to define “who is Black” in America (Davis 1991); that is, anyone who had “one drop” of “Black/African” blood would be considered “Black.”

Quasi-biological conceptions of Blackness also classified “Blackness” based on skin color, physical features, and temperament in order to deem “Blacks” inferior compared to Whites. Subsequently, Blacks were legally denied the accoutrements associated with the superiority and privilege of Whiteness, and they were socio-legally sanctioned based on having an “Africanized appearance” and “Africanized blood” (Bonilla-Silva 2001; Haney-Lopez 2006). Regardless of the pseudo-scientific origins of this racial designation, “Blackness” destined group members to racial marginalization, voidance of ethnic distinction, and subjugation to an imposed “Black” identity.

The U.S. Census further codifies “race” by counting bodies based on socio-legal racial definitions. Over time, the Census’ racial definitions have changed and expanded, also giving people the option to self-identify with one or more racial groups (Haney-Lopez 2006). For example, today persons who self-identify as “Black” are classified as such if their ancestry includes “People having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa. It includes people who indicated their race or races as ‘Black, African American, or Negro,’ or wrote in entries such as African American, Afro American, Nigerian, or Haitian” (U.S. Census Bureau 2007).

Regardless of the option to self-identify as “Black,” the Census still amalgamates various national references into an umbrella “Black” racial category that is devoid of ethnic, cultural specificity. Thus, even today, historically-defined racial designations categorize people with presumed African ancestral origins into being “Black.” Interestingly, racial categorizations in the United States generally void ethnic distinctions for all groups, with the exception of Latinos/Hispanics who are not recognized as a racial group, but rather as an ethnic group with many nationalities. This racial construction presents an interesting challenge for immigrants with African ancestry who, upon entering the United States, learn that, despite their ethnic, cultural, and historical diversity, are treated as “Black Americans,” and otherwise are referred to as “African Americans,” without regard to their actual ethnic backgrounds.

Black Identity across the African Diaspora: Grounds for Diasporic Linked Fate?

Dawson (1994) offers a seminal description of Black identity in America, suggesting that Blacks in America share linked destinies as a consequence of their experiences with U.S. slavery, Jim Crow, and racial discrimination, in general. Further, Dawson’s *Black utility heuristic* establishes a utility function based on estimates of sociopolitical circumstances that affect the larger racial group and that, by way of racial construction in America, inadvertently affect the utility functions of all individual group members who are “Black.” While this premise offers import for describing how

“race” affects racial group linkages, it offers a more myopic view of intra-racial group identities, especially as far as ethnic diversity.

First, the current theory of linked fate assumes racial identification with other Black group members based on Black nativity status and “African American” racial experiences in the United States. While Black immigrants may understand that they are “Black,” the way that they understand their “Black” identity may differ from what has been constructed as an “American Black,” or “African American,” identity. Being labeled “African American,” yet another ethnic group, implies having an ancestral and historical connection to U.S. slavery, segregation, and racial discrimination, and this connection has influenced a unique cultural and political experience for which African Americans have come to identify with one another and “Blackness,” in general (Allen et al., 1989; Cross 1991; Sanders Thompson 1995, 2001; Sanders Thompson and Akbar, 2003). What remains unclear, however, is the extent to which African Americans feel equally connected to other Black ethnic groups who reside in the United States.

There are grounds for which African American, West Indian, and African Blacks can find a psychological connection. For one, Blacks from the Caribbean and from the continent of Africa also share in a diasporic experience with the trans-Atlantic slave trade or racialized subjugation, an experience that “otherized” them vis-à-vis Whites (Hanchard 1999; Hesse 2007). In fact, latter nineteenth and early- to mid-twentieth century African-descended intellectuals and leaders entertained uniting these experiences under both ideological vision and political activism, better known as Pan-Africanism (Ackah 1999; Abdul-Raheem 1996; Von Eschen 1997). This Pan-Africanist spirit espoused views as vast as pride in Black history and culture; a rekindled connection or return to Africa; liberation of African-descended peoples oppressed by slavery, colonialism, or neo-colonialism; or unification of African nations into a unionized organization (Ackah 1999). However, with post-civil rights activism and centering of American Black leadership on domestic racism issues, along with outside pressures to repress anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist opposition, the Black American Pan-Africanist perspective turned increasingly inward, focusing less integratively on issues affecting Blacks in the Caribbean and African contexts of the Black Diaspora (Von Eschen 1997).

It is at this juncture that diasporic discourses among African Americans focused more on the American context, perhaps lending themselves to a more limited vision of linked destinies across African-descended people in the world and even domestically. With the influence that elites can have on mass public opinion (Zaller 1992), fewer diasporic discourses among American Black elites also may lead to less emphasis on psychological ties, or cross-ethnic linked fate among Black ethnic group members. Given this logic, Black ethnic differences perceivably become more rigid and less conducive for a diasporically linked fate among African Americans, and the feeling of what happens to West Indians and Africans as a shared experience, or an inter-linked outcome, becomes perceivably diminished.

Second, along with the theoretical notion that African Americans feel closer connections to one another because of their experiences with racial discrimination in the United States, the current Black linked fate theory ignores the possibility that West Indian and African Blacks (as historically non-native Blacks) have different experiences with race based on their formative relationships with other racial groups in their native countries, which may prove perceivably disruptive for African Americans’ cross-ethnic psychological linkages and political consciousness with West Indian and African groups in the States (Assensoh 2000; Rogers 2006; Waters 1999). Thus, despite similarities in racist and oppressive structures affecting African-

descended peoples in the Caribbean and African contexts of the Diaspora, their historical experiences with race in their nations of origin remain distinct from Black Americans' experiences (Waters 1999).

Black people from the Caribbean have had a different history of racial subjugation by colonizing countries. This history also includes a longer experience of autonomy within generally Black-dominated political and social environments. Similarly, Black people from Africa have experienced colonization; yet, their autonomic national experiences have occurred as late as the mid-twentieth century (Abdul-Raheem 1996). In the context of the United States, Black immigrants' former racial experiences in their countries of origin also may inform different political orientations from African Americans' (Rogers 2000, 2006).

African Americans similarly have experienced racial subjugation through slavery and *de jure* segregation, but distinctly, they have had a longer transition toward full(er) sociopolitical incorporation in a White-dominated society. They also live in a nation where they continue to be a racial minority in many contexts, a dynamic that has a profound effect on African Americans' interactions with Whites, as Whites retain a majority in social, political, and economic spaces (Bonilla-Silva 2001). This makes sociopolitical incorporation and power in the United States characteristically different from generally Black-dominated nations in the Caribbean and Africa.

Black-White relations in the United States also influence dichotomous perspectives on politics and public policy (Kinder and Sanders, 1996). These relations also have influenced the historic strategies and goals of African Americans' political activism toward political inclusion (Dawson 1994; McAdam 1982; Tate 1993). Even today in an era of supposed equality, the psychological effects of this racial dynamic affect African Americans' world view and ideological orientations about their relations with Whites (Dawson 2001; Harris-Lacewell 2004; White 1984), and Black-White relations have solidarized African American identities and political interests (Allen et al., 1989; Dawson 1994). Navigating race relations in the United States also remains an important aspect of African Americans' socialization experiences, which inform their racial identity development (Dawson 1994; Demo and Hughes, 1990; Peters 1985; Sanders Thompson 1995). Moreover, as African Americans are more mistrusting of Whites than Africans and West Indians, variation in attitudes toward Whites also may prove challenging for unifying ideological perspectives and mobilizing against racial injustices (Phelps et al., 2001). Thus, we must explore the extent to which African Americans (and other Black ethnic groups) perceive differences in one another's sociopolitical and racial experiences in America.

Third, the common measure for Black linked fate, "How much do you feel that what happens to other Blacks in America will affect what happens in your life?" (Dawson 1994) does not ask about linkages with specific Black ethnic groups in America. Instead, it focuses solely on racial group identification, amalgamating all Black ethnic group experiences into one presumed to be based upon historical and contemporary consciousness of African Americans. Black immigrants' knowledge of and emotional ties to African Americans' racial experiences may not mirror African Americans', and their historical outlook and intra-racial group affinities also may differ (Rogers 2000, 2006; Vickerman 2001, 1994). Evidence suggests Afro-Caribbean immigrants understand their connection to African Americans through a common African ancestry and a shared historical experience with the trans-Atlantic slave trade (Rogers 2006), but their nationality takes precedence over their racial identity (Foner 2001), facilitating political consciousness on behalf of Caribbean interests, in the case of West Indian Blacks. African Americans, in turn, perceive pursuit of Caribbean political interests as antithetical to racial solidarity (Rogers 2006), and with African

Americans, racial solidarity is important for political mobilization (Dawson 1994; Tate 1993).

In addition, Black solidarity may be challenged by Black immigrants' understanding about who is "Black" in the American context. Definitions of "Blackness" in other nations, especially in the Caribbean, may vary depending upon socioeconomic status, giving some affluent Blacks the opportunity to transcend their racial classification as "Black" and become "Whitened" (Waters 1994, 1999). Still, scholars disagree about the universality of this transcendence across Afro- and Latin-Caribbean countries (Sawyer 2006). Nonetheless, these experiences can influence how West Indian Blacks perceive themselves in the United States and how they relate to African Americans or other Blacks (Africans) and Whites. For African Americans who have parents that were born or lived outside the United States, they should be more sensitive to West Indians and Africans, as their parents would be considered Black immigrants as well.

African Americans, additionally, may perceive West Indians and Africans in the United States as having fewer, if not different, experiences with American racism because as immigrants, they have shorter histories and possibly less understanding about race relations in the United States, in particular. When Black ethnic groups are perceived as having variant sociopolitical circumstances in the United States, stronger identification with these groups becomes more tenuous, in some instances dampening the potential for Black, inter-ethnic coalitions (Assensoh 2000; Jones-Correa 2000; Rogers 2000, 2006). In the context of New York City (Stoller 2001) and other places with highly-concentrated African populations such as in the Northeast (Assensoh 2000), for example, relations among Black ethnic groups have been more tense (Rogers 2006; Waters 1994, 1999).

Fourth, studies of relationships among African, African American, and African Caribbean persons, moreover, find evidence supporting more negative perceptions about inter-ethnic relations among Blacks in America, especially between African Americans and other ethnic groups, but not necessarily between West Indians and Africans (Jackson and Cothran, 2003). African Americans also subscribe more negatively than West Indians and Africans to stereotypes about other Black ethnic groups in the United States, perceiving these groups as more conniving, distrustful, aggressive, suffering from a slavery mentality and a legacy of oppression, feeling more superior over other Blacks, or suffering from colonialism and war (Jackson and Cothran, 2003). In hand, while there are several generations of West Indian and African immigrants in the United States, for African Americans, perceiving those who identify explicitly as "West Indian" or "African" may suggest "difference," whether as an artifact of distinguishing or even distancing oneself from being "African American" or from being simply, "just Black" in the United States. Such perceptions detract from intra-racial identification.

The study of diasporic linked fate in the United States explores how African Americans think about their identity with respect to other Black ethnic groups in the context of the United States. The measures of diasporic linked fate examine how African Americans feel a "linkage" with West Indians and Africans, separately. Measures also interrogate how much congruency African Americans perceive between these groups' racial experiences in the United States.

Based upon the aforementioned historical, social, and political dynamics which situate African Americans in different psychological spaces from West Indians and Africans in the United States, in general, we should see African Americans perceive Black linked fate differently depending upon ethnic distinctions. By ascertaining how African Americans identify with or feel linked fate with other Black ethnic groups in

America, as Assensoh (2000) and Alex-Assensoh (2000) suggest scholars should do, we can enhance our understanding of the various contours of African Americans' identity. Currently, however, our knowledge about Black inter-ethnic identification remains limited by a conceptualization of linked fate that focuses more narrowly on Black identification based on African Americans' racial history and identification with one another. Furthermore, the models of diasporic linked fate account for the explanatory influences of messages learned about race (racial socialization), which influence racial identification formation, and personalized discrimination experiences, which influence perceptions of race, on African Americans' group identification.

The Role of Racial Socialization in Diasporic Linked Fate

Racial socialization is the process for which Black Americans learn about the influence of race on their lives (Demo and Hughes, 1990; Peters 1985). Various agents (family, peers, Black institutions, and media) inform Black Americans about their racial group status, history, fellow group members, and relationships with other racial groups (Allen et al., 1989; McAdoo 2007; Sanders Thompson 1994). However, most studies of racial socialization focus on the influence of familial messages on Blacks' racial socialization experiences (McAdoo 2007), and when Black Americans learn about race, they learn socialization messages with different emphases. Because racial socialization messages also inform racial identity among African Americans (Dawson 1994; Sanders Thompson 1999), they are important for testing their effects on African Americans' sense of identity, or diasporic linked fate with West Indian and African people in the United States. The following racial socialization messages should affect diasporic linked fate: messages about Black unity, Black culture, American racial history, and intraracial relations.

Emphasis on Black Unity across Black Ethnic Groups in the United States. African Americans who are taught about ethnic diversity should be more inclined to feel linked fate with other Black ethnic groups. Moreover, those who are taught about these groups unifying, should feel a stronger diasporic linkage.

Emphasis on Black Culture. African Americans who are inculcated with an emphasis on appreciating Black culture should regard other Black ethnic groups as similar to themselves, perhaps seeing a linkage to West Indians and Africans as fellow partakers in African-descended culture. Cultural differences among the ethnic groups should be minimized, with a maximization of linked fate.

Emphasis on Fighting Racial Discrimination. African Americans who receive messages emphasizing a struggle to dismantle racial discrimination should sense a greater linkage with other Blacks in the Diaspora, who by dint of their race, likely face similar experiences with racial discrimination. Race, not ethnicity, becomes the basis of how one develops one's political consciousness. African Americans who are exposed to stronger messages about the significance of race for the social, political, and economic experiences of all Black group members, then, should be less conscious of ethnic differences and more attune to diasporic linked fate.

Emphasis on Blacks Getting along with One Another. This message imparts a perspective of Blacks getting along with one another, despite their differences, perhaps ethnic or otherwise. Having received a greater emphasis on this message, should increase African Americans' linkage with West Indians and Africans.

Emphasis on Considering Ways to Advance the Black Racial Group. This message emphasizes racial group advancement, acknowledging that racial experiences unify a Black-focused cause and recognizing the need for all individual group members to advance beyond their current conditions. Having received greater emphasis on this

message, should increase African Americans' linkages to other Black racial group members in the United States.

Emphasis on the Effect of Racial Discrimination on Black Group Advancement. This message also emphasizes the group-centered nature of race. It situates African Americans' current (socioeconomic) circumstances as an artifact of discrimination based on race. Greater emphasis on this racial socialization message should increase diasporic linked fate and diminish perceptions of disparate ethnic experiences in the United States.

Emphasis on Historical Racial Discrimination Being a Part of Black Americans' Experiences throughout History. This racial socialization message, again, focuses on the history of race in America and its effect on all Blacks' experiences. With emphasis on a racial historical connection of "Blacks," African Americans should feel more linked to Blacks in the American Diaspora.

Emphasis on Black Ethnic Suspicion. When African Americans are socialized about messages that emphasize caution in dealing with West Indians and Africans, they should feel less linked to these groups and more likely to perceive different ethnic group experiences and less diasporic linked fate.

Frequency of Racial Discrimination

Despite advances in racial equality for Black Americans, perceptions of racial discrimination remain high among this group (Hochschild 1996; Sanders Thompson 1992; Sigelman and Welch, 1991). For example, as much as sixty percent of Blacks report experiencing racial discrimination throughout their lifetime (Kessler et al., 1999). Past racial discrimination experiences also influence how Blacks attribute racial prejudice to racially ambiguous circumstances (Caldwell and Jefferson, 2002; Sellers and Shelton, 2003). African Americans who have had more personal experiences with racial discrimination should be more sensitive to other Blacks, regardless of their ethnicity, and feel more "linked" to other Black group members.

Hypotheses

- H₁: Racial socialization experiences that emphasize racial unity will increase diasporic linked fate and reduce perceptions of ethnic differences.
- H₂: Racial socialization experiences that emphasize intraracial and ethnic differences should decrease Black diasporic linked fate and increase perceptions of ethnic differences.
- H₃: More frequent racial discrimination experiences will enhance diasporic linked fate and reduce perceptions of ethnic differences.
- H₄: African Americans with socio-demographic experiences outside the United States should express more diasporic linked fate with West Indian and African peoples in the United States and less cognizance of ethnic differences.

Data and Methods

The data in this analysis are analyzed from the National Politics and Socialization Survey (NPSS). The NPSS is a national, web-based survey developed by the author and administered by Luth Research Group via SurveySavvy. SurveySavvy has a panel of potential respondents of which respondents were contacted to participate in the survey based on a stratified sampling technique that over-sampled for Black Americans and that specified U.S. Census matching on gender and age characteristics.

Respondents sampled for the survey administration then opted-in to participating in the survey. NPSS was in the field from December 26, 2007 through January 2, 2008. It comprises $N = 1021$ respondents, of which $n = 517$ Blacks, $n = 252$ Whites, and $n = 252$ Latinos. Questions on the survey ask respondents about their racial (Blacks only) and political socialization experiences, social, political, and interracial and intraracial attitudes, and attitudes about current events. Analyses were limited to Blacks in the survey who identified specifically as African American, or $n = 424$.

Dependent Variables

This analysis estimates several multiple regression models as separate measures of African Americans' linked fate to (1) Blacks in America, in general (2) West Indians in America (3) Africans in America, and a separate analysis of (4) differences in Black ethnic group experiences in the United States. Diasporic linked fate is modeled as an additive measure of African Americans' linked fate with West Indians and Africans in America.

Linked Fate with Blacks in America. Respondents were asked, "How much do you think that what happens generally to Black people in this country will have something to do with what happens in your life? Unlike the response variable that Dawson (1994) uses to analyze linked fate, which coded the variable as (1) Not at all (2) Not much (3) Some (4) A lot, here, linked fate is scaled as a five-category response as follows: (1) Not a very great deal to do (2) Not a good deal to do (3) Somewhat to do (4) A good deal to do (5) A very great deal to do.

Linked Fate with West Indians. Respondents were asked, "How much do you think that what happens generally to Black Americans with Caribbean/West Indian descent (parents born in the Caribbean) will have something to do with what happens in your life? Responses are scaled: (1) Not a very great deal to do (2) Not a good deal to do (3) Somewhat to do (4) A good deal to do (5) A very great deal to do.

Linked Fate with Africans. Respondents were asked, "How much do you think that what happens generally to Black Americans with African descent (parents born in Africa) will have something to do with what happens in your life? Responses are scaled: (1) Not a very great deal to do (2) Not a good deal to do (3) Somewhat to do (4) A good deal to do (5) A very great deal to do.

Perceived Commonality and Differences in U.S. Black Ethnic Experiences. Respondents were asked, "Black Americans can have different heritages, or what is also known as 'ethnicities.' They can have African American heritage (parents born in the United States), Caribbean/West Indian heritage (parents born in Haiti, Jamaica, etc.), or African heritage (parents born in Ghana, South Africa, Sudan, etc.). Considering that there are several different Black ethnic groups in the U.S., to what degree do you think there is a difference in how each of these Black ethnic groups experiences life as Black people in the U.S.?" Responses are scaled: (1) A very big difference (2) A big difference (3) Somewhat of a difference (4) Not a big difference (5) Not a very big difference.

Diasporic Linked Fate. This measure is an additive measure of respondents' scores on both the Caribbean linked fate and African linked fate measures ($\alpha = .83$). The scale ranges from 2 to 10 (Mean = 5.814; Std. Dev. = 2.06).

Independent Variables

Demographic Characteristics. I control for several demographic characteristics. *Gender* is coded 1 = female, 0 = male. *Age* is scaled from youngest to oldest (age eighteen

and over). *Income* is scaled as household income, from \$14,999 or less through \$250,000 or over. I include a dummy variable for region—*North* (North = 1, else = 0)—because this is the region where the most Black immigrants are located. People who have more contact with West Indians and Africans in these Northern contexts should have attitudes that are distinct from those who live in other parts of the country. In fact, African Americans who live in the North, according to previous studies, tend to have had more contentious relations with West Indian immigrants, in particular (Rogers 2006). Their attitudes should be more negative toward this group. I include a dummy variable for *South* to control for the unifying racial effect that the Southern context should have on Blacks living in this region due in part to the historical experience of Jim Crow, by which all Blacks were racialized based on their phenotypes in ways that should unify them more as far as Black linked fate. *Education* is scaled from ninth grade through doctoral degree. The analysis is limited to respondents who identify as “African American.”

Childhood Socio-Demographic Context. Several measures of the physical context in which the respondents learned about race and ethnic relations are controlled for in the models. To gauge differences in the way that African Americans may have been socialized about race, those who have *Parents Born Outside U.S.* (1 = yes, 0 = no) may have different racial socialization experiences from those with parents born in the United States, as their parents will have been foreign-born Blacks with possibly different world views of race relations from their native countries. This personal experience with foreign-born Black parents also should increase identification with other Black ethnic groups. Those respondents with *Parents Born in the South* (1 = yes, 0 = no), may be more likely to learn about the history of racial discrimination and the way in which racism against Blacks in general operated in America, and therefore, feel a greater connection to Blacks, regardless of their ethnicity. Similarly, how respondents come to understand intra-racial linkages will be affected by where they grew up. That is, if one *Grew Up Outside the U.S.* (1 = yes, 0 = no), then one should be more sensitive to Black ethnicity as one has become more familiar with cultural experiences as a Black person outside the United States. Those respondents who *Grew Up in the North* (1 = yes, 0 = no) should be more familiar with Black ethnic differences. However, the strife of Black ethnic relations should be more evident in the Northeastern context. These respondents should feel less connected to West Indian and African Blacks. On the contrary, due to the racialization of Blackness that was prevalent in the South, regardless of one’s ethnicity, African Americans who *Grew Up in the South* should feel a greater affinity toward Blacks with different ethnicities.

Intra-Racial Socialization Measures. For this analysis, several measures of racial socialization are tested. All Black respondents were asked to state the extent to which certain messages about being Black in America were relayed to them either by their parents or guardians. All racial socialization measures are scaled: (0) Not emphasized at all (1) Not much emphasis (2) Neither emphasized nor de-emphasized (3) Some emphasis (4) Much emphasis. Respondents were asked the extent to which their racial socialization emphasized the following: (1) *Black Unity across Ethnicities*, or “Black people have different ethnicities (American, African, Caribbean, etc.), and they should stick together.” (2) *Black Cultural Importance*, or “Black culture and heritage are important.” (3) *Fighting Racial Discrimination*, or “Black people should fight against racial discrimination.” (4) *Getting Along with Blacks*, or “Black people should get along with one another.” (5) *Consideration of Black Group Advancement*, or “Blacks should consider ways to advance the Black group in society.” (6) *Effect of Discrimination on Black Group Advancement*, or “discrimination has affected Black

people's advancement in society." (7) *Black Ethnic Suspicion*, or "African Americans should be suspicious of dealing with West Indians and Africans." (8) *Black Historical Discrimination*, or "Black people have dealt with racial discrimination throughout history."

Frequency of Discrimination Experiences. Respondents were asked, "How often would you say that you have experienced racial discrimination?" (0 = never, 4 = very often).

Membership in Black Organizations. Respondents who were members of organizations that "promoted the advancement of Black Americans" were coded as "1 = yes" and "0 = no." With membership in Black organizations, African Americans should feel a greater affinity toward Black ethnic groups.

The Models

For only the models of Black linked fate and differences in Black ethnic groups' experiences, Model 1 includes all the aforementioned independent variables, with the exception of the racial socialization variables. Model 2 for these dependent variables includes the addition of the intra-racial socialization variables, and Model 3 also includes the Caribbean and African linked fate variables as independent variables, in addition to all the independent variables and the intra-racial socialization measures. Specifically for the model of Black linked fate, I include the dependent variable, "differences in U.S. Black ethnic experiences," as an independent variable. In turn, I include the Black linked fate measure as an independent variable in the "differences in U.S. Black ethnic experiences" model. Last, I examine the determinants of diasporic linked fate using several of the aforementioned variables.

RESULTS

Black Linked Fate

As Table 1 illustrates, most African Americans feel that what happens to other Black people generally has "somewhat to do" with their personal lives. Turning to the regression model of Black linked fate, with the exception of Model 2 in Table 2, higher education levels modestly enhance African Americans' feelings that their individual experiences are tied to the experiences of the Black racial group. Similarly,

Table 1. African Americans' Diasporic Linked Fate

	Black Linked Fate	Caribbean Linked Fate	African Linked Fate
Not a very great deal to do	3%	11%	10%
Not a good deal to do	11	28	23
Somewhat to do	34	36	39
A good deal to do	26	17	18
A very great deal to do	25	9	9
N =	404	390	394
Mean =	3.80	2.85	3.04
Std. Dev. =	1.41	1.09	1.17

Source: 2007 National Politics and Socialization Survey

Table 2. Determinants of Black Linked Fate

Covariates	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Female	-.0399 (.1181)	-.0106 (.1223)	-.0127 (.1178)
Age	-.0029 (.0045)	-.0029 (.0046)	-.0012 (.0045)
Income	-.0010 (.0335)	-.0097 (.0339)	-.0098 (.0328)
Education	.0529* (.0303)	.0491 (.0307)	.0490* (.0293)
South	-.3027** (.1468)	-.2547* (.1501)	-.1686 (.1412)
Childhood Socio-Demographic Context Measures			
Respondent's Parents from Outside the U.S.	.0036 (.5071)	-.0291 (.5214)	-.0207 (.4914)
Respondent's Parents from South	.0376 (.1308)	.0209 (.1332)	-.0032 (.1291)
Respondent Grew Up Outside U.S.	-.1085 (.5473)	-.1463 (.5577)	-.1641 (.5214)
Respondent Grew Up in the South	-.0688 (.1544)	-.0973 (.1564)	-.0510 (.1473)
Member of Black Organization	-.3215** (.1475)	-.3121** (.1520)	-.1749 (.1466)
Frequency of Discrimination Experiences	.4210**** (.0624)	.4096**** (.0640)	.2659**** (.0644)
Fewer Differences in Black Ethnic Experience in U.S.	-.0621 (.0484)	-.0772 (.0498)	-.1014** (.0481)
Intra-Racial Socialization Messages			
Black Unity across Ethnicities	—	.0457 (.0469)	-.0128 (.0455)
Black Cultural Importance	—	.0547 (.0801)	.0028 (.0773)
Fighting Racial Discrimination	—	-.0386 (.1038)	-.0317 (.1019)
Getting Along with Blacks	—	-.0737 (.0721)	-.0493 (.0683)
Consideration of Black Group Advancement	—	.0225 (.0606)	-.0225 (.0584)
Effect of Discrimination on Black Group Advancement	—	.1054 (.0746)	.1122 (.0711)
Black Ethnic Suspicion	—	-.0173 (.0454)	-.0106 (.0481)
Black Historical Discrimination	—	-.0217 (.1122)	.0563 (.1065)
Diasporic Linked Fate Measures			
Caribbean Linked Fate	—	—	.1367* (.0830)
African Linked Fate	—	—	.2995**** (.0796)
Constant	3.156**** (.5535)	3.006**** (.6193)	1.799*** (.6161)
R-Squared	0.185	0.199	0.333
N =	323	323	305

Source: 2007 National Politics and Socialization Survey

Note: *p ≤ .10; **p ≤ .05; ***p ≤ .01; ****p ≤ .001

African Americans who experienced more frequent racial discrimination feel a stronger connection to other Blacks. Contrary to expectation, however, being a member of an organization that promotes the advancement of Black people reduces linked fate with other Black people in Models 1 and 2; however, this effect appears to be mitigated by the addition of Caribbean and African linked fate variables in Model 3. Perceiving fewer differences in Black ethnic experiences in the United States also, surprisingly, reduces Black linked fate. Meanwhile, none of the intra-racial socialization messages predict Black linked fate. Sharing linkages with West Indians and Africans in the United States, however, increases African Americans' linked fate with other Blacks.

Caribbean Linked Fate

African Americans feel less linkage with West Indians or Caribbeans in the United States. Despite thirty-six percent of African Americans feeling that what happens to West Indians' lives has "somewhat to do" with their lives (as noted in Table 1), thirty-nine percent feel there is not much of a nexus. According to the regression models for Caribbean linked fate in Table 3, older African Americans and members of organizations that promote the advancement of Black people feel less connected to West Indians. African Americans who live in the North, however, are more inclined to feel linked to this group. Having more frequent racial discrimination experiences and perceiving fewer differences in Black ethnic experiences in the United States also augment this perceived connection. Unlike the Black linked-fate model, two racial socialization messages influence Caribbean linked fate—Black unity and Black cultural importance. Increased emphasis on both these messages during parent-family racial socialization enhances linked fate with Afro-Caribbeans.

African Linked Fate

African Americans also feel less connected to Africans in the United States. However, as Table 1 elucidates, more African Americans express their linkage as being "somewhat to do" with their lives than other "Blacks" in general and West Indians. Similar to the effects in the Caribbean linked-fate models, Table 3 illustrates that living in the North and having more frequent racial discrimination experiences enhance linked fate with Africans in the United States, whereas membership in an organization advancing Black people's interests reduces such fate. Having received more emphasis on the racial socialization message, "Black unity across ethnic groups," increases African linked fate. Unlike the Caribbean linked-fate model, however, having received emphasis on Black historical discrimination in the United States reduces perceived linkages with Africans in the United States. The racial socialization message about the importance of Black culture, in addition, is not statistically relevant. Perceptions of ethnic-living differences also lack statistical import in African linked fate, whereas they are statistically predictive in the Caribbean linked-fate model.

Perceived Commonality and Differences in Black Ethnic Experiences

Thus far, perceiving ethnic differences in Black Americans' living experiences explains some attitudes about linked fate with other Blacks; yet, the results are somewhat contradictory for "Blacks" versus specific Black ethnic groups. On the one hand, perceiving fewer ethnic differences reduces linked fate with other Blacks in general. On the other hand, perceiving fewer ethnic differences enhances linked fate with

Table 3. Determinants of Linked Fate Measures

Covariates	Black Linked Fate	Caribbean Linked Fate	African Linked Fate	Diasporic Linked Fate
Female	-.0127 (.1178)	-.0659 (.1207)	.1123 (.1250)	.0145 (.2301)
Age	-.0012 (.0045)	-.0106*** (.0046)	.0010 (.0047)	-.0102 (.0087)
Income	-.0098 (.0328)	-.0048 (.0339)	-.0231 (.0349)	-.0372 (.0645)
Education	.0490* (.0293)	-.0023 (.0306)	.0154 (.0315)	.0151 (.0579)
South	-.1686 (.1412)	—	—	—
North	—	.4445** (.2146)	.4246* (.2214)	.8992** (.4078)
Childhood Socio-Demographic Context Measures				
Respondent's Parents from Outside the U.S.	-.0207 (.4914)	.4654 (.5096)	-.2049 (.5280)	.2969 (.9649)
Respondent's Parents from South	-.0032 (.1291)	.0124 (.1292)	.0613 (.1319)	.0562 (.2453)
Respondent Grew Up Outside U.S.	-.1641 (.5214)	.0587 (.5495)	-.1452 (.5699)	-.1243 (1.040)
Respondent Grew Up in the South	-.0510 (.1473)	—	—	—
Respondent Grew Up in the North	—	-.1493 (.1888)	-.0907 (.1960)	-.2410 (.3579)
Membership in Black Organization	-.1749 (.1466)	-.3225** (.1513)	-.4418*** (.1563)	-.7627*** (.2864)
Frequency of Discrimination Experiences	.2659**** (.0644)	.3370**** (.0632)	.3369**** (.0652)	.6723**** (.1196)
Intra-Racial Socialization Messages				
Black Unity across Ethnicities	-.0128 (.0455)	.1304**** (.0464)	.1342*** (.0479)	.2554**** (.0879)
Black Cultural Importance	.0028 (.0773)	.1602** (.0797)	.1296 (.0831)	.3012** (.1520)
Fighting Racial Discrimination	-.0317 (.1019)	-.1249 (.1016)	.0075 (.1066)	-.1519 (.1956)
Getting Along with Blacks	-.0493 (.0683)	-.0546 (.0709)	-.0645 (.0735)	-.1045 (.1345)
Consideration of Black Group Advancement	-.0225 (.0584)	.0809 (.0606)	.0295 (.0625)	.1008 (.1151)
Effect of Discrimination on Black Group Advancement	.1122 (.0711)	-.0119 (.0735)	.0136 (.0759)	-.0009 (.1397)
Black Ethnic Suspicion	-.0106 (.0481)	.0233 (.0500)	-.0031 (.0513)	.0274 (.0947)
Black Historical Discrimination	.0563 (.1065)	-.0866 (.1102)	-.1878* (.1139)	-.2497 (.2089)
Black Linked Fate	—	—	—	—
Caribbean Linked Fate	.1367* (.0830)	—	—	—
African Linked Fate	.2995**** (.0796)	—	—	—
Fewer Differences in Black Ethnic Experiences	-.1014** (.0481)	.1196** (.0495)	.0247 (.0511)	.1548* (.0937)
Constant	1.799*** (.6161)	2.753**** (.4974)	2.701**** (.6381)	5.509**** (1.173)
R-Squared	0.333	0.222	0.193	0.221
N =	305	310	314	308

Source: 2007 National Politics and Socialization Survey
 Note: *p ≤ .10; **p ≤ .05; ***p ≤ .01; ****p ≤ .001

Table 4. African Americans' Perceptions of Differences in Black Ethnic Experiences of Blacks in America

	Black Ethnic Experiences
A very big difference	16%
A big difference	24
Somewhat of a difference	38
Not a big difference	12
Not a very big difference	10
N =	414
Mean =	2.77
Std. Dev. =	1.16

Source: 2007 National Politics and Socialization Survey

Caribbean Americans, in particular. Attitudes about Black ethnic experiences, therefore, deserve closer inspection.

Table 4 indicates that most African Americans perceive differences in Black ethnic groups' living experiences. Of all the demographic variables, Table 5 shows that none offer statistical import, with the exception of growing up in the North (Model 3), which only modestly affects one seeing fewer differences between Black ethnic groups' living experiences. Consistently across all three models, membership in organizations that promote the advancement of Black people modestly increases African Americans' perceiving Black ethnic differences. Having more Black linked fate reduces perceived commonality, whereas having higher Caribbean linked fate increases perceived commonality.

Several racial socialization messages influence perceptions of ethnic differences. Black unity across Black ethnic groups in the United States, as expected, increases African Americans' perceptions of unified ethnic experiences in America. On the contrary, those who learned racial socialization messages that emphasized getting along with other Blacks perceive more differences in ethnic living experiences. As expected, African Americans who learned messages emphasizing suspicion in dealing with West Indians and Africans perceive fewer similarities among Black ethnic groups in America.

Diasporic Linked Fate

As Table 3 illustrates, living in the North enhances African Americans' linkages to West Indians and Africans in the United States. Interestingly, no other demographic or childhood socio-demographic variables explain diasporic linked fate; however, these variables also lacked statistical significance in the separate models for Caribbean and African linked fates. Once again, membership in an organization promoting the advancement of Black people reduces diasporic linked fate, and more frequent racial discrimination experiences increase diasporic linked fate. Only two racial socialization measures influence and enhance diasporic linked fate—messages about Black unity and Black cultural importance. Perceiving fewer differences in Black ethnic experiences modestly increases diasporic linked fate.

Table 5. Determinants of Perceived Commonality in Black Ethnic Groups' Living Experiences in America

Covariates	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Female	-.0887 (.1359)	-.0620 (.1390)	-.0224 (.1435)
Age	.0041 (.0052)	.0044 (.0052)	.0082 (.0055)
Income	-.0290 (.0385)	-.0234 (.0386)	-.0153 (.0400)
Education	.0082 (.0352)	.0059 (.0352)	.0177 (.0360)
North	-.2286 (.2499)	-.2807 (.2498)	-.3361 (.2589)
Childhood Socio-Demographic Context Measures			
Respondent's Parents from Outside the U.S.	-.5128 (.5900)	-.5720 (.5991)	-.7075 (.5986)
Respondent's Parents from South	-.0140 (.1444)	-.0226 (.1452)	.0467 (.1524)
Respondent Grew Up Outside U.S.	.2736 (.6443)	.2327 (.6479)	.1900 (.6432)
Respondent Grew Up in the North	.2382 (.2207)	.2857 (.2211)	.4003* (.2245)
Membership in Black Organization	-.2872* (.1710)	-.3075* (.1742)	-.3459* (.1788)
Frequency of Discrimination Experiences	-.0312 (.0718)	-.0514 (.0728)	-.0537 (.0804)
Intra-Racial Socialization Messages			
Black Unity across Ethnicities	—	.1248** (.0531)	.1022* (.0553)
Black Cultural Importance	—	.0368 (.0921)	-.0049 (.0952)
Fighting Racial Discrimination	—	-.0369 (.1153)	.0259 (.1246)
Getting Along with Blacks	—	-.1559* (.0821)	-.1710** (.0827)
Consideration of Black Group Advancement	—	.0421 (.0695)	.0322 (.0715)
Effect of Discrimination on Black Group Advancement	—	.0270 (.0850)	.0709 (.0872)
Black Ethnic Suspicion	—	-.1155** (.0517)	-.1389** (.0583)
Black Historical Discrimination	—	.0877 (.1285)	.0634 (.1299)
Black Linked Fate	—	—	-.1680** (.0723)
Caribbean Linked Fate	—	—	.3139*** (.1001)
African Linked Fate	—	—	-.1236 (.0996)
Constant	3.247*** (.6166)	3.149*** (.6856)	2.861*** (.7477)
R-Squared	0.022	0.060	0.115
N =	329	329	305

Source: 2007 National Politics and Socialization Survey

Note: * $p \leq .10$; ** $p \leq .05$; *** $p \leq .01$; **** $p \leq .001$; The dependent variable represents the measure of "perceived differences" in Black ethnic living experiences coded in the direction that is substantively interpreted as the "perceived commonality" across Black ethnic living experiences.

CONCLUSION

Black Linked Fate? Yes. Diasporic Linked Fate? Not Quite.

This study expanded the study of Black linked fate to account for African Americans' feelings of linked fate with West Indian and African people in the United States. Separate analyses accounted for determinants of Black linked fate, Caribbean linked fate, African linked fate, and overall diasporic linked fate. Results of this analysis indicate that most African Americans feel "linked" to the experiences of "Blacks" in America. This suggests that African Americans continue to understand and perceive the continuing significance that race has on the lives of Black people in the United States. More specifically, when it comes to perceiving common fate with other ethnic group members in the Black Diaspora in the United States, however, African Americans distinctly perceive differences in Black ethnic groups' living experiences, and they feel less linked to Caribbean and African peoples in the United States, specifically. Thus, despite unified racial linkages, African Americans' social group affinities appear to be based upon Americanized experiences and their own socio-cultural perceptions as a Black ethnic group.

Living in the northern region of the United States, a region with a high concentration of both West Indian and African populations, enhances African Americans' diasporic linked fate. Scholars often cite the northern context as a more contentious one for African Americans' relations with West Indians and Africans. However, in this analysis, perhaps living in an environment with a higher likelihood of cross-ethnic interactions improves inter-ethnic affinities, similar to the assertions of some scholars' group contact theories, which argue that increased contact with groups helps people become more familiar with them and diminish negative attitudes (Allport 1954), although group contact theories offer mixed results as far as cooperation or conflict and depend on context, groups involved, and conceptions of contact (Pettigrew 1986). Unfortunately, the NPSS does not include measures for extent of contact with Black ethnic groups, although these measures could help us understand better to what extent proximity explains feeling greater linkages to these groups. Investigation of group contact or proximity and even positive or negative attitudes toward West Indians and Africans also can give us a clearer understanding about how such attitudes affect linked fate perceptions among African Americans. Perhaps this result also evidences the effect that context has on racial socialization experiences.

We also cannot be certain that respondents who identify as "African American" do not have certain generational histories of immigrant lineage, which may enhance their perceived linkages with other Black ethnic groups, despite their personal identification as being "African American." In many ways, this relates to the personal nomenclature that one decides to use to describe his or her ancestral heritage, which may be more complex than surveys can determine due to individualized definitions of race and ethnic naming. This complex nomenclature of identifying "Blacks" in the Diaspora is an aspect of Pan-Africanist discourse in determining the focus and identity of "Africa" in the Diaspora and the often convoluted intertwining of this identity for the Americanized experiences of native-born "Blacks" in the United States (Ackah 1999).

Consistent across the models for Black linked fate, Caribbean linked fate, and African linked fate, racial discrimination experiences have a unifying effect on African Americans' intra-racial attitudes. The more personal experiences that one has with racial discrimination, the more they feel linked to other Black ethnic groups. Contrarily, group membership in an organization that promotes the advancement of Black people reduces diasporic linked fate. Such organizations may contribute to

African Americans' socialization about Americanized racial experiences in ways similar to what Von Eschen (1997) describes as the direction that many Black intellectuals and leaders took with regard to focusing on domestic race-related issues in America and less emphatically on issues affecting the Black Diaspora. The role that education plays in enhancing Black linked fate with Blacks in general also attests to a solidarizing effect that higher-level learning, perhaps about Blacks in the Diaspora, has on unifying "Black" relations.

Only a few intra-racial socialization messages from parents or family members explain linked-fate attitudes. Respondents who received messages emphasizing greater unity across Black ethnic groups and emphasizing the importance of Black culture feel a greater linkage to both West Indian and African peoples in the United States and are more likely to perceive that there are fewer ethnic differences in Blacks' living experiences in the United States. Racial socialization messages emphasizing the importance of Black unity and Black culture also enhance diasporic linked fate. However, learning about Black historical discrimination in the United States reduces linked fate with Africans. This perhaps suggests that learning about Americanized racial experiences increases perceived differences in Africans' experiences with race. This racial socialization message still does not explain perceived differences in ethnic groups' experiences. Nevertheless, racial socialization experiences relayed via parent-child contact reinforce the perception that race unifies Black experiences across the Black Diaspora in the United States. Meanwhile, socialization messages that may be introduced via Black organizational memberships, in this analysis, detract from Black diasporic linkage.

Overall, these results suggest that African Americans learn about race and ethnicity from different sources—parent-child, personal experiences with race, membership in Black organizations, education environments, and locales—that can offer conflicting messages about race and ethnicity and affect linked fate disparately. Moreover, these results suggest that how we understand African Americans' perceptions of "who is Black" also may be integral to their group identification. These results support the expansion of racial socialization studies to include messages from different socialization agents, the content of these messages, and African Americans' subscription to them.

Building cross-ethnic political consciousness can become a very important resource for diverse Black communities. It would even give a whole new meaning to what Orr (1999) refers to as *Black social capital*, by encouraging social and political networks across Black ethnic groups and by expanding the notion of "Black" experiences in America. Politically, with the majority of African Americans perceiving limited linked fate with West Indians and Africans in America and perceiving more differences in the living experiences of Black ethnic groups, organizing across Black ethnic groups may prove more difficult without concerted efforts by Black leaders and intellectuals to promote socio-political socialization that emphasizes an over-arching racial consciousness, despite Black ethnic differences. Overcoming such ethnic identity cleavages also may prove challenging for African American leaders who wish to build inter-ethnic coalitions among Blacks in America in an oftentimes cross-racial, competitive political context where unviable intra-racial coalitions may impede Black group political interests. Black political entrepreneurs in contexts where African Americans and West Indians and Africans interact more fluidly will have to be aware of these perceived Black ethnic differences and will have to consider how to appeal across these ethnic groups, especially if the groups have different experiences with other racial groups or if they are affected by policies differently (e.g. immigration policies).

Rogers (2006), for example, highlights how immigration has caused cleavages among Black ethnic groups in New York City. By being aware of the multi-directional perspectives of ethnic differences within Black communities, Black political entrepreneurs can strategize how to address issues like immigration among various Black ethnic group members with the foresight of cultivating “Black” political consciousness across issues that affect “Black” group members, regardless of their ethnicity. For African Americans, this entails overcoming attitudes about race and politics that may be linked to their nativity status and unique, racialized socio-political experiences that may be reminiscent of their attitudes and prospective relationships with Latino immigrants.

African Americans’ relationships with Latinos are complicated by their understanding of their own and Latinos’ positioning to Whites, as a manifestation of their concern about historical and contemporary politics related to their struggle for full citizenship in American society (Carter 2007). Similar to Carter’s racial mediation theory about African Americans’ relationships with Latinos, these attitudes may be structuring how African Americans think about “new” Black immigrant groups who they feel have different living experiences from their own, despite shared racial group membership.

The results of this paper elucidate the importance of studying ethnic diversity (and perhaps intra-racial immigration attitudes) among Blacks in America (see also Assensoh 2000). Similar to other Black ethnic groups in America, African Americans also distinguish their Black ethnic identity with respect to their group experiences in comparison to other Black ethnic groups in America. For African Americans, this sense of a national identity is an Americanized one, attesting to the way that Black national identities operate not only for West Indians and Africans but also for African Americans. Recognizing Black ethnic differences, although a challenge to the notion of Black solidarity, however, does not have to function in a way that “otherizes” Black ethnicity negatively or in a way that further divides “Blacks” in America. Communities aware of cultural differences can also embrace them in a way that can become meaningful for their sociopolitical circumstances.

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