

Introduction

This issue hosts five original articles addressing various dimensions of African-American politics, engaging perspectives from political theory to discourse analysis, to public opinion analysis. Taken together, the articles underscore the internal diversity of the black experience and black politics, as well as the great influence that the dominant white culture, both in its racial and its liberal dimension, has had on black thought and attitudes.

First, Danielle Lemi and Nadia Brown in “Melanin and Curls: Evaluations of Black Women Candidates” challenge commonly held perceptions of undifferentiated black public opinion when it comes to African-American candidates, arguing that race and gender stereotypes influence ingroup assessments. Drawing on theories of colorism and prior research on the assessment of black female candidates, they seek to determine whether darker skin tones and non-straight hairstyles lead to greater support for black female candidates among black voters, or whether black voters perpetuate negative stereotypes related to skin color and natural hair. Using experiments, they find that although such traits have a negative influence on attitudes about candidates, black women are more likely to vote for a darker candidate with natural hair.

Next, Al Tillery’s analysis of Black Lives Matter (BLM) discourse on Twitter shows that unlike commonly held assumptions, the movement has maintained an individualistic rather than an identity-based rhetoric, urging for inside politics of engagement with government in the form of petitions, contact with representatives, and voting, rather than outside politics of disruption and civil disobedience. This has important implications for the current iteration of the civil rights movement and the role it is likely to play in contemporary American politics.

A third contribution, Keisha Njeri Lindsay and Jane Gordon’s “Black on Red: Racing and Gendering 19th and 20th Century African Americans’ Interpretive Uses of Native American Political Experience,” analyzes black narratives seeking to make sense of the Native American experience with oppression and comparing it to the black experience. These narratives depicted blacks as racially superior to indigenous people able to survive and thrive circumstances that led to the near extinction of Native Americans.

In the fourth contribution to the issue, Din Anbar in “DuBois at Harvard,” offers an intimate portrait of the interracial relationship between WEB DuBois and his Harvard professor, William James. The study interrogates the role of political friendship or “racial fraternity” in historical moments and how such interactions are interpreted by the participants and others.

The final article in the series, by Katherine McCabe, shifts gears to examine public opinion on healthcare policy and the role of race and identity. “The Persistence of Racialized Healthcare Attitudes,” looks at the racial divide in support for the Affordable Care Act over a 10-year period from 2008 to 2017. The study shows that racial resentment is a key driver of white opposition to the ACA, underscoring the “racial spillover” hypothesis. At the same time, McCabe shows that the strength of ingroup identity among blacks played a key role in driving black support for healthcare reform. The findings underscore the importance of the racial divide in creating a public coalition around any future healthcare reform effort.

In addition to these original research articles, the issue is host to 10 reviews of important monographs that were published in the recent past. Akasemi Newsome reviews Jean Beaman’s book *Citizen Outsider: Children of North African Immigrants in France* (2017). Melissa R. Michelson reviews Andrea Benjamin’s book *Racial Coalition Building in Local Elections: Elite Cues and Cross-Ethnic Voting* (2017). Anne Lavanchy reviews Brenna Bhandar’s edited book, *Colonial Lives of Property. Law, Land and Racial Regimes of Ownership* (2018). Shamira Gelbman reviews Jessica Blatt’s book *Race and the Making of American Political Science* (2018). Henry Flores reviews José E. Cruz’s book *Puerto Rican Identity, Political Development, and Democracy in New York, 1960–1990* (2017). David C. Wilson reviews Ashley Jardina’s book *White Identity Politics* (2019). Minion K. C. Morrison reviews Gladys L. Mitchell-Walthour’s book *The Politics of Blackness: Racial Identity and Political Behavior in Contemporary Brazil* (2018). Andre P. Audette reviews Marion Orr and Domingo Morel’s edited book *Latino Mayors: Political Change in the Postindustrial City* (2018). Els de Graauw reviews Greg Prieto’s book *Immigrants Under Threat: Risk and Resistance in Deportation Nation* (2018). Kim W. Williams reviews Chris Zepeda-Millán’s book, *Latino Mass Mobilization: Immigration, Racialization, and Activism* (2017).

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