

## Letter

# Taking Stock of Solidarity between People of Color: A Mini Meta-Analysis of Five Experiments

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**R**ecent work suggests that solidarity between people of color (PoC) is triggered when a minoritized ingroup believes they are discriminated similarly to another outgroup based on their alleged foreignness or inferiority. Heightened solidarity then boosts support for policies that benefit minoritized outgroups who are not one's own. Available experiments on this pathway vary by participants (e.g., Asian, Black, Middle Eastern, and Latino adults), manipulations (similar discrimination as foreign vs. inferior), and pro-outgroup outcomes (support for undocumented immigrants, Black Lives Matter). We report a pre-registered mini meta-analysis of this solidarity mechanism. Across five experiments ( $N = 3,252$ ), similar discrimination as foreign or inferior reliably triggers solidarity between PoC, which then substantially increases support for pro-outgroup policies. This mediated pathway is robust to possible confounding and emerges across studies and planned contrasts of them. We discuss what the viability of this mechanism implies for further theoretic and empirical innovations in a racially diversifying polity.

**A**merica's racial sands continue to shift as the percentage of people of color (PoC) approaches half of the U.S. population, with some regions already surpassing this threshold (U.S. Census Bureau 2021). This trend is injecting newfound contingency into political relations between racially minoritized groups. Some observers see an opportunity for more political coordination between PoC to remedy racial inequities (Pérez 2021). But a sober look at more than 30 years of research reveals that indifference or conflict between PoC is the modal outcome (Benjamin 2017; Carey et al. 2016; Gay 2006; McClain and Karnig 1990; Wilkinson 2015). Tensions between minoritized groups are understandable from psychological (Tajfel et al. 1971), material (Carey et al. 2016; Gay 2006), and historical perspectives (Kim 2000). Cognitively, the presence of outgroup(s) produces ingroup favoritism—a bias toward one's own that is partly driven by a need to preserve what makes an ingroup unique (Brewer 1991). This motive aligns with the many nuances differentiating PoC, who vary in terms of their

arrival to the United States (e.g., slavery vs. voluntary immigration), treatment by U.S. institutions (e.g., law enforcement), and political goals (Carter 2019; García and Sanchez 2021).

Under what conditions, then, should we expect greater political unity between racially minoritized groups in the United States? Recent work suggests that one answer involves greater appreciation for the precise locations of PoC within America's racial hierarchy and the discrimination they endure based on these stations. Accumulating work in psychology (Zou and Cheryan 2017) and political science (Masuoka and Junn 2013) suggests that the unique positions of PoC in the racial order depend on how *foreign* and *inferior* an ingroup is perceived to be.

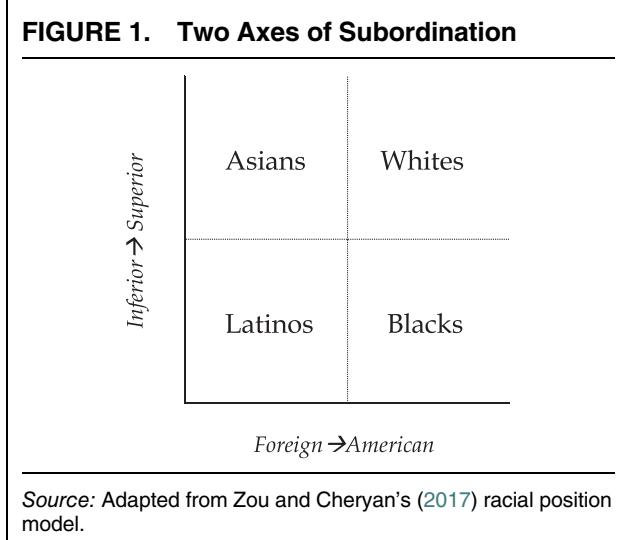
Figure 1 shows whites are perceived as the most *superior* and *American* group in this order. However, although Asian and Latino people are each stereotyped as *foreign*, Asian individuals are considered a more *superior* group than Latino and Black individuals. Moreover, although Black people are stereotyped as a more *American* minority than Latinos and Asians (Carter 2019), both Black and Latino people are deemed more *inferior* than Asians, as highlighted by the *model minority* myth—the view of Asians as “well-to-do” and less impertinent than Blacks and Latinos (Kim 2000). Finally, although not depicted in Figure 1, in-depth interview data suggest that some Middle Eastern and North African individuals (MENAs) believe that they are minoritized as *foreign*, similar to Latino and Asian people (Eidgahy and Pérez 2023). These axes of subordination underscore the contingency of U.S. interminority relations.

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Prior work finds that despite these differences in racial stratification, a sense of shared discrimination can foster perceptions of similarity as “disadvantaged minorities,” which can improve relations between PoC (Cortland et al. 2017; Craig and Richeson 2012). Seizing this insight, political psychologists have established that shared disadvantages feed into a robust sense of political cohesion as *PoC* among African American, Asian American, and Latino individuals (Chin et al. 2023; Pérez 2021). Thus, one way to leverage these findings toward greater political coalition building between minoritized groups is by triggering solidarity between PoC—the sense of commitment toward collective ends that they sometimes feel in specific contexts.

Evidence for this solidarity pathway has accumulated across several experiments. These studies suggest that manipulating whether a specific community of color senses it is discriminated *similarly* to another minoritized outgroup has downstream consequences for interminority political unity. Specifically, exposure to information that Latinos, Asian Americans, and MENAs are similarly discriminated against as *foreigners* causes them to express greater solidarity with PoC (Eidgahy and Pérez 2023; Pérez 2021; Pérez et al. 2022). This heightened solidarity then increases their support for policies that implicate outgroups beyond one’s own (e.g., MENAs become more pro-Latino and Latinos become more pro-Asian). Furthermore, when Black Americans and Latinos sense they are similarly discriminated as *inferior*, they also express greater solidarity with PoC, which propels them to become more pro-Latino and pro-Black, respectively (Pérez, Vicuña, and Ramos 2023a). Therefore, a sense of shared discrimination can be triggered among widely recognized minoritized groups (e.g., African Americans and Latinos), plus communities whose racialized experiences are less widely acknowledged (e.g., MENAs). Since some conflicts between minoritized groups spring from zero-sum competitions in settings where scarce resources are at stake (e.g., jobs) (Carey et al. 2016; Gay 2006), finding robust evidence for this proposed

mechanism will contribute to efforts at isolating pathways that mitigate interminority conflict.

We report a mini meta-analysis of five experiments ( $N = 3,252$ ) that investigated this solidarity mechanism.<sup>1</sup> These studies examined the political views of African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos, and MENAs. Our pre-registered analyses reveal that, across studies, sensing that one’s ingroup is discriminated similarly to another minoritized outgroup causes reliable increases in solidarity between PoC, which then heightens downstream support for policies that benefit an outgroup that is not one’s own. For example, solidarity with PoC propels Black adults toward more support for flexible policies toward undocumented Latinos, while Latinos express stronger endorsement of Black Lives Matter. These general patterns hold in planned contrasts between minoritized populations and the manipulated dimension in the racial order. This pathway is reasonably robust to confounding, further underlining its theoretic viability.

## RESEARCH DESIGN

Our mini meta-analysis draws on five experiments with varied communities of color (pre-registration in Section 1 of the Supplementary Material [SM.1]). These studies unfolded between May 2021 and January 2022 on Dynata’s online survey platform, and were conducted under the direction of UCLA’s Race, Ethnicity, Politics & Society Lab. Where feasible, samples were matched to census benchmarks for age, gender, and education for a group. Studies varied by sample size, sampled population, manipulation (i.e., the outgroup in focus), and pre-registration status, among other differences (Table 1). The advantage of our mini meta-analysis is its ability to unearth summary trends (if they exist) across heterogeneous experiments with conceptually comparable features.

The manipulations across studies were news briefs focusing on (1) the gradual extinction of giant tortoises (control) or (2) a racialized outgroup (e.g., Latino, Asian, or Black people) (treatment) (SM.2). For example, in Study 4, Black participants read an article about Latinos, whereas Latino participants in Study 5 read an article about Black people. Each treatment highlighted the alleged *inferiority* of Latino and Black individuals. Specifically, Latino participants read an article titled “Despite Their Presence in the United States for Decades, Many Blacks are Still Treated as Second Class Citizens, As Evidenced by Hate Crimes Data.” The article discussed the discrimination that many Black individuals experience, with hate crimes data corroborating this. A shared sense of *inferiority* is introduced by briefly noting that Black individuals are “viewed as second-class individuals, similar to many Latino people.” Comparable to other treatments in these

<sup>1</sup> Pre-registered at AsPredicted (<https://aspredicted.org/7ge6b.pdf>). Data and materials to reproduce the reported results are available at Pérez, Vicuña, and Ramos (2023b).

**TABLE 1. Key Variation in Five Experiments on Solidarity with People of Color**

Study	Date	Population	Sample size	Outgroup in treatment	Manipulate <i>inferiority</i>	Manipulate <i>foreignness</i>	Pre-registered
1	5/21	Asians	641	Latinos	No	Yes	No
2	5/21	Latinos	624	Asians	No	Yes	No
3	8/21	MENAs	472	Latinos	No	Yes	Yes
4	1/22	Blacks	807	Latinos	Yes	No	Yes
5	1/22	Latinos	819	Blacks	Yes	No	Yes

Note: MENAs = Middle Eastern and North African individuals.

studies, this manipulation had 5 out of 246 words refer to one's ingroup (i.e., Latinos), which is about 2% of the total. Accordingly, these briefs manipulated *similar* discrimination between groups, which reflects our proposed mechanism and aligns with prior work on the psychological triggers of interminority commonality (Cortland et al. 2017).

Post-treatment, participants completed a manipulation check. Those failing this check are excluded from our analyses (SM.1). To guard against possible post-treatment bias (Montgomery, Nyhan, and Torres 2018), we reanalyze our data by including all respondents who failed this check. These results yield the same substantive conclusions for all paths in our mediation analyses reported below (SM.5).

Following this check, participants completed two items on solidarity with PoC: "I feel solidarity with people of color, which include African Americans, Asian Americans, and Latinos" and "The problems of Blacks, Latinos, Asians, and other minorities are too different for them to be allies or partners" (reverse-worded). Replies ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly disagree) (all measures in SM.3).<sup>2</sup>

After this, participants expressed support for policies that prior work identifies as implicating African Americans (Pérez 2021), Asian Americans (Malhotra, Margalit, and Mo 2013), and Latinos (Abrajano and Hajnal 2015), also on a 1–7 scale. When Black people were the outgroup, participants reported support for two proposals, including "Introducing harsher penalties for hate crimes committed against Black individuals." When Asians were the outgroup, participants expressed support for a pair of proposals that previous work classifies as implicating Asian Americans, including "Increasing the number of H1-B visas, which allow U.S. companies to hire people from foreign countries to work in highly skilled occupations, such as engineering, computer programming, and high-technology" (Malhotra, Margalit, and Mo 2013).<sup>3</sup> Finally, when Latinos were the outgroup,

participants reported support for three proposals, including "Increasing the number of border patrol agents at the U.S.–Mexico border" (reverse-worded) (SM.3).

Our mini meta-analysis uses Goh, Hall, and Rosenthal's (2016) approach, which is advised when a small set of conceptually similar studies exist. Two pieces of information from each study are essential for this approach: (1) relevant effect size(s) and (2) sample sizes for each effect size. These quantities are then entered into the Open Science Framework template provided by Goh, Hall, and Rosenthal (2016) (<https://osf.io/6fh5/files/osfstorage>).

We combine relevant measures into summated indexes with a 0–1 range, where higher values reflect stronger levels of a variable. We convert all coefficients into Cohen's *d* values to convey their magnitude, with *d* values ~0.20, ~0.50, and ~0.80 as small, medium, and large, respectively. All reported *p*-values are two-tailed. Fuller details on the analyzed inputs and outputs are in SM.4.

## RESULTS: DIRECT EFFECTS OF SHARED DISCRIMINATION ON PRO-OUTGROUP SUPPORT

We first appraise the direct treatment effects on all outcomes. This path is neither necessary nor sufficient for mediation to occur (Hayes 2021), but we report it for transparency. Table 2 indicates that the reliability of this path varies substantially by study, which is expected given the lower power of this test (Hayes 2021). All estimates are positive, with a meta-analyzed effect indicating that shared discrimination mildly increases support for pro-outgroup policies ( $d = 0.153$ ,  $SE = 0.036$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

## RESULTS: SIMILAR DISCRIMINATION CAUSES INCREASES IN SOLIDARITY WITH PEOPLE OF COLOR

We next evaluate the critical path between our treatments and mediator, solidarity between PoC. Table 3 reports the results for each study, plus a meta-analyzed effect. Notwithstanding variability in the individual estimates, each one is positive and significantly different from zero. Consequently, we yield a meaningful and precisely estimated effect across all five studies ( $d = 0.175$ ,  $SE = 0.036$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This supports the

<sup>2</sup> These items do not reference MENAs, which could make it harder to uncover our proposed mechanism. However, Tables 2–4 and Figure 2 show that the MENA experiment (Study 3) yields clear evidence for our mechanism.

<sup>3</sup> The correlations between our indexes of pro-Asian and pro-Latino policies further suggest that they are capturing comparable quantities in Study 1 (Asian Ps,  $r = 0.289$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and Study 2 (Latino Ps,  $r = 0.328$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

**TABLE 2. Direct Treatment Effects on Downstream Outcomes**

Study (Sample—treatment)	Estimate ( <i>d</i> value)	<i>p</i> -value (two-tailed)	Sample size
Study 1 (Asians—foreigner treatment)	0.119	0.158	550
Study 2 (Latinos—foreigner treatment)	0.012	0.898	546
Study 3 (MENAs—foreigner treatment)	0.362	0.000	424
Study 4 (Blacks—inferiority treatment)	0.106	0.137	802
Study 5 (Latinos—inferiority treatment)	0.209	0.003	818
Meta-analyzed ( <i>d</i> )	<b>0.153</b> ( <b>0.036</b> )	0.001	3,140

Note: *d* values reflect standard deviation units. The bold entry is the meta-analyzed value, with standard error in parentheses. MENAs = Middle Eastern and North African individuals.

**TABLE 3. Treatment Effects on Solidarity with People of Color**

Study (Population—treatment)	Estimate ( <i>d</i> value)	<i>p</i> -value (two-tailed)	Sample size
Study 1 (Asians—foreigner treatment)	0.218	0.011	557
Study 2 (Latinos—foreigner treatment)	0.217	0.013	542
Study 3 (MENAs—foreigner treatment)	0.242	0.014	424
Study 4 (Blacks—inferiority treatment)	0.129	0.065	804
Study 5 (Latinos—inferiority treatment)	0.131	0.059	818
Meta-analyzed ( <i>d</i> )	<b>0.175</b> ( <b>0.036</b> )	0.001	3,145

Note: *d* values reflect standard deviation units. The bold entry is the meta-analyzed value, with standard error in parentheses. MENAs = Middle Eastern and North African individuals.

claim that exposure to shared discrimination significantly increases solidarity between PoC. But, is heightened solidarity associated with greater downstream support for policies that benefit minoritized outgroups?

## RESULTS: SOLIDARITY BETWEEN POC IS ASSOCIATED WITH PRO-OUTGROUP SUPPORT

Table 4 examines the downstream association between increases in solidarity with PoC and pro-outgroup policies. The estimates trend toward positive and moderate associations (*r*), with a hearty and positive summary relationship between our mediator and outcomes (0.366, *SE* = 0.018, *p* < 0.001). After converting this correlation into a *d* value, we see that across studies, a shift in solidarity yields a large increase in support for pro-outgroup policies (*d* = 0.790). Figure 2 depicts the entire indirect pathway, where similar discrimination increases solidarity with PoC (*d* = 0.175), which then substantially boosts individual support for pro-outgroup policies (*d* = 0.790), with all paths being highly significant at *p* < 0.001.

## RESULTS: SENSITIVITY ANALYSIS

Since our proposed mediator in these experiments is not randomly assigned, we appraise our results'

robustness by estimating the correlation (*rho*,  $\rho$ ) between errors in our outcomes and an omitted mediator (Hayes 2021). This reveals the point at which our mediation effect vanishes to zero. Table 5 shows that this mediation effect is reasonably robust to confounding. The meta-analyzed association ( $\rho$ ) between solidarity and another mediator would have to exceed 0.333 for this pathway to dissipate completely, which further underlines our mechanism's viability.

## RESULTS: PLANNED CONTRASTS

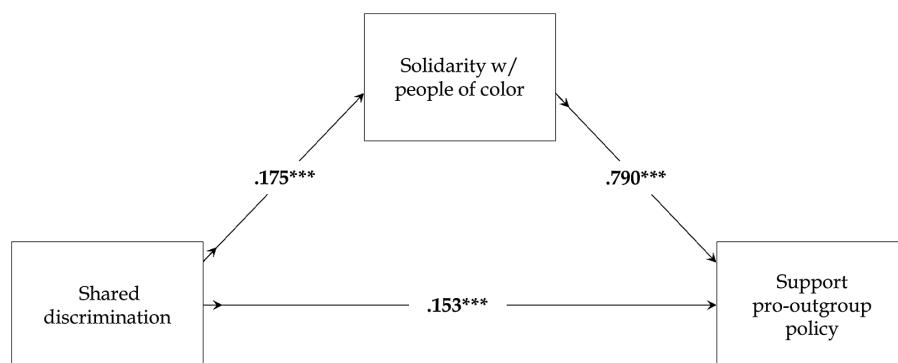
We now appraise the robustness of our results to several pre-registered contrasts (SM.1). We summarize our findings in Table 6 and discuss their details here. First, we find no reliable evidence that our treatment effects on solidarity between PoC differ significantly when comparing those studies that manipulate the *foreigner* dimension (0.224) versus *inferiority* dimension (0.130) (difference = 0.094, *t* = 1.303, *p* < 0.193). This also applies to the difference in downstream associations between solidarity and pro-outgroup policy support ( $0.81_{\text{foreign}} - 0.76_{\text{inferior}} = 0.050$ , *t* = 1.384, *p* < 0.167), which is substantively small and unreliable.

When comparing those studies with Latino versus non-Latino participants, we again find a negligible difference in our treatment effects on solidarity ( $0.165_{\text{Latinos}} - 0.183_{\text{non-Latinos}} = -0.018$ , *t* = -0.249, *p* < 0.804). However, we find that insofar as the

**TABLE 4. Solidarity's Influence on Downstream Outcomes**

Study (Population—treatment)	Estimate $r$	$p$ -value (two-tailed)	Sample size
Study 1 (Asians—foreigner treatment)	0.334	0.001	547
Study 2 (Latinos—foreigner treatment)	0.389	0.001	546
Study 3 (MENAs—foreigner treatment)	0.414	0.001	417
Study 4 (Blacks—inferiority treatment)	0.236	0.001	802
Study 5 (Latinos—inferiority treatment)	0.462	0.001	818
Meta-analyzed ( $r$ )	<b>0.366</b> ( <b>0.018</b> )	0.001	3,130
$r$ converted to $d$ value	<b>0.790</b>		

Note: The bold entry is the meta-analyzed association between our mediator and outcome in each study, with standard error in parentheses.  $d$  values reflect standard deviation units. MENAs = Middle Eastern and North African individuals.

**FIGURE 2. Solidarity Mediates the Effect of Shared Discrimination on Pro-Outgroup Policies**

Note: All paths are reliable at  $p < 0.001$ , two-tailed. The displayed coefficients represent the meta-analyzed quantities from Tables 2–4.

**TABLE 5. Sensitivity Analysis**

Study (Population—treatment)	Estimate ( $\rho$ )	Sample size
Study 1 (Asians—foreigner treatment)	0.294	547
Study 2 (Latinos—foreigner treatment)	0.274	540
Study 3 (MENAs—foreigner treatment)	0.391	417
Study 4 (Blacks—inferiority treatment)	0.260	802
Study 5 (Latinos—inferiority treatment)	0.433	818
Meta-analyzed ( $\rho$ )	<b>0.333</b> ( <b>0.018</b> )	3,124

Note: MENAs = Middle Eastern and North African individuals.  $p < 0.001$ , two-tailed.

connection between solidarity between PoC and downstream support for pro-outgroup policy is concerned, there is a meaningful difference ( $0.950_{\text{Latino}} - 0.650_{\text{non-Latino}} = 0.300$ ,  $t = -8.291$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), where non-Latino participants display stronger support for pro-outgroup policies on the basis of their heightened solidarity.

In our sample of experiments, Studies 1 and 2 were not pre-registered, but Studies 3–5 were. This feature fails to produce a significant difference in treatment effects on our mediator. Specifically, an unreliable difference emerges in the effect of our treatments on solidarity between PoC ( $0.153_{\text{pre-registered}} - 0.218_{\text{un-}}$

registered =  $-0.065$ ,  $t = 0.868$ ,  $p < 0.385$ ), whereas a similar pattern emerges in the connection between solidarity and support for pro-outgroup policy ( $0.790_{\text{pre-registered}} - 0.780_{\text{un-registered}} = 0.010$ ,  $t = 0.217$ ,  $p < 0.828$ ).

Finally, we examined whether our solidarity pathway varies reliably by the timing of studies, since the experiments occurred from 2021 to 2022. We find an insignificant difference in the treatment effects on solidarity ( $0.130_{2022} - 0.224_{2021} = -0.094$ ,  $t = -1.303$ ,  $p < 0.193$ ), while a similarly negligible pattern emerges in the association between solidarity and support for pro-outgroup policy ( $0.760_{2022} - 0.820_{2021} = -0.060$ ,  $t = -1.636$ ,

**TABLE 6. Summary of Statistical and Substantive Differences in Solidarity Pathway**

Does pathway differ by hierarchy dimension ( <i>foreign</i> vs. <i>inferior</i> )?	No
Does pathway differ by samples (Latinos vs. non-Latinos)?	Yes ( <i>only M → O link</i> )
Does pathway differ by pre-registration (pre-registered or not)?	No
Does pathway differ by timing of study (2021 vs. 2022)?	No

Note: Test statistics and *p*-values are discussed in text. M = mediator; O = outcome.

$p < 0.102$ ). This implies that the proposed mechanism uncovered in this research is robust across the temporal context under analysis.<sup>4</sup>

## IMPLICATIONS

Our analysis validates the proposed solidarity pathway between PoC. Across a wide swath of non-white communities, the degrading experience of shared racial discrimination is systematically converted into a net positive in politics. Our evidence suggests that this pathway is theoretically and statistically viable across African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos, and MENAs. Our evidence also indicates that what is needed to trigger greater solidarity between PoC is a sense of shared disadvantage as racially minoritized groups. This opens the door to creating greater synergy between our psychological model of interminority cooperation and models of interminority conflict rooted in realistic conflicts over finite resources (Carey et al. 2016; Gay 2006). One way to create this synergy is by expanding the measurement of solidarity to include items that more broadly capture the sense of *commitment* and *bonding* that is required for solidarity to propel collective action in high-stakes settings (Chin et al. 2023), including items that measure *linked fate* (Dawson 1994), which reflects a perceived sense of common circumstances and shared outcomes.

We also see an opportunity for theoretical synergy with related forms of solidarity. Growing research establishes that minoritized individuals have membership in multiple social categories (e.g., race, gender, and class). This *intersectionality* complicates (Moreau, Nuño-Pérez, and Sanchez 2019) and sometimes fractures unity in highly heterogeneous settings (Cassese 2019; Cohen 1999). Yet emerging scholarship also suggests that *intersectional solidarity* is a fruitful way to create more inclusive and sustainable social movements and coalitions (Crowder Forthcoming; Gershon et al. 2019; Strolovitch 2007; Tormos-Aponte 2017). Future scholarship can clarify the various psychological

pathways that produce distinct variants of solidarity to accomplish political objectives in terrain where individuals hold membership in multiple nominal categories, such as race, ethnicity, gender, and class.

Beyond the stigma of discrimination, racially minoritized groups also possess many strengths, which suggests that our pathway might be fruitfully expanded to convert such assets into additional triggers to solidarity between PoC. The treatments we analyzed transformed “lemons” (i.e., shared discrimination experiences) into “lemonade” (greater interminority unity). Indeed, our evidence clarifies how different aspects of discrimination can be marshaled to create unity between racially minoritized groups—a key strategic consideration for activists, organizers, and leaders of these groups. Yet minoritized groups also share a host of attributes that are positive and likely capable of producing comity between distinct communities of color, such as experiencing *resilience* in the face of racialized adversity (Brannon, Fisher, and Greydanus 2020).

Extending this pathway to actual *behavior* also stands to reveal new theoretic insights, especially given the variable connection between what one thinks and does (Chin et al. 2023). This endeavor is likely to uncover moderators of the attitude–behavior link in interminority politics, thus providing more precision in anticipating *when*, *why*, and *whom* among PoC mobilize politically.

Finally, while we uncovered a robust mediation path, more causal leverage is warranted. Scholars may consider other mediators in the pathway we isolated, while manipulating solidarity in a way that “turns off” its downstream effects (Hayes 2021). This can further validate our mechanism and allow scholars and practitioners to more confidently harness its effectiveness in politics.

## SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

To view supplementary material for this article, please visit <http://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055423001120>.

## DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Research documentation and data that support the findings of this study are openly available at the American Political Science Review Dataverse: <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/98WHCF>.

<sup>4</sup> We deviated from our pre-registration to analyze how our experiment on Asian Americans as the outgroup (Study 2) affects our results. We find no reliable evidence that our solidarity effects differ if we include Study 2 ( $d = 0.175$ ) or exclude it ( $d = 0.167$ ) (difference = 0.008,  $t = 0.197$ ,  $p < 0.844$ ). A null pattern also characterizes the difference in downstream associations between solidarity and pro-outgroup policy support ( $0.79_{\text{Asian outgroup included}} - 0.77_{\text{Asian outgroup excluded}} = 0.020$ ,  $t = 0.493$ ,  $p < 0.622$ ).

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research.

## ETHICAL STANDARDS

The authors declare that the human subjects research in this article was reviewed and approved by UCLA's Institutional Review Board (IRB). IRB approvals can be found in SM.1.

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