

Race, Sociopolitical Participation and Black Empowerment\*

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## Race, Sociopolitical Participation and Black Empowerment

### ABSTRACT

Using 1987 national sample survey data that included a large black oversample (total black N = 544), the paper re-examines black-white differences in sociopolitical participation. The findings contradict two consistent results of previous research. First, there are no interracial differences in sociopolitical participation after controlling for differences in socioeconomic status. Second, the most active segment of the black population is no longer the "politically discontented", those with a high sense of political efficacy but with low trust. Now the "politically engaged", those who exhibit high efficacy and high trust are most active among blacks. The combination of findings is best explained by the substantial degree of black political empowerment that has taken place, especially in major cities, since the mid-1960s. We discuss implications of the results for theoretical interpretations of when and why black sociopolitical behavior differs from that of whites.

Perhaps the most common definition of democracy is "rule by the people". Such an assertion implies that some portion of the electorate must become involved in the political process. Students of American politics have devoted much attention, therefore, to specifying the levels, types, objectives and consequences of mass participation (Berelson et al., 1944; Campbell et al., 1960; Verba and Nie 1972; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980). Given a traditional conception of American politics that emphasizes the importance of groups in the political process (e.g., Truman 1954; Key 1958; Dahl 1961), a question of special interest has been whether racial groups, primarily blacks and whites (but also others), differ in how much or why they become actively involved.

Competing theories concur in the observation that the levels and nature of black sociopolitical participation differs from that of whites. Whether blacks participated to a greater or lesser degree than whites and the causes of such differences, however, were subjects of little agreement. Initial disagreements emerged because some research failed to control for socioeconomic differences between the races. Some differences in conclusions reflected the lack of careful distinctions between more demanding behaviors such as working for political campaigns or community organizations, and less demanding activities such as voting. Compounding matters were differences in samples and in the time period studied.

Recently, however, a degree of consensus emerged on two points. First, blacks tend to out-participate whites when differences in socioeconomic status were taken into account (Olsen 1970; Verba and Nie 1972). Second, a strong sense of "ethnic community" or group consciousness was the stimulus to heightened black participation. In particular, very high levels of participation were found for blacks who exhibit the political orientation we

label "political discontent" (Shingles 1981; Guterbock 1983). Consistent with previous research we define the politically discontented as people who distrust political authorities yet who also feel politically efficacious. People with this type of political orientation have a motivation to act based on their lack of trust and a high perceived ability to influence political outcomes. The extraordinary levels of participation among blacks then, reflected mainly the actions of the politically discontented among them who were acting on community norms. These norms supported using politics as a vehicle for improving the status of the group.

Much of the data supporting this view of black political behavior--especially of black out-participation of whites--dates back to the 1960s.<sup>1</sup> In the ensuing twenty to twenty-five years, however, blacks made enormous strides in socioeconomic status and political influence. Key among these changes has been a fundamental alteration in the political context. For example, the number of black elected officials now exceeds six-thousand (Williams and Morris 1987). In some cities, such as Detroit, Gary, Los Angeles and Atlanta, black mayors have controlled city hall for more than a decade. In other areas, black candidates have recently been elected to the Mayors office and returned for a second term (i.e., Chicago, Philadelphia). It is plausible then, to speak of substantial, though far from ideal (Jennings 1984), "black political empowerment" in many of the nation's major cities. This increase in the control of institutionalized power by blacks is likely to have considerable impact on the level and nature of black sociopolitical behavior. Against this backdrop of important social changes and using contemporary national survey data involving a large black oversample we raise anew questions of black-white differences in sociopolitical participation.

We begin by reviewing several theoretical accounts of black political behavior and offer an alternative perspective labeled the "empowerment hypothesis". We then analyze data from the 1987 General Social Survey to test the several competing predictions. The analysis addresses, first, whether there are currently black-white differences in such activities as voting, campaigning, and community activity; second, what part a person's political orientation plays in determining the level of activity; third, the effects on participation of direct measures of each of the several hypotheses about black participation currently in the literature; and finally, we test as fully as possible our "black empowerment" thesis.

#### BACKGROUND

We identify five explanations of black-white differences in sociopolitical participation. The first hypothesis derives from the "Standard Socioeconomic Model", which holds that the tangible and psychological resources of those higher in socioeconomic status contribute to higher levels of sociopolitical involvement (cf. Orum 1966; Verba and Nie 1972). From this perspective, black-white differences in educational attainment, occupational status, and income account for lower overall rates of black participation. Importantly, the standard model does not anticipate black out-participation of whites once adjustments are made for socioeconomic status.

The "compensatory theory" of black political participation rests on the finding that blacks tend to out-participate whites when socioeconomic status has been equated. This view holds that blacks join organizations and become active in politics to an exaggerated degree in order to overcome the exclusion and feelings of inferiority forced upon them by a hostile white society. According to Myrdal (1944), Babchuk and Thompson (1962), and later

interpreters (Klobus-Edwards, Edwards, and Klemmack 1978; Guterbock and London 1983), the compensation theory views high black participation as pathological. In short, because of a sense of damaged self-worth created by white prejudice and discrimination blacks seek social validation through voluntary associations and politics.

There is some ambiguity in how to test the compensation theory. Some researchers contend that the compensation theory predicts that blacks with high self-esteem will participate more than others (McPherson 1977; Klobus-Edwards et al., 1978). Like Guterbock and London (1983), we think the most straightforward implication of the compensatory argument would make the opposite prediction. Accordingly, compensatory theory predicts that blacks with lower self-esteem have the need to compensate and therefore engage in unusual levels of organization joining, active participation, and political activity. This prediction is closer to Myrdal's and Babchuk and Thompson's treatment which viewed higher black participation as "exaggerated" and "pathological." Indeed, it is a contradiction to hold that people with high self-regard participate at high levels because of a damaged self-concept. It is also difficult to view high self-esteem as deviant or as an indicator of psychological insecurity over one's identity or place in the world.

A third theory, also aimed at explaining black out-participation of whites, has been labeled the ethnic community approach (Lane 1959; Olsen 1970). This perspective holds that membership in disadvantaged minority communities leads people to develop strong feelings of group attachment and solidarity. One product of these feelings is the emergence of norms that support, if not demand, acting collectively and through political means to improve the status of the group.

Closely linked to the ethnic community theory is research identifying group consciousness as a basis of high black political participation. For example, Olsen (1970) found that black "ethnic identifiers" tended to participate more than nonidentifiers. Verba and Nie (1972) found that blacks who mentioned race frequently in describing community conflicts were most likely to out-participate whites. Shingles (1981) reanalyzed the Verba and Nie data and found that "group consciousness" helped explain black participation because it contributed to blacks' sense of political efficacy. Miller, Gurin, Gurin, and Miller (1981) found that a multiple component measure of group consciousness predicted participation among blacks and other groups using National Election Study data.

Not all of the evidence, however, supports the ethnic community-group consciousness hypothesis. Antunes and Gaitz (1975) found that blacks and Mexican-Americans were about equally likely to express a sense of "ethnic identity." But blacks were much more active than Mexican-Americans and ethnic identity was unrelated to participation among both groups. Cohen and Kapsis (1978) developed multiple indicators of ethnic consciousness for their New York city sample of whites, blacks and Puerto Ricans, finding no important effects of ethnic consciousness on belonging to voluntary associations.

A fourth, racial climate, theory of black participation was recently advanced by Danigelis (1977). He argued that black participation reflects formal and informal rules imposed by whites on black political behavior and how blacks react to those rules. Where, or during periods when, white hostility to black political involvement is low, black participation tends to be higher. Black participation should be at it is highest where white interests dictate soliciting black support and involvement. Black

participation should be lowest where white hostility to blacks is high and blacks have few resources to counter this hostility.

We propose a fifth, alternative perspective, that is more contextual in focus. This contextual argument we label the black empowerment thesis. It rests on three assumptions. First, micro- and macro-level aspects of a person's political environment influence that person's sociopolitical orientations and behaviors. Huckfeldt and Sprague (1987) and Knoke (1988) have shown that the make-up of interpersonal networks affect partisanship and issue attitudes. Erikson, McIver and Wright (1987) showed how state political cultures influence party identification and ideology. Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1980) showed the effects of state variation in voter registration laws on electoral turnout. Relevant features of the political environment often vary from person to person or from one political jurisdiction to another. These differences are likely to influence observed levels of participation.

Our second assumption is that sociopolitical behavior has a heavily instrumental basis. Where blacks have a greater stake in institutionalized power, the black populace should be more actively involved. Like Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1980) we believe that people participate because the costs of doing so are out-weighed by the perceived benefits. These benefits can be both tangible, such as patronage jobs, or more often, a source of psychological gratification. Benefits are weighed against the costs of participation. Many of the latter are reduced by, for example, higher levels of education that reduce information costs or by occupational experiences that increase contact with decision-making officials or organized community groups.

Part of any cost-benefit calculation is a judgment of the likely outcomes



of involvement. In particular, the perceived likelihood of responsiveness of authorities to one's goals and interests is important. Where blacks hold more positions of authority, exercise more real power, and have done so for longer periods of time, more blacks should have the expectation that sociopolitical involvement has value. As Charles V. Hamilton explained: "People who have experienced positive results (albeit limited in many instances) as a function of mobilization and bargaining are much more likely to have respect for that process--indeed, to participate in it--than those who have been thwarted at every stage in trying to enter that process....The proposition is a reasonably simple one: to the extent that the process is perceived as related to the product desired, then participation will increase." (Hamilton 1984: 11). Where blacks have made great strides in office-holding there is reason to believe that the level of black participation, and perhaps even the psychological orientations that accompany it, will have changed correspondingly.

Our third assumption concerns where and the extent to which blacks have made gains in electoral office-holding. A crucial change brought about by the civil rights movement and attendant changes in court rulings and legislation is a tremendous expansion in the number of black elected officials. Williams and Morris (1987, p. 137) recently reported that the number of black elected officials rose from "fewer than 103 in 1964 to 6,384 in 1986". The largest number of black elected officials are in Southern states, where blacks are a larger fraction of the total population. Perhaps of most significance for altering the character of black political behavior, however, is the election of black mayors in the nation's major cities. As Persons explained: "...the stellar achievement of black political mobilization has been the election of

black mayors in some of America's largest cities" (1987, p. 177). In 1987, of the 28 black mayors in cities with populations larger than 50,000, 20 are in cities outside the South (Persons 1987). The vast majority of black mayors are located in smaller communities in the South. But the influence of these black office holders is constrained by the small size of the surrounding population, and the very low socioeconomic status of many of these areas. These factors place tremendous limitations on the tax base and size of city government. They also limit the ability of a mayor, whatever his race, to provide services for a constituency.

Thus, we believe it is in Northern urban areas where black political power is probably at its most effective. These cities are centers of business and tourism, and have large populations and tax bases. The experience, people and organizational base necessary to mobilize black voters should also be more highly developed in these areas. We should, as a result, find high levels of mass black involvement in these areas. Furthermore, it seems likely that the sort of distrust of government that characterized politically active blacks in the past has shifted to a more trusting orientation. In short, black political empowerment is changing how much blacks participate and the orientations conducive to greater participation.

#### DATA AND MEASURES

The data are taken from the NORC's 1987 General Social Survey (Davis and Smith 1987). This is a nationally representative multistage probability sample of English speaking adults living in the continental United States. The main GSS sample included a total of 1466 respondents, with 191 blacks, 1222 whites, and 53 nonblack-nonwhites (who are excluded from all analyses), and had an overall response rate of 75.4%. The 1987 GSS also includes a large

black oversample (N = 353) drawn as a separate sample, but using the same sampling frame. The oversample had a response rate of 79.9% and brings the total black sample size to 544. There were no statistically discernible differences between the black oversample and blacks in the main GSS in age, sex, education, family income, occupational prestige, or regional distribution.

As the core of a larger module on Sociopolitical Participation developed by the GSS Board of Overseers and principal investigators, the 1987 GSS replicated the sociopolitical participation measures developed by Verba and Nie (1972). Measures of the four major modes of participation identified by Verba and Nie--voting, campaigning, communal activity, particularized contacting of officials--and a summary index of participation are the main dependent variables in our analyses. We followed procedures used by Verba and Nie in constructing the participation measures. As a check on the procedures used to create the participation scales, we followed our procedures for the 1987 data using Verba and Nie's original 1967 sample. These measures correlated, in each case, better than .99 with the measures included in the ICPSR data set for the 1967 data. Question and scale content and other information about treatment of the data are reported in table notes.

## RESULTS

### A. Race, Participation, and Socioeconomic Status

Table 1 reports descriptive information on the main measures of sociopolitical participation. We use five scales concerning the behaviors of voting, campaigning, communal activity (e.g., degree of involvement in groups that work on problems of broad social relevance), particularized contacting of officials (e.g., direct contact with a public official concerning a personal

matter), and summary index of sociopolitical participation.<sup>2</sup> All measures are scored so that higher scores indicate higher levels of participation. This set of measures underscores our interest in the general pattern of sociopolitical behavior as opposed to electoral turnout alone.<sup>3</sup>

-- Table 1 about here --

As Table 2 shows, blacks have lower participation scores than whites on all five measures. Four of these differences are significant, the only exception being campaign activity. These differences, however, may reflect several compositional differences between blacks and whites in socioeconomic status, age, and sex distribution. The black sample, like the black population when compared to whites, has lower average levels of education, occupational standing, and family income. The black population, on average, is younger than the white population and age is also related to participation. There is also a slightly higher proportion of women than men in the black sample (61 versus 39%) than in the white sample (56 versus 44%). The last two columns of table 2 thus report mean participation scores after adjusting for respondent education, occupational prestige, family income, age, and sex. These results show that lower black participation is entirely explained by compositional differences in socioeconomic status and demographic factors (mainly the former). Although black participation scores exceed those for whites on four of the five participation measures, none of the differences reach conventional criteria for statistical significance. In short, we do not find that blacks significantly out-participate whites.<sup>4</sup>

-- Table 2 about here --

Testing for overall group differences with the adjusted participation measures may, however, mask significant black-white differences at particular

status levels. In order to test this possibility we created a Socioeconomic Status scale based upon a respondent's education, occupational prestige, and family income and divided this measure into quartile groups. Table 3 reports means by race for each quartile group for the adjusted voting, campaigning, and communal activity scales, and for the summary participation index. There is a modest tendency, especially among the lowest and the highest SES quartile groups, for blacks to score higher than whites. Only one of sixteen tests for black-white differences in means, however, was significant (the third quartile group for the adjusted voting scale) and this showed whites out-participating comparable blacks.

-- Table 3 about here --

On the average, blacks participate at lower levels than whites for both routine (e.g., voting) and more demanding (e.g., communal activity) forms of sociopolitical participation. At present, these differences mainly reflect the lower socioeconomic status of blacks. Once controls for socioeconomic status are in place, the black-white differences are statistically indiscernible. Still, we do not yet have a full picture of whether or why black participation may differ from that of whites. Comparable levels of participation net of socioeconomic status does not rule out the possibility of political orientation as a source of participation differences between the races.

#### **B. Political Orientation and Participation**

In order to determine if the effect of political orientation on participation varied by race we created a four-fold typology of political orientations based upon the intersection of a respondent's expressed levels of political trust and political efficacy (see Appendix for question wording).

The four types are: the "politically engaged" (high trust and high efficacy); the "politically obedient" (high trust and low efficacy); the "politically discontented" (low trust and high efficacy); and the "politically alienated" (low trust and low efficacy).<sup>5</sup> Table 4 reports ANOVA test results for the impact of race and the political orientation typology on each of the adjusted participation scales. Political orientation has significant main effects on participation for voting, campaigning, communal activity and the summary index. (Race has a barely significant main effect on campaigning [ $p = .047$ ] and the summary index [ $p = .038$ ]. The effect sizes are small and we suspect they appear simply because missing data on the trust and efficacy items are slightly more selective on education among blacks than among whites.) Importantly, there is a significant interaction between race and political orientation on the communal activity measure and the summary index.

-- Table 4 about here --

Table 5 clarifies the interactive effects by showing means by race and political orientation for the adjusted communal activity scale and for the adjusted summary index. Three noteworthy patterns emerge. First, blacks in three of the four orientation types participate at higher levels than comparable whites, including among the politically engaged. Second, and quite strikingly, the largest black-white differences involve much lower levels of participation among black political discontents as compared to their white counterparts! Third, blacks and whites differ in the orientation type that is most active. Among blacks, the politically engaged are far more active than any of the other types. Among whites, the politically discontented appear to be the most active, though the difference from the politically engaged is quite small.

Two possible artifactual sources of these unexpected patterns were considered. First, our findings may differ from previous studies because we use different measures. Our measures of efficacy are a subset of those used by analysts of data from an earlier period (Guterbock and London 1983 and Shingles 1981). But we do use different measures of trust than those used by Guterbock and London (1983) or by Shingles (1981). This difference, however, is unlikely to be an artifactual source of different findings. The questions we use have strong face validity as measures of trust (see Appendix). Furthermore, several tests of construct validity give us confidence in the trust scale. The trust scale correlates very highly with a reliable three-item scale of confidence in the federal government ( $r = .41, p < .001$ ). The trust measure relates to race, age, and education in a manner consistent with previous research (Abramson 1983, pp.232-238). Blacks score as significantly less trusting (or confident) than whites. Age group and education group differences are small. Thus we do not believe use of different measures creates an artifactual appearance of different patterns in the late 1980s.<sup>6</sup>

A second possible artifact involves the use of median cut-points based on the black sample. This procedure was used by Guterbock and London and thus cannot be a reason for our finding that "politically engaged" blacks are the most active segment of the black community. Still, we obtain this result even if the component items of the trust scale (and efficacy scale) are dichotomized at a logical place given response alternatives offered respondents rather than considering the distribution. Also, the results for whites are not altered substantially by using this sort of categorization scheme in creating the political orientation typology.

-- Table 5 about here --

The findings for the effects of political orientation on participation are not attributable to two possible artifactual causes. We thus pursue several substantive explanations.

### C. Competing Theories

The explanation of why political orientation matters differentially for blacks and whites may lie in one of the theoretical arguments discussed above. For example, differences in psychological security by orientation type and race, as predicted by compensatory theory, may shed light on these matters. Or the most group conscious blacks may now be those in the politically engaged group rather than the politically discontented group. We used indicators that would allow us to perform reasonably direct tests of each of the main theories of black-white differences in participation. We used two measures of psychological insecurity to test the compensatory theory: an "Anomia" scale tapping the degree of general social normlessness felt by the respondent and a "Distrust People" scale that tapped feelings of lack of faith in humans in general.<sup>7</sup> We tested the ethnic community/group consciousness theory with a three item index composed of questions on whether blacks felt their group lacked in political power, should work collectively rather than as individuals to get ahead, and felt that government was obligated to do more to help improve the status of blacks. The index is labeled "Group Consciousness". We developed a "Racial Climate" variable based on the level of antiblack prejudice among whites in each of nine Census regions using GSS prejudice and racial contact questions (high scores indicate a more positive racial climate). This indicator of level of prejudice and segregation does not



directly tap constraints on black participation, but where scores on it are higher attempts to constrain black participation are likely to be greater.<sup>8</sup>

We employed two measures to help test the black empowerment thesis. One is an indicator of "Political Interest and Knowledge" based on reported interest in politics, media consumption, and accurate naming of three public officials.<sup>9</sup> This taps more than the contextual factor of the degree of black empowerment, but should be closely related to it. To more directly tap the contextual basis of Political Interest and Knowledge we sometimes use a version of this index that adjusts it for the effects of education and other variables. The second "contextual measure" is a four-fold typology of communities based on the intersection of a "central city-noncentral city" distinction and a "south-nonsouth" distinction (e.g., North-Central city, North-noncentral city, South-Central city, South-nonCentral city). If the empowerment argument is correct, black participation should be highest in Northern central cities.

-- Table 6 about here --

Table 6 uses these measures to answer two types of questions: Do people with different political orientations differ in psychological security, group consciousness, proximate racial climate, and so on? Do these variables relate to sociopolitical participation, especially after adjusting for socioeconomic status? The top two rows of table 6, which report Anomia and Distrust People mean scores for blacks by political orientation type, refute the compensatory theory. The most active group of blacks, the politically engaged, scores lowest on both measures of psychological insecurity. Furthermore, the last two columns show that the more psychologically insecure blacks are the less they participate (using the summary index), but these correlations with

participation are not significant once participation scores have been adjusted for socioeconomic status. Whites show similar patterns in that the more active types, the politically engaged and the politically discontented, exhibit greater psychological security. Anomia and Distrust of People significantly decrease participation among whites, however, even using the adjusted participation index.

The ethnic community/group consciousness theory fares little better than the compensatory theory. There is a small connection between political orientation and Group Consciousness. However, the most active group of blacks, the politically engaged, is the least group conscious. (This outcome should be kept in perspective. Blacks on the whole are highly group conscious, including the politically engaged. For example, among this group of blacks, 88% thought that blacks had "too little" or "far too little" influence in American life and politics and 60% clearly favored the idea that the federal government was obligated to provide special assistance to blacks.) Most damaging to the ethnic community/group consciousness theory, however, is the absence of a relation between Group Consciousness and black participation. The zero-order correlation with the unadjusted summary index is only .14 ( $p < .05$ ) but it drops to .01 (n.s.) after adjusting the participation index for socioeconomic status.<sup>10</sup>

Racial Climate also has a small relation to political orientation among blacks but is unrelated to orientation for whites. Not unexpectedly, politically obedient blacks appear to live in areas with slightly higher levels of white hostility toward blacks as compared to the other three types whose Climate scores are similar. But, Racial Climate is unrelated to participation for both races, whether using the unadjusted or the adjusted

summary participation index. (This is not, however, a full test of Danigelis's hypothesis which is longitudinal in nature. We also do not have indicators of formal constraints on black participation or any information on the nature of black reactions to the level of white hostility.)

Evidence for our contextual, black empowerment argument, is generally more supportive. Politically engaged blacks score highest of the four orientation types on Political Interest and Knowledge. This holds true even after adjusting Political Interest and Knowledge for education, family income, occupational prestige, age and sex. Furthermore, Political Interest and Knowledge is highly correlated with the adjusted participation index ( $r = .42$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

Results using the urban-regional location variable, shown in Table 7, provide more equivocal support for the empowerment hypothesis. Politically engaged blacks do tend to be found in areas where blacks have made the greatest gains in Mayoral office holding. Twenty-nine percent of politically engaged blacks live in Northern Central Cities and 31% live in Southern nonCentral cities. Politically engaged blacks, in fact, constitute a plurality (33%) in Southern nonCentral Cities. More importantly, there is an interaction between race, Urban-Regional Location, and the adjusted participation index ( $F = 3.48$ ,  $p < .05$ ). As the second to last column of Table 7 shows, blacks in Northern Central Cities are the most active segment of the population regardless of race (mean = 16.49) and they are much more active than their white counterparts (black-white difference = +28.56).

Yet, several patterns provide less sanguine results for the black empowerment hypothesis. A high proportion of politically discontented (49%) and of politically alienated (38%) blacks live in Northern Central Cities.

Politically engaged blacks make-up only 21% of all blacks in Northern Central Cities.

-- Table 7 about here --

To help clarify the importance of political orientation and the "contextual" variables (ie., Political Interest and Knowledge, Urban-regional location) we estimated a series of multiple regression models for each of our measures of participation separately by race. Table 8 summarizes the contribution to variance explained over that of a baseline model. The baseline model specifies participation as a function of education, family income, occupational prestige, age, and sex. Urban-Regional Location, Political Orientations, and Political Interest and Knowledge are then added to the model in a nested fashion. The psychological variables, in particular, Political Interest and Knowledge, are entered last in order to assess their net contribution after controlling for respondent background and Urban-Regional Location.<sup>11</sup>

-- Tables 8 and 9 about here --

In general, the contribution to variance tests show that Urban-Regional Location is not a powerful determinant of participation for either race. Political Orientation and Political Interest and Knowledge are consistently important predictors. The clearest evidence of effects for Urban-Regional Location involves black voting. Here the Urban-Regional Location variables add 3% to the variance explained. The dummy variable coefficients (not shown) show that the rank ordering of means is consistent with expectations. Those with the highest participation scores are blacks in Northern Central Cities. They are followed by blacks in Southern nonCentral Cities. Effects for the Urban-Regional Location variables on black voting are not diminished by adding

the orientation and interest and knowledge variables to the model.

Table 9 summarizes the impact of the full set of variables, reporting coefficients for all variables on the summary participation index separately by race. Among blacks, the mean participation scores for the Urban-Regional Location variables are as expected. The highest level of involvement occurs among blacks in Northern Central Cities. But neither the individual contrasts with the omitted group (South Central City), nor the overall contribution to variance explained, is significant. Interestingly, an almost opposite rank ordering of mean participation for the Urban-Regional Location variables is found among whites. For whites, the most active people are found in Southern Central Cities. Viewed in the light of the limited black empowerment in these areas (prominent exceptions such as Atlanta, New Orleans, and Birmingham notwithstanding), the results suggest a racially polarized politics in these areas with blacks clearly in a weaker position.

The results show that politically engaged blacks are the most active segment of the black population. Politically discontented blacks (the omitted category) participate at a low level. Among whites, politically discontented respondents have higher mean participation rates than each of other types as indicated by the negative signs for each coefficient. Two of these contrasts are statistically significant, showing the Alienated and Obedient to be significantly less active than the discontented. Political Interest and Knowledge is the single strongest determinant of participation among blacks (partial beta = .45,  $p < .001$ ) and among whites (partial beta = .36,  $p < .001$ ). Importantly, the effects of Political Interest and Knowledge indicate more than learning produced by greater formal education or by age. We believe the powerful net effects reflect, in part, aspects of the individuals

proximate political environment that encourage involvement.

#### D. Further Tests of Black Empowerment

Prima facie evidence for our contextual black empowerment hypothesis is found in the high rates of participation among blacks with high efficacy and relatively high trust ("politically engaged") in the political system (Table 5). In addition, this group is the most politically well informed and interested segment of the black population (Table 6). Higher scores on Political Interest and Knowledge for blacks who are politically engaged remain even after the interest and knowledge scale has been adjusted for the effects of education and other relevant socioeconomic and demographic factors (Tables 6 and 9). This finding provides additional, though indirect support, for our political contextual argument: the high levels of information about politics and interest in politics among politically engaged blacks is neither a function of higher levels of education or income nor of a person's age.

We performed two more direct tests of the empowerment thesis using the 1987 GSS data which are shown in Table 10. And we reanalyzed the 1967 Verba and Nie data to see if the effects of Urban-Regional Location on Political Interest and Knowledge and on participation had in fact changed (Table 11). These tests also support the black empowerment thesis. First, we reasoned that since blacks in Northern central cities have wielded political power for a longer span of time and more often from Mayoral offices, that the level of black interest and knowledge about politics should be highest in these areas. This is indeed the case, as Table 10 shows, whether the test is performed using the unadjusted or adjusted Political Interest and Knowledge index. The latter test, of course, is the crucial one.

Second, we hypothesized that the black-white difference in level of

Political Interest and Knowledge would be smallest in Northern Central cities. This hypothesis receives strong confirmation. Not only did race and urban-regional location interact in predicting adjusted scores on Political Interest and Knowledge, but Northern central city blacks actually score higher on the adjusted index than comparable whites. This is the only category where black Political Interest and Knowledge scores exceed those of whites.

-- Table 10 about here --

The 1967 Verba and Nie survey contained identical questions on participation and political interest and knowledge, as well as a closely similar size of place measure. Hence, we returned to the 1967 data to see how Urban-Regional Location affected Political Interest and Knowledge and level of participation at this earlier time. Table 11 shows that among blacks, Urban-Regional Location was unrelated to the adjusted Political Interest and Knowledge Index in 1967. Blacks also score lower than whites in each category, though the black-white disparity is smallest in Northern Central cities. Recall that we found very different patterns in 1987 (see Table 10).

-- Table 11 about here --

Analysis of the adjusted Summary Participation index also tends to confirm the empowerment thesis. There is a significant main effect of race ( $F = 5.98$ ,  $p < .05$ ), with blacks on average participating at higher rates than whites (i.e., the traditional black out-participation finding). Race, Urban-Regional Location and adjusted participation scores do not significantly interact, however ( $F = 1.62$ , n.s.). Overall, in 1967 blacks in the North and South were about equally likely to out-participate whites despite low participation among Southern nonCentral city blacks. For the crucial case of the black-white difference in Northern Central cities, we find that the difference is larger

in both absolute size in 1987 than in 1967 (+28.56 versus +17.52) and, importantly, when expressed as a proportion of a standard deviation unit of the adjusted participation index (.33 in 1987 versus .20 in 1967). In short, the results suggest that the degree of black political empowerment in Northern Central cities--over time and relative to other areas in 1987--has greatly increased.

We are left with one puzzle: A high proportion of politically discontented blacks live in Northern Central cities and this apparently contradicts our emphasis on the degree of black empowerment in these areas. Two possible explanations suggest themselves. One explanation involves a political parallel to the idea of an "economic schism" (Wilson 1980) in the black community. In many Northern central cities there are some stable middle class black communities that ostensibly provide leadership in conventional politics. Yet there is also a large segment of the black population living in very depressed, underclass-like conditions (Wilson 1987). This pattern suggests that, politically, there may be two strata in many Northern central cities: a "politically engaged" black middle class and a "politically discontented" black working and lower class.

Several tests produced no evidence of this political bifurcation of the black community. There are no significant differences between political orientation types for family income ( $F = 1.62$ , n.s.) or occupational prestige ( $F = 1.08$ , n.s.). A small but significant education difference ( $F = 3.29$ ,  $p = .02$ ) reflects the very low educational attainment of politically obedient blacks (10.43 years), rather than a difference between the engaged (12.10 years) and the discontented (12.58). Age is also unrelated to political orientation among Northern Central City blacks ( $F = .74$ , n.s.).



A second possibility is suggested by those who argue that "progressive" black politicians are beginning to challenge more traditional black politicians (Jennings 1984). Politically discontented blacks may be an extremely liberal segment of the black population. If so, their lower levels of participation may reflect frustration with the mainstream managerial roles that black mayors must often play (cf. Jennings 1984; Moore 1988). Two patterns contradict this account of low participation among the black politically discontented. Both politically engaged and discontented blacks are strongly identified with the Democratic party. Seventy-two percent of engaged blacks identify with the Democratic party and 80% of discontented blacks do so. In addition, engaged and discontented blacks living in Northern Central cities do not differ in their views on a reliable scale of support for increased social welfare spending ( $F = 1.14, n.s.$ ).<sup>12</sup> We do not find that politically discontented blacks are a distinctively progressive element of the black community.

We do not have a clear explanation for the large number of politically discontented blacks in Northern Central Cities. Browning et al., 's (1984) research suggests that even in Northern Central Cities there can be great variation in the extent of black empowerment. It is possible that the politically discontented blacks we have identified do not live in the same cities as those we have identified as the politically engaged. But a larger sample and more refined measures of contextual empowerment than we have available are needed in order to test this possibility.

**DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

We began with an interest in whether contemporary data showed black-white differences in participation and if past theories continued to shed light on black sociopolitical behavior. Our main conclusions are threefold. First, interracial differences in overall levels of participation once socioeconomic status has been controlled are no longer evident. When differences in socioeconomic status are removed we find little evidence of higher participation among blacks. Second, political orientation continues to have important effects on level of activity. But the effect of political orientation on participation varies by race and type of involvement. It is now the politically engaged among blacks, not the politically discontented, who are the most active. Third, we suspect that the end of black out-participation of whites and the shift in the political orientation characterizing the most active blacks is a result of major changes in the political environment. The most important of these changes is growing black political empowerment, especially in Northern urban areas.

Evidence supporting the empowerment hypothesis is partial but we also think convincing. Many aspects and implications of this hypothesis require further careful testing. Future research needs to develop direct indicators of two types. It would be useful to ascertain whether black respondents think black officials are more responsive to their needs than white officials (Jackson and Oliver 1988). Indicators of the extent, type, and duration of black office holding would also be useful to link to data on individual level participation (Browning et al., 1984). Of course, full exploration of these ideas would also assess whether black officials are in a position, by disposition and also structurally, to produce desired outcomes for their constituents.

In addition, it is important to keep the degree of black empowerment in perspective. Blacks gained control of Mayoral offices at a time when the power of urban political machines continues to decline, when population and commerce are shifting to suburban areas (Wilson 1980), and when federal programs are less and less generous (Moore 1988). Furthermore, hindrances to black empowerment in the form of cumbersome voter registration procedures, district boundaries that dilute the black vote, gerrymandering, hostility to black candidates among a significant number of whites (Williams and Morris 1987), and the cooptation of some black leaders (Browning et al., 1984; Jennings 1984) still impede black participation. Yet, the struggle for the right to vote and a degree of inclusion in decision making has largely been won. At the forefront of black politics today is the effort to use the power under the control of blacks to better serve black communities.

Our research also prompts some re-thinking of how previous theoretical paradigms treat black political behavior. Data rarely speak for themselves. The values and commonsense assumptions of researchers play a substantial role in prevailing theoretical ideas about black participation. Perhaps most importantly, prevailing paradigms are influenced by the position of blacks in the economy and polity, as well as by the influence of blacks in the cultural production of knowledge. During an era prior to the civil rights movement and effective protection of the voting rights of blacks in the south, black participation was judged to be the "compensatory" action of those barred from the gratifications of normal social life (Myrdal 1944). And even though citizen participation is the heart of a democratic system of government, this view of high black participation as pathological held sway into the early 1960s (Babchuk and Thompson 1962).

The unanticipated vitality, mass appeal, and effectiveness of the civil rights movement and later black power movements, dramatically altered the theoretical lenses through which black out-participation of whites was viewed. It seemed clear that members of a minority community could develop a sense of attachment to group members in shared circumstances, politicize that mutual commitment, and turn political activity on behalf of the group into normatively approved behavior (Olsen 1970; Verba and Nie 1972; Shingles 1981; Guterbock and London 1983).

With the institutionalization of many of the economic, political and normative changes wrought in large part by the civil rights and black power movements we may now be on the verge of another shift in theoretical paradigms. The compensatory theory is unsuccessful in explaining contemporary black sociopolitical behavior. More surprisingly, the type of discontents anticipated by the ethnic community theory are much less potent in 1987 than in the past. The Standard Socioeconomic Model cannot account for black-white differences in the influence of political orientations or urban-regional location on participation.

Oddly, the shift is one that may reveal more clearly the "deep structure" of black sociopolitical participation while surely occasioning further change in more surface level patterns and explanations. That deep structure involves the politics of a disadvantaged but psychologically identified minority group. The major goals for whom have steadily been fair inclusion in American social and political life (Jones 1972; Walton 1985; Hamilton 1984). When the paths to these objectives were fundamentally blocked, different strategies and orientations were necessary than would apply in the current context of significant wielding of institutional power.

## FOOTNOTES

1. We prefer to treat higher participation among blacks as "out-participating" whites rather than adopting the conventional vocabulary of "overparticipation." The phrase overparticipation is misleading given widespread evidence that most Americans, including blacks, are not very politically active (Burnham 1987). The phrase is also needlessly ethnocentric since it presumes that average white levels of participation are "normal," automatically making higher or lower black participation somehow deviant (Klobus-Edwards, Edwards, and Klemmack 1978). In addition, we use the term "sociopolitical" participation to indicate that our interest extends beyond voting and campaign activity to include involvement in voluntary and community organizations.

2. The distinctions between types of activity are supported by factor analyses performed on 15 indicators of sociopolitical behavior using a weight variable to adjusted for the black oversample. Factor loadings based on the pattern matrix from an oblique rotation were used in weighting each respondents score on the component variables for each of the scales, following a procedure used by Verba and Nie (1972). More detailed treatment of the factor analysis results are available from the authors upon request. Notes to Table 1 provide more details on the number and content of items used in each scale.

3. All of the measures of participation are self-reports. Such measures may be subject to biases. In particular, there is a well-documented tendency to overreport voting. But as Silver et al. (1986) reported, those who overreport voting have characteristics similar to those who actually do vote (e.g., highly educated) and, crucially, they share norms about the importance of participation. Failure to vote in any single specific election may not reflect a person's general pattern of behavior (cf. Schuman and Johnson 1976). Yet it this pattern of behavior—not point-estimates of turnout—that most interest us. In the case of blacks, Anderson et al (1988) showed an event that activates norms of participation for the respondent (i.e., a pre-election interview conducted by a black interviewer) actually increases the chances that a black person will vote. If there is a tendency toward overreporting of participation, we do not think it seriously compromises our substantive conclusions.

4. We do not examine in detail the effects of each socioeconomic status indicator on sociopolitical participation. Readers may be interested, however, so three results regarding the effects of these variables (education, occupational status, and family income) on the participation measures should be noted. First, education is usually the most important of the three (i.e., largest standardized beta), though family income and occupational standing often contribute to participation as well (see Table 9). Second, we found no consistent evidence that these variables interact with race. By and large, the socioeconomic status variables relate to participation in the same direction and with comparable magnitude for blacks and whites. Third, we found no important regional differences among blacks in the effects of the

socioeconomic status variables on participation.

5. Political trust and political efficacy were each measured with two item scales. Cut-points for creating the typology were based on the black median. The percentage of whites in the engaged, obedient, discontented, and alienated groups, respectively, are 42%, 26%, 12%, and 19%. The comparable figures for blacks are 25%, 22%, 20%, and 32%. There is a significant relationship between race and political orientation (chi-square = 70.29, d.f. = 3,  $p < .0001$ , gamma = .24), with the largest differences involving fewer blacks than whites in the politically engaged group (-17%) and more blacks in the alienated group (+13%).
6. One possible reason for our results to differ from earlier studies is that we now find very different proportions of blacks in categories of the political orientation typology. Unfortunately, since different measures of trust were used we cannot, for example, make exact comparisons with the results of Guterbock and London (1981). Keeping in the mind the difference in measures, however, it is worth noting that the percentages of blacks in each category are quite similar. We classify 25% of blacks in the engaged category, Guterbock and London showed approximately 32% in this group. We have 20% in the discontented category and Guterbock and London found 19% in this category. Our figures for, respectively, the obedient and alienated, are 22% and 32% as compared to 20% and 29% for Guterbock and London.
7. Both scales are widely used measures of psychological security and have been particularly useful in studying black-white differences (Thomas and Hughes 1986). Anomia is a three variable scale (alpha = .54), with a range of 1 to 6, mean = 2.82, s.d. = 1.11, over the full sample. Distrust People is a three variables scale (alpha = .66), with a range of 1 to 6, mean = 2.62, s.d. = 1.28 over the full sample. Blacks score significantly higher (more insecure) than whites on both measures, even after controlling for education, family income, occupational prestige, region, size of place, sex, and age.
8. The Racial Climate index is derived in a two-step process. First, scores for white respondents on 4 racial attitude and 2 racial proximity variables were each scored 0 for antiblack attitudes or lack of contact and 1 otherwise. They were then summed into an index ranging from 0.00 to 5.00 (missing data on two of six variables was allowed), mean = 2.53, s.d. = 1.31. Respondents were then assigned the mean of the scores for whites on these variables for their region based on the nine category census classification of regions. The Climate variable and region are strongly related, with scores at their highest (most positive) in the Pacific region (i.e., California, Oregon, Washington) and lowest in the East South Central region (i.e., Alabama, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi).
9. Political Interest and Knowledge is a five item index based on whether a person reads a newspaper regularly, is interested in politics generally, and correctly named his/her state governor, congressman, and local schoolboard president. The average correlation among these items is .26, ranging from .13 to .33. Each variable was standardized and then summed into an index with a low -7.70, a high of 5.53, a mean of 0, and a standard deviation of 3.13 over the full sample.

10. The Group Consciousness items have strong face validity and two of three items were specifically designed to tap, respectively, the dimensions of Power Discontent and Collective Action commitment stressed by Gurin, Miller, and Gurin (1980) and Miller, Gurin, Gurin, and Malanchuk (1981). The items were pre-tested twice in order to assure that respondents understood them and that reasonable distributions would be obtained. The Power Discontent and Collective Action Orientation items also show construct validity in that parallel questions asked only of women respondents in order to get at gender consciousness, when compared to the black consciousness items, show the well established pattern of higher discontent and collective commitment among blacks than among women (Gurin 1985). We explore the group consciousness hypothesis in detail elsewhere (Gilliam and Bobo 1988), including consideration of the sort of interactive model suggested by Miller et al. (1981). These results in no way modify the conclusions reported above.

11. Urban-Regional Location is represented by three dummy variables identifying the North-Central City, North-nonCentral City, and South-nonCentral City. The omitted category, or contrast group is South-Central City. Political Orientation is represented by three dummy variables identifying the Engaged, the Obedient, and the Alienated. The omitted category are the Discontented, making them the contrast group.

12. The Social Welfare scale is composed of 4 items. The items address whether the federal government should use taxes to reduce income differences between rich and poor, do more to provide health care, provide greater assistance to the poor, and generally intervene in social problems. The average correlation among the four items is .39 and the scale reliability (alpha) is .69.

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## APPENDIX

1. **POLITICAL TRUST:** How much of the time do you think you can trust the local government here in (NAME OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT) to do what is right--just about always, most of the time, only some of the time, or almost never?; How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right--just about always, most of the time, only some of the time, or almost never?.

2. **POLITICAL EFFICACY:** How much influence do you think people like you can have over local government decisions--a lot, a moderate amount, a little, or none at all?; If you had a complaint about a local government activity and took that complaint to a member of the local government council, would you expect him or her to pay a lot of attention to what you say, some attention, very little attention, or none at all?.

3. **ANOMIA:** In spite of what some people say, the lot of the average man is getting worse, not better? (Agree, Disagree); It's hardly fair to bring a child into the world with the way things look for the future (Agree, Disagree); Most public officials are not really interested in the problems of the average man (Agree, Disagree).

4. **DISTRUST PEOPLE:** Would you say that most of the time people try to be helpful, or that they are mostly just looking out for themselves?; Do you think most people would try to take advantage of you if they got a chance, or would they try to be fair?; Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?.

5. **GROUP CONSCIOUSNESS:** People have different opinions about the amount of influence that various groups have in American life and politics. Do you think blacks have far too much influence, too much influence, about the right amount of influence, too little influence, or do they have far too little influence?; Some people think that the best way for blacks to improve their position is through civil rights groups, they would be at point 1 on this card. Other people think that the best way for blacks to improve their position is for each individual black to become better trained and more qualified. They would be located at point 7. And other people have opinions somewhere in between. Where would you place yourself on this scale?; Some people think that blacks have been discriminated against for so long that the government has a special obligation to help improve their living standards (Point 1 on the card). Others believe that the government should not be giving special treatment to blacks (Point 5 on the card). Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you made up your mind on this?.

6. **RACIAL CLIMATE:** Here is an opinion some people have expressed in connection with black-white relations. Which statement on the card comes closest to how you feel? White people have a right to keep blacks out of their neighborhoods if they want and blacks should respect that right? (Agree strongly, agree slightly, disagree slightly, disagree strongly); Do you think there should be laws against marriages between blacks and whites?; Suppose there is a community-wide vote on the general housing issue. There are two possible laws to vote on. Which law would you vote for? A. One law says that

a homeowner can decide for himself whom to sell his house to, even if he prefers not to sell to blacks. B. The second law says that a homeowner cannot refuse to sell to someone because of their race or color?; Are there any blacks living in your neighborhood now?; During the last few years, has anyone in your family brought a friend who was a black home for dinner?; Do blacks attend the church that you, yourself, attend most often, or not?.

7. POLITICAL INTEREST AND KNOWLEDGE: How often do you read the newspaper-- every day, a few times a week, once a week, less than once a week, or never?; How interested are you in politics and national affairs? Are you very interested, somewhat interested, only slightly interested, or not at all interested?; We want to know how well known the different governmental leaders are around here. Could you tell me the name of the governor of this state? (Correct Answer, Incorrect Answer); What about the Congressman from this district? Do you happen to know (his/her) name? (Correct Answer, Incorrect Answer); What is the name of the head of the local school system? (Correct Answer, Incorrect Answer).

Table 1

Descriptive Information on  
Sociopolitical Participation Measures[1]

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Voting[2] (N=1699)	-181.40	89.71	.986	100.02
Campaigning[3] (N=1746)	-75.42	435.85	-.005	102.10
Communal Activity[4] (N=1748)	-89.31	414.37	.016	105.69
Particularized Contacting[5] (N=1744)	-40.88	426.78	.000	105.38
Summary Index[6] (N=1745)	-145.45	380.91	.000	100.00

[1]All scales are computed using factor score weights. The scales were standardized and then multiplied by 100, yielding means of approximately 0 and standard deviations of 100.

[2]The Voting scale consists of three variables: participation in the 1984 presidential election, participation in the 1980 presidential election, and regularity of voting in local elections.

[3]The Campaigning scale consists of five variables: trying to persuade others during an election, making donations to political campaigns or causes, working for a campaign, attending a political rally, and active membership in a political club or group.

[4]The Communal Activity scale consists of five variables: working to solve local problems, starting a local problem solving group, contacting local officials on a matter of general social concern, contacting state or federal officials on a matter of general social concern, and active membership in any of 14 types of groups that act on community problems.

[5]The Particularized Contacting scale consists of two variables: contacting a local official about a personal matter and contacting state or federal officials about a personal matter.

[6]The Summary Index is created through a higher order factor analysis. The four mode scales were factor analysed with the resulting factor loadings used as weights for each scale in creating the summary index.

Table 2

## Race Differences in Sociopolitical Participation

Modes of Participation	Unadjusted Means		Adjusted Means	
	Blacks	Whites	Blacks	Whites
Voting	-16.59	3.64***	2.69	-.39
Campaigning	-8.71	1.35	5.37	-.79
Communal Activity	-16.38	2.56***	4.58	-.67
Particularized Con.	-10.75	1.67*	-3.70	.70
Summary Index	-18.40	2.86***	4.86	-.71

NOTE: Adjusted means are corrected for socioeconomic status (education, occupational prestige, and family income) and demographic factors (age and sex).

Significance of F: \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

Table 3

## Mean Sociopolitical Participation By Race and Socioeconomic Status

Socioeconomic Status	Voting		Campaigning		Communal		Summary Index	
	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White
1. Lowest Quartile	-24.55 (192)	-34.26 (228)	-31.07 (200)	-32.41 (238)	-38.45 (200)	-41.20 (239)	-40.42 (200)	-44.12 (238)
2.	-26.50 (149)	-13.01 (260)	- 8.99 (162)	-12.40 (270)	-23.15 (162)	-18.43 (270)	-24.86 (162)	-19.41 (270)
3.	-10.13 (101)	11.17* (326)	- 4.06 (106)	- 3.65 (329)	- 2.56 (106)	3.74 (330)	- 8.28 (106)	5.05 (329)
4. Highest Quartile	23.57 (66)	32.02 (367)	54.02 (65)	37.72 (372)	47.79 (65)	44.50 (372)	52.54 (65)	47.07 (372)

NOTE: The socioeconomic status variable was created by standardizing and then summing education, occupational prestige, and family income. Cutpoints for quartile groups are based on the distribution for the full sample. Blacks are significantly more likely than whites to be in the lowest quartile (38 versus 20%) and significantly less likely to be in the highest quartile group (12 versus 31%).

Significance of F: \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Table 4

Effects of Race and Political Orientation on  
Adjusted Sociopolitical Participation Measures

	Main Effects Tests[1]		Interactive Effects Test	Multiple Correlation
	Race	Political Orientation		
Voting[2]	1.96	13.46***	.72	.17***
Campaigning	3.95*	19.75***	1.93	.20***
Communal Activity	2.11	22.08***	5.47**	.23***
Particularized Contacting	.92	1.91	1.93	.09
Summary Index	4.29*	33.08***	3.37*	.26***

[1] All tests involve two-way ANOVA using the sociopolitical participation measures as adjusted for socioeconomic status (education, occupational prestige, and family income) and demographic factors (age and sex).

[2] Cell entries for Main Effects Tests and Interactive Effects Tests are F-values.

Significance of F: \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .



Table 5

## Adjusted Mean Scores by Political Orientation and Race[1]

Communal Activity[2]	Political Orientation			
	Engaged	Discontented	Obedient	Alienated
Blacks	34.01	-3.46	-5.75	-6.54
Whites	16.62	35.28	-28.02	-21.74
Difference	+17.39	-38.74	+22.27	+15.20
Summary				
Index[2]				
Blacks	38.88	3.35	-5.93	-12.69
Whites	20.39	26.00	-26.79	-25.85
Difference	+18.49	-22.65	+20.86	+13.16

[1]The sociopolitical participation measures have been adjusted for socioeconomic status (education, occupational prestige, and family income) and demographic factors (age and sex).

[2]Only the measures showing significant interactions between race and political orientation as reported in Table 4 are used here (see Table 4 for F-test results).

Table 6

Tests of Compensation, Climate, Ethnic Community,  
Contextual Theories of Sociopolitical Participation

BLACKS	Engaged	Political Orientation			Eta	Summary Index	
		Discon.	Obedit.	Alinatd.		r	r-adj[1]
Anomia	2.99	3.31	3.37	3.42	.18***	-.10*	-.07
Distrust People	3.20	3.32	3.29	3.58	.15*	-.16**	-.08
Racial Climate	2.43	2.41	2.28	2.44	.16**	.08	.01
Group Conscious- ness	10.11	10.85	10.16	10.98	.14*	.14*	-.04
Political Int/Krw	-.05	-.29	-1.91	-.93	.21***	.58***	.42***
Adjusted Political Int/Krw[2]	.51	-.03	-.90	-.34	.18***	.46***	.47***
<b>WHITES</b>							
Anomia	2.49	2.81	2.87	3.08	.21***	-.24***	-.12***
Distrust People	2.20	2.38	2.63	2.99	.24***	-.22***	-.11***
Racial Climate	2.55	2.54	2.53	2.54	.06	.02	-.05
Political Int/Krw	.96	.99	-.74	-.64	.27***	.52***	.37***
Adjusted Political Int/Krw[2]	.50	.85	-.35	-.57	.19***	.34***	.41***

[1] Entries are Pearson correlation coefficients using the Summary Index scores as adjusted for socioeconomic status (education, occupational prestige, and family income) and demographic factors (age and sex).

[2] The Political Interest and Knowledge index is adjusted for socioeconomic

(Table 6, continued)

status (education, occupational prestige, and family income) and demographic factors (age and sex).

Significance: \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

Table 7

Urban-Regional Location, Political  
Orientation, and Summary Participation Index by Race[1]

BLACKS[2]	Engaged	Political Orientation			Row Mean Adjusted Summary Index[4]	Row Total Percent
		Discon- tent	Obedient	Alienated		
North Central City	29 (21)	49 (28)	24 (15)	38 (35)	16.44	35%
North non- Central City	17 (27)	12 (15)	13 (17)	20 (41)	-4.28	16
South Central City	23 (23)	19 (15)	31 (27)	26 (34)	.55	25
South non- Central City	31 (33)	20 (16)	32 (30)	15 (20)	3.26	24 100% (531)
<b>WHITES[3]</b>						
North Central City	12 (33)	18 (15)	14 (25)	21 (27)	-12.12	15%
North non- Central City	57 (45)	50 (12)	53 (27)	43 (16)	10.37	52
South Central City	6 (39)	8 (15)	7 (26)	7 (20)	-.11	7
South non- Central City	24 (40)	24 (12)	26 (26)	29 (22)	5.26	26 100% (1208)

[1] Entries are percentages of Political Orientation type living in Urban-Regional Location type identified at beginning of the row. Figures in parentheses are the percentage of people in each Urban-Regional type who fall into the respective Political Orientation type.

[2] Chi-square = 32.83, d.f. = 9,  $p < .001$ .

(Table 7, continued)

[3]Chi-square = 17.62, d.f. = 9,  $p < .05$ .

[4]ANOVA test results show significant interactions between Race and Urban-Regional Location ( $F = 3.48$ ,  $p < .05$ ), between Race and Political Orientation ( $F = 2.91$ ,  $p < .05$ ), but not between Political Orientation and Urban-Regional Location ( $F = .51$ , n.s.). The three-way interactio of Race, Urban-Regional Location and Political Orientation is insignificant ( $F = .40$ , n.s.).

Table 8

Contribution to Sociopolitical Participation  
of Contextual and Political Orientation Variables

	Voting	Campaigning	Communal Activity	Part. Cont.	Summary Index
<b>BLACKS</b>					
Baseline Model R <sup>2</sup> (adj.)	.187***	.111***	.147***	.003	.194***
increment for urban/region	.032***	.012	.010	.016	.007
increment for political orientation	.032***	.047***	.029**	.003	.051***
increment for political int/knw	.106***	.112***	.053***	.013*	.153***
Full model R <sup>2</sup> (adj.)	.350***	.274***	.228***	.009	.398***
N	433	447	447	447	447
<b>WHITES</b>					
Baseline Model R <sup>2</sup> (adj.)	.197***	.085***	.142***	.005	.196***
increment for urban/region	.005	.007*	.004	.002	.003
increment for political orientation	.0221***	.037***	.050***	.010*	.058***
increment for political int/knw	.098***	.051***	.041***	.008**	.103***
Full Model R <sup>2</sup> (adj.)	.318***	.175***	.233***	.019**	.357***
N	1058	1074	1076	1073	1073

NOTE: The baseline model is a regression of each sociopolitical measure on socioeconomic status (education, occupational prestige, and family income) and demographic factors (age and sex).

Significance of F: \* p < .05, \*\* p < .01, \*\*\* p < .001.

Table 9

Regression Model of Summary Participation Index  
By Race

Coefficients	Blacks	Whites
Constant	-136.68***	-120.87***
Background		
Age	1.10***	.95***
Sex (Female=1)	-4.81	.15
Occupational Prestige	.47	.55*
Family Income	-.10	.19
Education	5.04***	6.24***
Urban-Regional Location		
North, Noncent. City	5.82	-10.05
South, Noncent. City	7.37	-13.12
North, Central City	14.93	-15.87
Political Orientation		
Alienated	-12.29	-34.63***
Engaged	30.24**	-1.60
Obedient	1.99	-38.42***
Political Int/Krw	13.66***	12.32***
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.398***	.357***
N	447	1074

NOTE: Entries are metric regression coefficients.

Significance of F and T: \* p < .05, \*\* p < .01 \*\*\* p < .001.

Table 10

Political Interest and Knowledge,  
Urban-Regional Location and Race

Urban-Regional Location	Blacks		Whites	Difference
	Political Interest and Knowledge Unadjusted	Adjusted	Adjusted	
North Central City	-.08	.28	-.31	+1.03
North nonCentral City	-1.02	-.36	-.10	-.26
South Central City	-.93	-.32	.17	-.49
South nonCentral City	-1.71	-.65	.74	-1.09
F-value	6.96***	2.69*	7.42***	7.24***

NOTE: The F-value for the black-white difference (last column) is based on an ANOVA test for the interaction of Race and Urban-Regional Location.

Significance of F: \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .



Table 11

Political Interest and Knowledge, Summary  
Participation Index, Urban-Regional Location  
and Race, 1967

	Political Interest/Knowledge (Adj.)			Summary Index (Adj.)		
	Blacks	Whites	Difference	Blacks	Whites	Difference
North Central City	-.68	-.21	-.47	15.62	-1.90	17.52
North nonCentral City[1]	-----	.18	-----	-----	9.71	-----
South Central City	-.71	.63	-1.34	-1.12	-16.78	15.66
South nonCentral City	-.67	.67	-1.34	-8.94	3.03	-11.97
F-value[2]	.004	15.84***	3.83*	1.83	6.01***	1.62
N(weighted)	325	2197	2522	367	2377	2744

[1]There were not enough black respondents in this category to make comparisons.

[2]The F-value for the black-white difference columns is based on an ANOVA test for the interaction of Race, Urban-Regional Location and, respectively, the adjusted Political Interest and Knowledge Index and the adjusted Summary Participation Index.

Significance of F: \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .