

Latino Group Consciousness and Perceptions of Commonality with African Americans*

Gabriel R. Sanchez, *University of New Mexico*

Objective. Currently, Latinos and African Americans constitute more than one-quarter of the U.S. population. The sheer size of these groups suggests an opportunity for increased political influence, with this opportunity providing the incentive for greater social and political interaction between them. The objective of this article is to determine the role of Latino group consciousness in the formation of attitudes toward African Americans. *Methods.* Utilizing data from the 1999 Washington Post/Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation National Survey on Latinos, a multivariate ordered logit model is employed to test the relationship between Latino group consciousness and perceptions of commonality with African Americans. *Results.* Results show that group consciousness in the form of Latino internal commonality and perceived discrimination are contributors to Latino perceptions of commonality with African Americans. *Conclusion.* This analysis demonstrates that before any meaningful political alliances can be formed between the nation's two largest minority groups, Latinos may need to develop strong levels of panethnic identity.

There is power in numbers, and we are now beginning to see that the increasing proportion of ethnic and racial minorities in the United States is having a significant impact on electoral politics. Currently, Latinos and African Americans constitute a little more than one-quarter of the U.S. population (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2004). The sheer size of these groups suggests an opportunity for increased political influence, providing an incentive for greater social and political interaction between them. Further, Latinos and African Americans share a number of common characteristics that often have political connotations, including education levels and incomes that are significantly below the national average (McClain and Stewart, 2002).¹ This trend is apparent across several indicators, such as lower home-ownership rates and higher-than-average unemployment rates.

*Direct correspondence to Gabriel R. Sanchez, Department of Political Science, University of New Mexico, MSC05-3070, 1 University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM 87131-0001 (sanchezg@unm.edu). The author will share all data and coding materials with those wishing to replicate the study. The author thanks John Garcia, Michael Rocca, and the anonymous reviewers for their helpful suggestions.

¹African Americans have higher educational attainment and income levels than Latinos, yet they both trail whites in these indicators of socioeconomic status.

In addition, both groups have historically faced significant levels of discrimination based on their racial or ethnic backgrounds. However, common circumstances do not necessarily lead to perceptions of commonality between Latinos and African Americans.

Most research exploring intergroup perceptions has focused on the interactions between African Americans and whites (Hyman and Sheatsley, 1956; Taylor, Greeley, and Sheatsley, 1978; Kluegel and Smith, 1986; Tuch, 1987; Kluegel, 1990; Bobo and Kluegel, 1993; Wright, 1977; Ellison and Powers, 1994; Fitzpatrick and Hwang, 1992; Sigelman and Welch, 1993; Welch et al., 2001; Fossett and Kiecolt, 1989; Frisbie and Niedert, 1977; Giles and Buckner, 1993; Glaser, 1994; Quillian, 1996; Taylor, 1998), with a smaller focus on African American's attitudes toward Latinos (Bobo and Massagli, 2001; Bobo et al., 1994; Dyer, Vedlitz, and Worchel, 1989; Mindiola, Niemann, and Rodriguez, 2002; Gay, 2005). However, less is known about how Latinos view African Americans. The purpose of this analysis is to expand our knowledge in this area by defining the role of Latino group consciousness in the propensity of Latinos to perceive commonality with African Americans. My results suggest that two dimensions of group consciousness, Latino internal commonality and perceived discrimination, are significantly and positively correlated with perceptions of commonality with African Americans. Therefore, increased Latino group consciousness will yield more positive attitudes toward African Americans, a critical first step toward greater political coalitions among the nation's largest minority groups.

Literature Review

Scholars have been interested in how African American's view Latinos for some time, with many finding evidence that feelings of distrust and hostility among blacks have prevented political alliances between the two groups (Bobo and Massagli, 2001; Bobo et al., 1994; Dyer, Vedlitz, and Worchel, 1989; Mindiola, Niemann, and Rodriguez, 2002). Although there is some debate regarding the source of these attitudes, competition over scarce resources tends to be a common thread in this research (Alozie and Ramirez, 1999; Johnson and Oliver, 1989; Oliver and Johnson, 1984; Kaufmann, 2003; Mindiola, Niemann, and Rodriguez, 2002; Vaca, 2004; but see McClain and Karnig, 1990; McClain, 1993; McClain and Tauber, 1998, 2001). In short, despite shared interests, competition over occupational, educational, and political resources often serves as an obstacle for positive attitudes and coalition formation between these two groups (Borjas, 1999). Scholars have added to this framework by finding that negative attitudes toward Latinos increase with higher concentrations of Latinos in the neighborhoods in which black respondents live (Bobo and Hutchings, 1996; Bobo and Johnson, 2000; Morris, 2000; Cain, Citrin, and Wong, 2000;

Cummings and Lambert, 1997; Oliver and Wong, 2003; Sears et al., 1999; Branton and Jones, 2005), and when blacks are disadvantaged economically relative to Latinos (Gay, 2005; Oliver and Wong, 2003).

Although less developed, an emerging literature has developed that focuses on Latinos' perceptions of and attitudes toward African Americans. Among this more recent scholarship, Bobo and Hutchings (1996) find that Latinos are surpassed only by African Americans in their propensity to view other groups as competitors.² It is critical to note, however, that competitive attitudes are not universal among Latinos. For example, nativity is a major explanatory factor for Latinos' attitudes toward blacks, as foreign-born Latinos tend to perceive greater competition with African Americans than their native-born counterparts (Bobo and Hutchings, 1996). The role of nativity is reinforced by a more recent study of black and Latino relations in Houston, Texas. Mindiola, Niemann, and Rodriguez (2002) found that, overall, Latinos expressed more negative views of African Americans than blacks expressed of Latinos, but tolerance was particularly low among foreign-born Latinos. This trend may be a result of Latino immigrants arriving in the United States with negative stereotypes regarding blacks that were formulated in their country of origin. In fact, a sizable literature focused on discrimination and racial stereotypes in Latin America has addressed this issue (de la Cadena, 2001; Dulitzky, 2005; Guimaraes, 2001; Hanchard, 1994; Mörner, 1967; Sweet, 1997; Wade, 1993, 1997; Winant, 1992).

Socioeconomic status has also been identified as a critical explanatory variable in studies of black-brown relations. For example, both African Americans and Latinos with low incomes are more likely to perceive members of other groups as economic competitors (Bobo and Hutchings, 1996). However, others have argued that individual-level economic political attitudes among Latinos and African Americans can motivate support for coalition formation between minority groups. Specifically, Tedin and Murray (1994) have found that concern over economic conditions, such as poverty and unemployment, are associated with support for biracial coalition activities among both African Americans and Latinos. The salience of socioeconomic status here is largely a result of blacks and Latinos having historically experienced lower median family incomes and higher rates of poverty and unemployment when compared to whites and Asians (McClain and Stewart, 2002).

In addition to perceptions of competition and overall tolerance, scholarship in this area has also suggested that Latinos tend to harbor negative stereotypes of African Americans. For instance, Johnson, Farrell, and Guinn (1997) find that a majority of Asian Americans and a large percentage of Latinos view blacks as less intelligent and more welfare dependent than their own groups. Similarly, a recent study of Latinos in North Carolina found

²Interestingly, Latinos were found to perceive greater levels of competition with Asian Americans than they did with African Americans.

that the stereotypes of blacks by Latinos are more negative than those of whites. Specifically, nearly 57 percent of Latino immigrants in this study felt that few or almost no blacks could be trusted, and nearly 59 percent believed that few or almost no blacks are hard working (McClain et al., 2006:578). Particularly when contrasted with the significantly less negative perceptions of whites in the study, it appears as though Latinos (at least those in North Carolina) do not have strong feelings of commonality with blacks. This supports earlier work that suggests both African Americans and Latinos feel closer to whites than to each other (Dyer, Vedlitz, and Worchel, 1989).

The McClain et al. (2006) study also provides some inferences regarding factors that impact negative perceptions of blacks among Latinos. Specifically, negative perceptions are greatest among the less-educated, men, and those with less social contact with African Americans. Finally, and most relevant to this study, Latinos with a stronger sense of linked fate with other Latinos are less likely to have negative stereotypes of African Americans. This is consistent with Kaufmann's (2003) findings that Latinos who feel closer to other Latinos are more likely to perceive commonality with blacks.

This provides some valuable context for my broader analysis of group consciousness and Latino perceptions of African Americans. However, the following quote from the most recent study in this area clearly indicates that there is a need for continued research focused on Latino perceptions of African Americans: "the significance of this predictor (linked fate) has not been studied to any significant extent in the Latino politics literature and clearly deserves additional study" (McClain et al., 2006:580). This study is an attempt to answer this call by exploring the potential role of Latino group consciousness on perceptions of commonality with African Americans.

Theory and Hypotheses

Based on this review of extant research, I contend that a sense of shared group identity or intra-group consciousness among members of a minority group is essential to the formation of positive perceptions between racial and ethnic minorities. The research conducted on common or linked fate in the black politics literature is particularly meaningful to this argument. For example, Michael Dawson's (1994) notion of the *black utility heuristic* argues that African Americans infer self-interests from group interests of African Americans generally. Further, Dawson contends that political coalition formation and collective action requires individuals to perceive that their fate is linked, first, to others in their own social group and, second, between their group and another (Dawson, 1994). Therefore, according to this notion of linked fate, Latinos must develop group consciousness internally before engaging in any meaningful political relationship with another group. Thus, the more individual Latinos see their economic, social, and political realities linked with the status of Latinos generally, the more

likely that they will begin to see that their sociopolitical status is linked with other racial/ethnic groups. This notion has been reinforced by more recent work that has found aspects of individual-level group identity to be positively correlated with minority intergroup attitudes (Kaufmann, 2003; McClain et al., 2006). Therefore, just as perceptions of common fate among African Americans have led to unity in policy preferences and homogeneity in their voting behavior (Tate, 1993; Dawson, 1994), group consciousness among Latinos should motivate a greater sense of common status with, and positive attitudes toward, African Americans.

The group consciousness framework motivates a dominant hypothesis that will be tested in this study. Without a general perception among individual Latinos that they share interests, preferences, and needs with other Latinos, collective action for Latino interests, much less minority interests, is very improbable. Therefore, the primary hypothesis driving this analysis is that Latinos with a strong sense of group consciousness will be more likely to have perceptions of commonality with African Americans. Thus, it is hypothesized that the three dimensions of group consciousness will be significantly and positively associated with perceptions of commonality with African Americans.

In addition, one of the main arguments for the potential of black-brown coalitions is that the two groups share similar disadvantaged positions in society. However, not all Latinos or African Americans share economic circumstances similar to the majority of their respective groups (Segura and Rodrigues, 2003). Therefore, it is quite plausible that Latinos with more education and higher incomes than the median for Latinos may not perceive that they share political circumstances with members of their own group, much less with African Americans. This leads to the second hypotheses—that both education and income will be significantly and negatively correlated with perceptions of commonality with African Americans. If supported, this hypothesis will contradict the many studies suggesting economic competition is the primary source of conflict between Latinos and African Americans.

And finally, scholars have suggested that the race of an interviewer conducting a survey can influence responses (Davis, 1997; Kinder and Sanders, 1996). Therefore, I control for the possible impact of interviewer effects by including a variable for the perceived race/ethnicity of the interviewer. I hypothesize that respondents who believe that an African American is interviewing them will be more likely to indicate that they have commonalities with blacks.

Data, Variables, and Method

The source of all survey data introduced in this research paper originates from the 1999 survey of 2,417 Latinos conducted by the Washington Post,

the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, and Harvard University. The Washington Post/Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation/Harvard University National Survey of Latinos in America consists of 4,614 adults, with 2,417 Latinos in the sample. The study includes interviews with 818 Mexicans, 318 Puerto Ricans, 312 Cubans, and 593 Central or South Americans. Latino adults were interviewed in their choice of English or Spanish, with 53 percent of the Latino interviews conducted predominately in Spanish. The final results were weighted to the national Latino population as estimated by the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey. This survey was conducted by telephone between June 30 and August 30, 1999 by International Communications Research.

The dependent variable in this analysis is perceptions of commonality with African Americans. This variable is based on the following survey question: "How much do [respondent's group] have in common with African Americans?" Respondents could offer answers ranging from a lot in common to nothing at all in common. The values of this variable are, therefore, 0—nothing in common; 1—only a little in common; 2—a fair amount in common; and 3—a lot in common. Basic frequencies indicate that there is meaningful variation within the dependent variable and across the various Latino national-origin groups. The Puerto Rican population has the greatest percentage of individuals who perceive that they have at least a fair amount in common with African Americans (49 percent) followed by Dominicans (43 percent). This trend is most likely a result of the common physical characteristics these Latino subgroups share with African Americans as well as the higher level of interaction between Latinos of these backgrounds and African Americans in urban contexts like New York. The Latino subgroup with the lowest level of perceived commonality with African Americans is Central/South Americans, with only 23 percent in the two positive categories of the dependent variable. Ordered logit is utilized to estimate the models employed in this analysis due to the ordered and categorical nature of the dependent variable, commonality with African Americans.

My general discussion of the coalition formation literature has identified several factors that may impact the perception of commonality with African Americans among Latinos. This array of factors is grouped into six clusters representing the different perspectives attempting to explain perceptions of commonality. These clusters are (1) group consciousness (Latino commonality, perceived discrimination, collective action), (2) socioeconomic status/demographic factors (income, education, gender, age, urban), (3) attitudes and experiences (maintenance of culture, internal efficacy, partisanship, interviewer effect), (4) social-political integration (nativity, length of time in the United States, English proficiency), and (5) national origin (Cuban, Puerto Rican, Dominican, and Central/South American).

A discussion of the variable construction for the primary variable cluster of group consciousness will precede statistical analysis. The survey items utilized to construct the remaining independent variables are included in the

Appendix. A correlation matrix was created to test for multicollinearity among all explanatory variables. The variables that are most highly correlated are nativity and English proficiency, with a correlation of 0.61.³ No other two variables had correlations of greater than 0.5.

The relationship that I am most concerned with is Latino intra-group consciousness and its possible impact on perceptions of commonality with African Americans. The concept of group consciousness suggests that the effects of group affinity, perceived discrimination, and collective orientations are felt within Latino subgroups (Puerto Rican, Columbian, Mexican, etc.), as well as the broader panethnic grouping of Latinos. I agree with Miller et al. (1981) that proper conceptualization of group consciousness requires the employment of multiple measures to tap into the main dimensions of group consciousness. Past literature suggests that there are three general dimensions of group consciousness: general identification with a group, an awareness of that groups' relative position in society, and the desire to engage in collective activity that focuses on improving the situation of that group (Gurin, Miller, and Gurin, 1980; Padilla, 1985; Garcia, 2003). Fortunately, the Washington Post survey provides the opportunity to capture all three aspects of group consciousness for Latinos. This attempt to account for the multidimensional nature of group consciousness advances previous research interested in the role of group consciousness in minority political behavior, which has typically relied on only group identity to measure group consciousness (Olsen, 1970; Verba and Nie, 1972; Padilla, 1985; Uhlaner, 1989; McClain et al., 2006).

To measure group identity in this analysis, a group commonality index was created using a battery of questions that asked respondents how much they felt they had in common with other Latino subgroups.⁴ Respondents were given a score based on their answers to the set of questions. For example, a response of "a lot in common" received +2 points, "a fair amount in common" +1, "only a little in common" - 1, and "nothing in common" - 2. These scores were used to construct an index that consists of seven values running from no sense of Latino commonality to a strong sense of commonality with all Latino subgroups.

Beyond notions of commonality, group consciousness requires that individuals recognize that their group shares a disadvantaged position in society. I employ a measure of perceived discrimination to capture this component of group consciousness, based on responses from the following survey questions: *Is discrimination against Latinos in our society today a*

³These measures were tested individually and collectively through the use of a scaled measure, with no change in statistical significance or direction in any of the models.

⁴The questions ask: Do you feel [insert respondent's nationality group] have a lot, a fair amount, or nothing in common with the following groups: Mexicans, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, and Central/South Americans? Cronbach's alpha statistic of 0.876 indicates with great confidence that these survey questions can be scaled to create the Latino commonality variable.

problem or not? And Is it a big problem or not such a big problem? A three-point scale is used as a measure of discrimination with the following values: 1—those individuals who believe discrimination is not a problem; 2—those who indicate that discrimination is a problem for Latinos but not a big problem; and 3—those who believe that discrimination is a big problem for Latinos.

The final component of group consciousness is the desire to improve the disadvantaged societal position of one's group through collective action. I use the following survey question as an indicator of one's belief that collective action can improve the group's position in society: *Do you think that if various Latino groups worked together politically Latinos would be better off, worse off, or wouldn't make much difference?* The values of this final component of group consciousness are: 0—worse off; 1—no difference; and 2—better off. The inclusion of these three measures effectively captures all dimensions of group consciousness.

Empirical Findings

To test the impact of group consciousness on perceptions of commonality with African Americans, a multivariate model is specified including measures for SES, demographics, attitudinal dimensions, and social integration measures. Due to the ordered nature of the dependent variable, ordered logit is used to specify the Latino-specific participation models.

Table 1 indicates that in all there are 13 variables that are significantly related to perceptions of commonality with African Americans. Among the group consciousness cluster, both commonality and perceived discrimination are significant. These variables perform as expected, as the positive coefficients and odds ratios for both suggest that they motivate greater perceptions of commonality with African Americans. The odds ratios associated with both variables, particularly internal commonality, are robust, suggesting that the substantive impact of these two dimensions of group consciousness is high in magnitude. Figures 1 and 2 explore the substantive impact of group consciousness on perceived commonality further, where predicted probabilities are plotted for both variables. These figures were created by allowing both group consciousness measures to run their full values while holding all other variables at their means. In both cases, it is clear that as the values of Latino internal commonality and perceived discrimination increase, so does the likelihood that Latinos will express greater perceptions of commonality with blacks—particularly in regard to Latino internal commonality. Therefore, Latinos who have a greater sense of intra-commonality and who believe that Latinos are discriminated against in society are more likely to have perceptions of commonality with African Americans. Consistent with Hypothesis 1, group consciousness clearly influences Latinos' attitudes and perceptions of African Americans, as collec-

TABLE 1

The Effect of the Full Model on Motivating Commonality with African Americans (Ordered Logit)

Explanatory Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	Odds Ratio
<i>Group Consciousness</i>			
Commonality	2.06***	0.071	7.65
Perceived discrimination	0.269***	0.080	1.28
Collective action	0.097	0.146	1.13
<i>SES/Demographics</i>			
Income	-0.039	0.037	0.954
Education	-0.104**	0.040	0.908
Gender	-0.068	0.118	0.898
Age	-0.014**	0.006	0.983
<i>Attitudes/Experiences</i>			
Acculturation	-0.127**	0.067	0.904
Internal efficacy	-0.117**	0.055	0.893
Partisanship	0.301**	0.134	1.38
Interviewer effect	0.586***	0.177	1.76
<i>Social/Political Integration</i>			
Nativity	0.471**	0.187	1.55
Length of time in U.S.	-0.006	0.007	0.996
English proficiency	0.053	0.093	1.01
Urban	-0.235*	0.136	0.849
<i>National Origin</i>			
Puerto Rican	0.875***	0.181	2.21
Cuban	0.761**	0.194	1.98
Dominican	0.127***	0.294	3.58
Central/South American	-0.099	0.169	0.905

* $p < 0.10$ level; ** $p < 0.05$ level; *** $p < 0.01$ level.

$N = 1,521$.

Pseudo $R^2 = 0.475$.

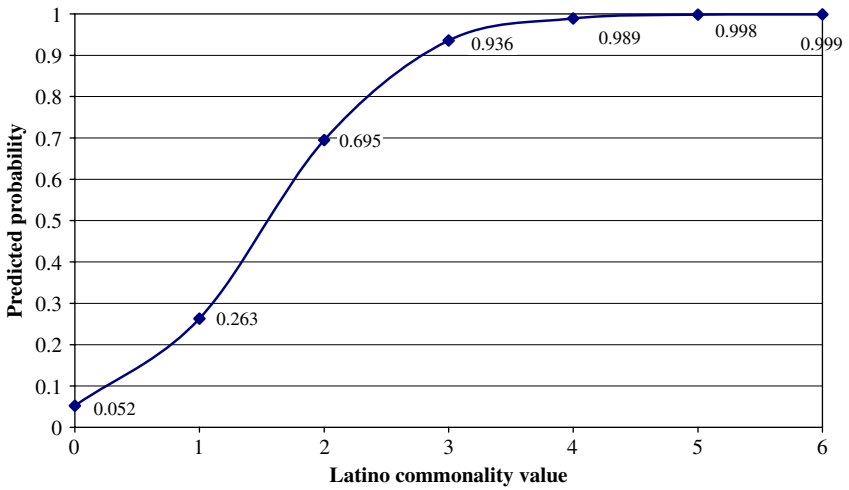
tive action is the only dimension of group consciousness that is not statistically significant in this context.⁵

With the role of group consciousness now clarified, the next stage in the analysis is to investigate if variables from the remaining clusters contribute to Latino attitudes toward African Americans. Among the SES and demographic cluster, both education and age are significant and negatively correlated with perceptions of commonality with blacks. Therefore, consistent with the second hypothesis, Latinos who are younger and who have lower levels of formal education are more likely to have perceptions of commonality with African Americans. This supports the notion that Latinos who share similar living conditions with African Americans are more likely to

⁵Despite not reaching statistical significance, the coefficient and odds ratio for collective action are positive.

FIGURE 1

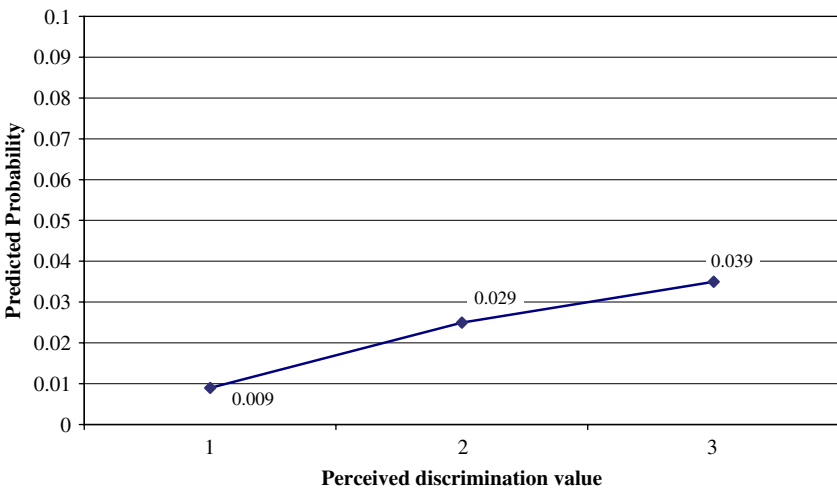
The Impact of Latino Commonality on Perceived Commonality with African Americans



*0 indicates that a respondent has no sense of commonality with any of the Latino subgroups, 6 indicates a strong sense of commonality with all Latino subgroups.

FIGURE 2

The Impact of Perceived Discrimination on Perceived Commonality with African Americans



*1 indicates that a respondent does not think discrimination directed toward Latinos is a problem, 2 indicates that discrimination is a problem, 3 indicates that discrimination is a big problem.

recognize this sense of commonality with blacks. None of the other SES or demographic factors are statistically significant. Interestingly, the income variable does not have a statistically significant relationship with perceptions of commonality.

Attitudes and experiences have a tremendous impact on Latinos' perceptions of commonality with African Americans as all four variables in this cluster (maintenance of culture, internal efficacy, partisanship, and interviewer effects) are statistically correlated with the dependent variable, and have strong substantive impacts as indicated by the robust odds ratios. Latinos who do not feel that it is important for Latinos to maintain distinct elements of their culture, as well as those who are less confident in their abilities to understand politics, are more likely to perceive commonalities with African Americans. The cultural maintenance variable suggests that increased assimilation among Latinos may lead to greater affinity toward other groups, including African Americans. Latino Democrats are also more likely to express perceptions of commonality with the nearly monolithically Democratic African-American population. Finally, consistent with Hypothesis 3, Latino respondents who believed that they were being interviewed by an African American were significantly more likely to express commonality with blacks. The respondents appear to be giving the socially desirable response to the interviewer, who they believe to be black. This supports the notion that the race, or in this case, perceived race, of a survey administrator influences responses (Davis, 1997; Kinder and Sanders, 1996).

The final two variable clusters are social/political integration and national origin. Nativity is statistically significant and positive, indicating that Latinos who are born in the United States are more likely to recognize commonalities with blacks. This makes intuitive sense, as foreign-born Latinos do not have the recognition of a shared history of *de jure* and *de facto* discrimination in the United States with African Americans, and confirms the trends in nativity found in the extant literature (Bobo and Hutchings, 1996; Mindola et al., 2003). In addition to nativity, urbanicity is also meaningful, with Latinos living in urban areas being less likely to perceive commonalities with African Americans. This is interesting given the high percentage of both groups who live in urban areas. It is possible that Latinos who live in urban areas view African Americans as economic competitors, thus reducing their perceptions of commonality with blacks.

In regard to national origin, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and Dominicans are all more likely than Mexicans to perceive high levels of commonality with African Americans. The odds ratios indicate that Dominicans are the subgroup most likely to perceive commonality with African Americans, followed by Puerto Ricans, and then Cubans. This finding can be due to the regional proximity of Latinos from these backgrounds to African Americans in urban areas such as New York or Miami. It is also plausible that this trend is a result of physical similarities between many Latinos from Dominican and/or Puerto Rican backgrounds and African Americans. Future research

utilizing the forthcoming Latino National Survey (LNS) data set should explore the possible relationship between Latino skin color and attitudes toward African Americans in order to further investigate the role of physical characteristics highlighted by the trends in national origin found here.

Group Consciousness and the Future of Black-Brown Relations

This analysis provides strong support for the contention that Latino group consciousness leads to greater perceptions of commonality with African Americans. Two dimensions of group consciousness, perceived discrimination and Latino internal commonality, have robust statistical and substantive impacts on Latinos' attitudes toward blacks. Latinos with high levels of internal commonality and those who believe that discrimination directed toward their community is a problem are more likely to recognize common status with African Americans. The impact of group consciousness remains strong despite the presence of interviewer effects, which were also found to influence Latino attitudes toward African Americans. It appears as though there must be solidarity among Latinos before there can be any discussion of meaningful partnership with other groups. Therefore, panethnicity, or a common identity among Latinos of different origin groups, is a necessary component of common identity with external groups.

One of the more interesting findings from this analysis is the role of age in perceptions of commonality with African Americans. Age is negatively correlated with perceptions of commonality with blacks, suggesting that younger Latinos are more likely to recognize common experiences across groups. This is promising for the future of coalition formation between these groups. If this younger generation of Latinos maintains these attitudes as they age and become more involved politically, the ability of political leaders to utilize this resource for collective efforts will increase tremendously. Finally, the inability of income to reach statistical significance suggests that attitudes across racial and ethnic groups are driven by more than economic competition—a driving theory within the literature (Alozie and Ramirez, 1999; Johnson and Oliver, 1989; Oliver and Johnson, 1984; Kaufmann, 2003; Mindiola, Niemann, and Rodriguez, 2002; Vaca, 2004). It is possible that high levels of group consciousness can overcome perceptions of economic threat and motivate positive attitudes between minority groups, similarly to the way the concept has been found to overcome depressed socioeconomic status to motivate political participation among African Americans (Dawson, 1994).

This is not a direct test of the relationship between the components of group consciousness and coalition formation, but investigating the role of the multiple dimensions of group consciousness in the formation of commonality with African Americans is a valuable piece to the puzzle. Previous research has suggested that Latinos and African Americans share common

experiences in the United States. This analysis adds to this discussion by testing whether individuals within these communities recognize that these commonalities exist, and by defining factors that contribute to Latino perceptions of commonality with African Americans. As demographics continue to change in the United States, positioning Latinos and African Americans in common situations, the propensity for coalition formation will continue to intensify.

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Appendix: Presentation of Survey Items and Independent Variable Measures

Socioeconomic Status/Demographics

- Household Income—*What is your total household income from all sources, before taxes?* The values of the income measure are a nine-point income scale ranging from <\$20,000 to >\$100,000.
- Education—*What is the last grade that you completed in school?* The values of the education variable are: 0 = <9th grade; 1 = some high school; 2 = high school graduate; 3 = vocational training; 4 = some college; 5 = college graduate; 6 = postgraduate training.
- Gender—*What is your gender?* The values of the gender variable are: 0 = female; 1 = male.
- Age—*What is your age?* Age is continuous with the youngest respondent being 18 and the oldest being 90.

Attitudes/Experiences

- Cultural Maintenance—*How important is it for Latinos to maintain their distinct cultures?* The values of the cultural maintenance variable are: very important, somewhat important, not too important, and not at all important.
- Internal Efficacy—*Politics and government are so complicated that a person like me cannot really understand what's going on.* The values of internal efficacy are: 0 = strongly agree; 1 = agree somewhat; 2 = disagree somewhat; 3 = disagree strongly.
- Partisanship—*In politics today, do you consider yourself a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or something else?* The values of the partisanship variable are: 0 = Republican; 1 = Independent; 2 = Democrat.
- Interviewer Effect—*One last question, what race/ethnicity do you think I am?* The values of interviewer effect are: 0 = non African American; 1 = African American.

Sociopolitical Integration

- Nativity—*Were you born in the United States or another country?* The values of nativity are: 0 = foreign born; 1 = native born.
- Length of Time in the United States—*How many years have you lived in the United States?* Time spent in the United States is continuous, with age being used to maintain noncitizens in the analysis.
- English Proficiency—This measure was created from the following survey questions: *Would you say you can carry on a conversation in English? Would you say you can read a newspaper or book in English?* The English proficiency scale ranges from 0 = nonproficient through 3 = highly proficient.
- Urban—The urban variable is derived from the Census coding provided by the survey. The values of this variable are: 0 = nonurban; 1 = urban.

National Origin

To account for national origin, dummy variables are constructed for Cubans, Central/South Americans, Dominicans, and Puerto Ricans, with Mexicans serving as the comparison population. All variables were coded based on the following set of survey questions: *Earlier you said you were Hispanic or Latino, what country did your family of ancestors come from? Which country do you identify with more?* Both dummy variable utilizes the same coding strategy: 0 = non-Cuban; 1 = Cuban; 0 = non-Puerto Rican; 1 = Puerto Rican, etc.