

Witnessing racial discrimination shapes collective action for racial justice: Enhancing awareness of privilege among advantaged groups

Özden Melis Uluğ  | Linda R. Tropp

Psychology of Peace and Violence Program,
Department of Psychological and Brain
Sciences, University of Massachusetts,
Amherst, MA, USA

Correspondence

Özden Melis Uluğ, Psychology of Peace
and Violence Program, Department of
Psychological and Brain Sciences, University
of Massachusetts, 135 Hicks Way, Tobin
Hall, 6th Floor, Room 627, Amherst, MA
01003, USA.
Email: oulug@clarku.edu

Abstract

Three studies tested whether witnessing incidents of racial discrimination targeting Black people may motivate White people to engage in collective action for racial justice. In studies of White Americans (Study 1) and self-identified White activist “allies” (Study 2), witnessing incidents of racial discrimination predicted greater willingness to participate in collective action for racial justice, through the pathway of enhanced awareness of racial privilege. Studies 1 and 2 showed that awareness of racial privilege uniquely predicted the link between witnessing incidents of racial discrimination and willingness to participate in collective action for racial justice; these effects were consistent both with and without controlling for Whites’ sense of identification with their own racial group. Study 3 tested experimentally how witnessing incidents of racial discrimination may compel White people to become more motivated to engage in collective action for racial justice. Compared to those in a control condition, White participants who were randomly assigned to watch a brief video depicting recent discriminatory incidents targeting Black people (e.g., Starbucks incident in Philadelphia, housing incident at Yale University) tended to show greater motivation to engage in collective action for racial justice, an effect accounted for largely by enhanced awareness of racial privilege. How witnessing incidents of racial discrimination can transform views of privilege and willingness to stand up for racial justice among members of advantaged racial groups is discussed.

1 | INTRODUCTION

Typically, members of advantaged racial groups tend to have limited awareness of discrimination targeting members of disadvantaged racial groups (Tropp & Barlow, 2018). White Americans are generally less likely to perceive racial discrimination against Black people and other racial minorities than are Black Americans (Gallup, 2016; Pew, 2016). Many White Americans are also disinclined to believe that racial prejudice and discrimination still exist against racial minorities (Wilkins & Kaiser, 2014), often presuming that members of disadvantaged racial groups are somehow exaggerating any claims of discrimination they may face (see ABC News, 2000; Dover et al., 2014).

We contend that one reason for this limited awareness of racial discrimination targeting other racial groups is that, because of their relative racial privilege, members of advantaged racial groups do not regularly experience the same kinds of mistreatment as those experienced by members of disadvantaged racial groups. Race-based privileges are often invisible to advantaged racial groups, at the same time as they are readily visible and likely to impact the life experiences and opportunities of members of disadvantaged racial groups (see Case, 2012; Case et al., 2012, 2014; McIntosh, 1989, 2012, 2015). Indeed, White Americans are not only unlikely to see instances of discrimination targeting members of disadvantaged racial groups, but they also tend to be unwilling to accept that being

White might help their ability to get ahead (Horowitz et al., 2019; Knowles et al., 2014).

Given that White people in the United States are largely unaware of racial discrimination commonly faced by members of disadvantaged racial groups, we contend that witnessing instances of racial discrimination targeting disadvantaged racial groups should enhance their awareness of the existence of this discrimination. Importantly, White people must be aware that racial discrimination targeting people of color regularly occurs to be motivated to take action toward reducing such discrimination and promoting racial justice (see Dion, 2003).

Consistent with this view, prior research would suggest that the more aware people are of structural inequalities, the more likely they are to engage in collective action to address these inequalities (see, e.g., Dion, 2003; Duncan, 1999; Dunn & Szymanski, 2018; Thomas & McGarty, 2009). Moreover, it is possible that witnessing racial discrimination would not only motivate some White people to take action to combat racial inequality, but that—through the process of becoming aware of racial inequality—they may also become more aware of their own relative racial privilege (see Ellemers & Barreto, 2009; Tropp & Uluğ, 2019 for related discussions). In the present work, we, therefore, propose that witnessing incidents of racial discrimination targeting members of disadvantaged racial groups should meaningfully shift advantaged racial group members' awareness of racial privilege, and in so doing, motivate them to stand up and engage in collective action for racial justice.

1.1 | Privilege awareness among the advantaged

Some prior research has focused on how awareness of racial privilege may shift the attitudes of advantaged group members toward greater acceptance of the disadvantaged. For example, heightened privilege awareness among White Americans has been shown to predict more positive attitudes toward African Americans (Stewart et al., 2012; see also Powell et al., 2005). Relatedly, among heterosexuals, greater acknowledgment of heterosexual privilege has been linked to more positive attitudes toward same-sex marriage and marriage equality (Case & Stewart, 2010). As evidenced by these examples, the research conducted thus far has looked at how greater awareness of privilege among members of advantaged groups predicts *attitudes* toward the disadvantaged. What remains largely unknown, however, is the extent to which privilege awareness might be associated with corresponding shifts in willingness to take action to promote intergroup equality (see Powell et al., 2005 for a related argument). Other research has examined how advantaged group members respond when racial inequalities are framed either in terms of out-group disadvantage or in-group privilege (see, e.g., Iyer et al., 2003; Leach et al., 2002; Lowery et al., 2012). This body of work suggests that recognition of racial discrimination and recognition of White privilege are related, yet, distinct, concepts (Iyer et al., 2003), which predict different emotional and motivational responses to inequality (Lowery et al., 2007, 2012). For instance,

focusing on how disadvantaged racial groups are discriminated against may lead members of advantaged racial groups to feel sympathy for the disadvantaged, whereas focusing on Whites' advantage and instances, where Whites discriminate against Black people, may lead Whites to feel guilty (Iyer et al., 2003).

In the present research, we argue that witnessing incidents of racial discrimination targeting members of disadvantaged racial groups may raise advantaged group members' awareness of their privileged position, and correspondingly, their motivation to engage in collective action to promote racial justice. In line with the research cited above, we contend that, for members of advantaged groups, perceiving discrimination against disadvantaged groups focuses on the experiences of the disadvantaged out-group, whereas acknowledgment of racial privilege focuses on the position of the advantaged in-group relative to the disadvantaged out-group (Leach et al., 2002; Lowery et al., 2012). In our view, this distinction carries crucial implications for motivating collective action for racial justice among members of racially advantaged groups. Indeed, perceiving discrimination against members of disadvantaged racial groups may not be sufficient to compel members of advantaged racial groups to take action for racial equality. Rather, it may be that members of advantaged racial groups may only feel compelled to take action when they become aware of their own relatively privileged position in society. Consistent with this analysis, research conducted by Reimer et al. (2017; Study 1b) with heterosexual participants showed that their perceptions of discrimination against nonheterosexuals did not significantly predict collective action to promote the interests of LGBT communities. A central goal of the present research is, therefore, to extend this line of work and test more directly how witnessing incidents of racial discrimination relates to advantaged group members' awareness of their racial privilege, and how awareness of racial privilege, in turn, predicts advantaged group members' inclinations to take action to promote racial equality and justice.

1.2 | Motivations to engage in collective action for racial justice among the advantaged

Little research evidence exists regarding how awareness of racial privilege may predict willingness to participate in collective action to promote racial equality and justice among members of advantaged racial groups. Most prior research on awareness of structural inequalities has been framed in terms of group consciousness among members of disadvantaged groups, and how this awareness may predict their willingness to participate in collective action to benefit their own groups' interests (Duncan, 1999; Dunn & Szymanski, 2018). This work shows that one of the most important predictors of intentions to engage in collective action among disadvantaged group members concerns their perceptions of inequality. Perceiving inequality has long been recognized as a key motivator for collective action among members of disadvantaged groups (Dion, 2003; Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996; Wright &

Tropp, 2002), such that the more disadvantaged groups perceive that their groups are targets of unjust treatment, the more inclined they are to engage in collective action to support their group (Uluğ et al., 2020; van Zomeren et al., 2008).

By contrast, very little is known regarding how awareness of privilege may propel advantaged group members to engage in collective action to promote intergroup equality or the interests of the disadvantaged. Instead, studies predicting support for collective action among members of advantaged groups have tended to focus on the predictive value of other factors, such as intergroup contact and intergroup emotions (e.g., guilt and empathy among the advantaged; Mallett et al., 2008; Selvanathan et al., 2018), as well as moral conviction and/or beliefs in the efficacy of such action (van Zomeren et al., 2011). Yet, some studies offer preliminary insights suggesting the value of examining privilege awareness as a predictor of support for collective action among members of advantaged groups. For example, in the context of gender relations, advantaged group members may become more willing to participate in collective action once they are convinced that inequality is prevalent and too widespread to be ignored (Iyer & Ryan, 2009). Similarly, it has been shown that awareness of how multiple identities intersect (i.e., intersectionality) is related to greater intentions to be politically active (Curtin et al., 2015). Nonetheless, at present, we have limited knowledge of how advantaged groups' awareness of racial privilege may enhance willingness to engage in collective action to combat racial injustice.

In addition to focusing on the racial context, we expand upon earlier work in this area in two crucial ways. First, we examine specifically how witnessing instances of racial discrimination targeting the racially disadvantaged may contribute to building awareness of racial privilege among the racially advantaged, and in turn, to predicting their greater willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice. We argue that if members of advantaged racial groups directly witness instances of racial discrimination, they may begin to recognize the pervasiveness of discrimination faced by members of disadvantaged racial groups, and how racial discrimination manifests in ways beyond what they themselves are (or are not) likely to experience in their daily lives (see Pew, 2019). Recognition of such forms of discrimination targeting the racially disadvantaged should, therefore, enhance the extent to which members of advantaged racial groups become aware of racial privilege, which could, in turn, enhance their willingness to participate in collective action to address the racial inequalities they now perceive.

Second, we extend prior work by employing both survey and experimental research designs to test the role that privilege awareness may play in relations between witnessing racial discrimination and willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice among advantaged group members. Most prior studies on this topic have used experimental procedures to examine the role of privilege awareness in intergroup contexts (e.g., Powell et al., 2005; Stewart et al., 2012). Our studies add to this literature by operationalizing privilege awareness both in terms of how it may be induced in any given moment (using experimental procedures) and how it may be

perceived on a more ongoing basis (as assessed in surveys), along with testing its role in the relation between witnessing racial discrimination and willingness to engage in collective action for racial equality and justice.

1.3 | Overview of research

In the present research, we hypothesize that witnessing instances of racial discrimination targeting the racially disadvantaged will predict advantaged racial group members' willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice. We also propose that awareness of racial privilege among the racially advantaged serves as a key pathway through which witnessing instances of racial discrimination transforms into greater willingness to take action against racial inequality. In each study, we have investigated how members of an advantaged racial group (White Americans) respond to instances of racial discrimination experienced by members of a disadvantaged racial outgroup (Black Americans). More specifically, we examined the extent to which witnessing incidents of racial discrimination predicts willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice, while testing privilege awareness as a process variable linking the effects of witnessing incidents of racial discrimination to collective action for racial equality and justice.

In this program of research, we have employed different research methodologies to examine how White Americans' witnessing of racial discrimination would predict their willingness to engage in collective action for racial equality and justice. First, we conducted online survey studies of Whites who comprise part of the broader U.S. population (Study 1) as well as those who identify specifically as White activist "allies" in the struggle for racial justice (Study 2). Across these studies, we examine links between witnessing discrimination, privilege awareness, and willingness to engage in collective action both with and without controlling for Whites' racial identification, given prior research showing that highly identified members of advantaged groups are less inclined to recognize inequality, since acknowledging inequality could threaten the perceived legitimacy of their group's advantaged position (Doosje et al., 1998). Related work also suggests that higher White identification is associated with more negative attitudes toward Black people (Stewart et al., 2012) and a greater motivation to protect the interests of Whites as a racial group (Lowery et al., 2006). Moreover, it has been shown that when White Americans think about White privilege, they are more likely to endorse racist attitudes, yet, only when White racial identification is sufficiently high (see Branscombe et al., 2007).

We then conducted an experimental study (Study 3) in which we randomly assigned White participants either to be exposed (or not exposed) to recent and highly publicized incidents of racial discrimination targeting Black people. We used these procedures to test more directly how witnessing incidents of racial discrimination may lead White participants to become more willing to engage in collective action for racial equality and justice, through the pathway of greater privilege awareness.

TABLE 1 Means, standard deviations, and correlations among key variables (Study 1)

Variables	M(SD)	1	2	3	4
1. Witnessing racial discrimination	2.17 (1.00)	–			
2. Awareness of racial privilege	4.43 (1.82)	.60***	–		
3. Willingness to engage in collective action	1.74 (1.05)	.45***	.50***	–	
4. White identification	4.84 (1.36)	–.07	–.09*	–.13**	–

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$.

2 | STUDY 1

2.1 | Method

2.1.1 | Participants and procedure

We received IRB approval for this research from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. A total of 581 self-identified White American participants were recruited to complete online surveys through Amazon's Mechanical Turk. Participants received \$1.00 USD as compensation for their participation at the end of the study. Two hundred ninety-six of the respondents identified themselves as female, 283 as male, 1 as other, and 1 did not respond to this question. Respondents' ages ranged from 21 to 78 years ($M = 39.23$, $SD = 12.23$). Overall, participants' political orientations ranged across the political spectrum (1 = *Liberal*, 11 = *Conservative*), with the mean score falling near the midpoint of the scale ($M = 5.14$, $SD = 3.10$).

2.1.2 | Measures¹

Witnessing incidents of racial discrimination

We used 10 items² adapted from Krieger et al. (2005) to assess how often participants reported having witnessed an incident of racial discrimination in their day-to-day lives, in which a Black person was treated differently than other people would be treated (e.g., "A Black person has been treated with less courtesy than other people"). Responses to these items ranged from 1 (*never*) to 4 (*four or more times*; $\alpha = .96$).

Awareness of racial privilege

We used five items developed by Case (2007) to assess participants' awareness of racial privilege: (1) *White people have privileges that Black people do not have in the United States*; (2) *White people automatically have more opportunities than Black people in employment and education*; (3) *Black people are disadvantaged in society and White people are at an advantage*; (4) *White people are*

at an advantage because they hold most of the positions of power in American society; and (5) *White people must be willing to give up their privileged status before Whites and Blacks can be truly equal in the United States*. Responses to these items ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*; $\alpha = .95$).

Willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice

Participants indicated how willing they are to participate in three different collective action behaviors related to the Movement for Black Lives, by adapting items from Odağ et al. (2016): (1) *protesting on the streets during Black Lives Matter protests*, (2) *attending forums, meetings, or discussion groups related to Black Lives Matter protests*, and (3) *posting messages on social media about the Black Lives Matter protests* (1 = *never*, 5 = *always*; $\alpha = .92$).

In addition, using two items adapted from Knowles and Peng (2005), participants indicated how strongly they identify with their advantaged racial group, to be used as a control variable in data analysis. Participants' scores on two items assessing White identification were averaged prior to data analysis: "I feel strong ties with other White people in the U.S." and "I identify with other White people in the U.S." (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*, $r = .80$).

2.2 | Results and discussion

2.2.1 | Preliminary analyses

Correlations among the variables and their means and standard deviations are presented in Table 1. Greater witnessing of racial discrimination was associated with both greater awareness of racial privilege and greater willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice. In addition, greater awareness of racial privilege corresponded with greater willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice. White identification was not significantly related to witnessing racial discrimination; however, greater White identification was significantly associated with lower awareness of racial privilege and lower willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice.

2.2.2 | Mediation analysis

We conducted a mediation analysis using PROCESS Model 4 with 5,000 bootstrapped samples (see Hayes, 2013) in order to test whether awareness of racial privilege mediates the relationship

¹All measures, including materials used in the experimental manipulations in Study 3, are available at https://osf.io/n7vzw/?view_only=e5f42e2b4650428ea9ff633cb014ba98

²We conducted an exploratory factor analysis to assure that all 10 items in this scale load onto a single factor. The results showed that all 10 items loaded on the same factor and only one component extracted (all factor loadings > .77; see Supporting Information).

between witnessing racial discrimination and willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice. We conducted this test of mediation both with³ and without including White identification as a covariate in the model as a statistical control; these tests yielded similar results, and the model that does not include White identification as a covariate is reported below.

Results indicated that witnessing racial discrimination was a significant predictor of awareness of racial privilege, and that awareness of racial privilege was a significant predictor of willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice (Figure 1). Witnessing racial discrimination remained a significant predictor of willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice even after including awareness of racial privilege in the model. The indirect effect was tested using a bootstrap estimation approach with 5,000 samples; results indicated a significant indirect association between witnessing incidents of racial discrimination and willingness to engage in collective action, $b = .21$, $SE = .03$, 95% CI [.17, .26] with the effect size (ratio of indirect effect to the total effect) of .48. A sensitivity power analysis also showed that with the available sample size ($N = 581$), we had 95% power to detect an effect size of *Cohen's* $d = .03$.

Study 1 offered support for our hypothesis that witnessing incidents of racial discrimination would predict greater willingness to participate in collective action for racial justice among White Americans, in part through the pathway of enhanced awareness of racial privilege. These effects held after accounting for participants' White identification—a factor that has been shown to shape perceptions of racial discrimination and racial equality in past work (Branscombe et al., 2007; Doosje et al., 1998; Lowery et al., 2006).

Overall, we observed a low level of willingness to participate in collective action for racial justice among White American respondents in the MTurk sample in Study 1 ($M = 1.74$; $SD = 1.05$; see Table 1). Indeed, a high proportion of the White Americans surveyed indicated that they would not be willing to support the Black Lives Matter movement in the future by protesting ($n = 470$; 70.2%); by attending forums, meetings, or discussion groups ($n = 359$; 61.8%) or by posting messages on social media ($n = 344$; 59.2%). It is possible that the limited variability in willingness to participate in collective action for racial justice may have somehow curbed relations among

the key variables in Study 1. Also, we observed that a third of our respondents reported never having seen an incident of discrimination ($n = 200$; 34.5%). We, therefore, conducted a second study for which we recruited a sample of White American participants who were more actively engaged in collective action behavior and perhaps more likely to have witnessed incidents of racial discrimination, in order to examine associations between witnessing racial discrimination, awareness of racial privilege, and willingness to participate in collective action for racial justice.

3 | STUDY 2

Study 2 aimed to investigate how witnessing incidents of racial discrimination may predict greater awareness of racial privilege and willingness to participate in collective action for racial justice among White Americans, with the explicit goal of examining links among these variables among White Americans who are more likely to be engaged in collective action than the more general White population surveyed in Study 1. As in Study 1, we expected that witnessing racial discrimination would predict willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice through the pathway of greater awareness of racial privilege.

3.1 | Method

3.1.1 | Participants and procedure

Given how low levels of reported willingness to participate in collective action for racial justice were in Study 1, we focused on recruiting White American participants who indicated that they had participated in at least some form of prior collective action for racial justice. To recruit participants for this study, we contacted local activist networks, Facebook groups, and campus organizations to submit posts that would help us to identify people who would refer to themselves as "White allies." Potential respondents were informed that the study's aim was to examine White people's perceptions of and experiences with other racial groups in various

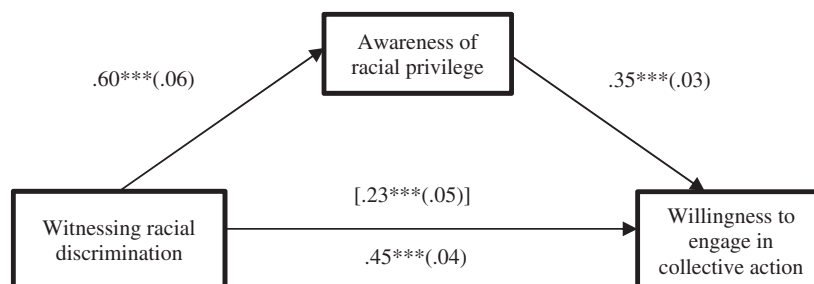


FIGURE 1 Mediation analysis illustrating the direct and indirect associations of witnessing racial discrimination on awareness of racial privilege and willingness to engage in collective action (Study 1). The figure displays standardized regression coefficients (and standard errors). The numbers in brackets represent the standardized regression coefficient (and standard error) for the relation between witnessing racial discrimination and willingness to engage in collective action after adjusting for awareness of racial privilege. *** $p < .001$

TABLE 2 Means, standard deviations, and correlations among key variables (Study 2)

Variables	M (SD)	1	2	3	4
1. Witnessing racial discrimination	3.11 (.79)	–			
2. Awareness of racial privilege	6.23 (1.00)	.41***	–		
3. Willingness to engage in collective action	3.67 (.80)	.20*	.32**	–	
4. White identification	4.21 (1.36)	–.14	–.26**	–.20	–

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$.

contexts, and they could participate in the study if they had previously taken at least one prior action relevant to racial justice. Interested individuals were directed to a link where they could access an online survey. As part of our outreach efforts, we allowed members of these activist networks and groups to share the link to the online survey with others who might also be interested (i.e., snowball sampling).

Screening questions at the start of the online survey asked participants about their racial or ethnic background and whether they had participated in any prior form of action for racial justice, such as attending a protest. A total of 99 individuals who self-identified as “White” and who indicated at least some prior participation in action(s) for racial justice then voluntarily completed the rest of the online survey. Seventy-two of the respondents identified themselves as female, 21 as male, and 6 as “other.” Respondents’ ages ranged from 18 to 72 years ($M = 30.88$, $SD = 12.96$). Additionally, on a scale ranging from 1 (*Liberal*) to 11 (*Conservative*), participants recruited for Study 2 tended to report more liberal political orientations ($M = 2.44$, $SD = 1.59$) relative to participants recruited for Study 1 ($M = 5.14$, $SD = 3.10$); $t(245,85) = 13.15$, $p < .001$.

3.1.2 | Measures

We used the same measures as those used in Study 1 to assess witnessing incidents of racial discrimination⁴ (Krieger et al., 2005; $\alpha = .92$), awareness of racial privilege (Case, 2007; $\alpha = .89$), and willingness to participate in collective action for racial justice (Odağ et al., 2016; $\alpha = .75$). Once again, we included a 2-item measure of White identification to be used as a statistical control in data analysis (Knowles & Peng, 2005; $r = .66$).

3.2 | Results and discussion

3.2.1 | Preliminary analyses

Correlations among the variables as well as their means and standard deviations are presented in Table 2. Consistent with findings from Study 1, witnessing racial discrimination was associated with

both greater awareness of racial privilege and greater willingness to participate in collective action for racial justice. Greater awareness of racial privilege was also associated with greater willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice. In addition, White identification was not significantly associated with witnessing racial discrimination or willingness to participate in collective action; however, greater White identification was associated with lower awareness of racial privilege. We also observed that mean scores on White identification tended to be lower among self-identified White allies in Study 2 ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 1.36$) than among White MTurkers in Study 1 ($M = 4.84$, $SD = 1.36$); $t(678) = 4.29$, $p < .001$. At the same time, mean scores on willingness to participate in collective action for racial justice were significantly higher among self-identified White allies in Study 2 ($M = 3.67$, $SD = .80$) than among White MTurkers in Study 1 ($M = 1.74$, $SD = 1.05$); $t(160,62)$

$= -21.11$, $p < .001$.

3.2.2 | Mediation analysis

We conducted a mediation analysis using PROCESS Model 4 with 5,000 bootstrapped samples (see Hayes, 2013) to test whether awareness of racial privilege would mediate the relation between witnessing racial discrimination and willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice. To be consistent with Study 1, we conducted this analysis both with⁵ and without including White identification as a covariate in the model. As these tests yielded similar results, as in Study 1, the full model that does not include White identification as a covariate is reported below.

Results showed that witnessing racial discrimination was a significant predictor of awareness of racial privilege, and that awareness of racial privilege was a significant predictor of willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice (see Figure 2). Witnessing racial discrimination was no longer a significant direct predictor of willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice once awareness of racial privilege was included in the

⁴We again conducted an exploratory factor analysis to assure that all 10 items in this scale load onto a single factor. The results showed that all 10 items loaded on the same factor and only one component extracted (all factor loadings $> .57$; see Supporting Information).

⁵Once we included White identification as a covariate in the model, the indirect association remained significant, $b = .10$, $SE = .05$, but it was a somewhat weaker effect, 95% CI [.02, .21]. However, unlike in Study 1, White identification did not predict willingness to engage in collective action. We also tested White identification as a moderator by using PROCESS Model 14. The interaction between awareness of racial privilege and White identification was not significant, and the interaction did not predict willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice ($b = -.05$; $SE = .08$, $p = .470$).

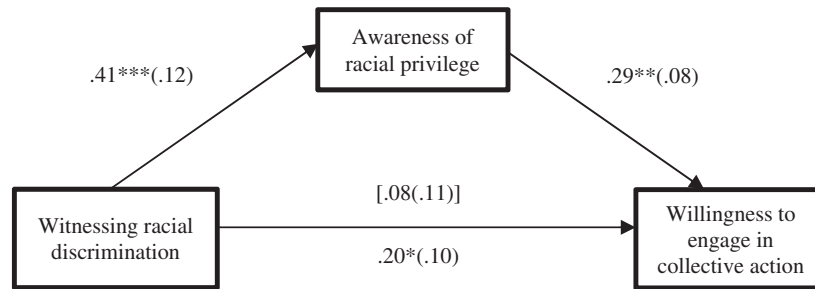


FIGURE 2 Mediation analysis illustrating the direct and indirect associations of witnessing racial discrimination on awareness of racial privilege and willingness to engage in collective action (Study 2). The figure displays standardized regression coefficients (and standard errors). The numbers in brackets represent the standardized regression coefficient (and standard error) for the relation between witnessing racial discrimination and willingness to engage in collective action after adjusting for awareness of racial privilege. *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

model. The indirect effect was tested using a bootstrap estimation approach with 5,000 samples; results indicated a significant indirect association between witnessing incidents of racial discrimination and willingness to engage in collective action, $b = .12$, $SE = .05$, 95% CI [.03, .23], with the effect size (ratio of indirect effect to the total effect) of .58. Although this study of self-identified White allies is underpowered, a sensitivity power analysis showed that with the available sample size ($N = 99$), we had 95% power to detect an effect size of *Cohen's d* = .16.

Paralleling the results from Study 1, results from Study 2 suggest that witnessing racial discrimination predicts greater willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice, through the pathway of greater awareness of racial privilege. These findings replicate and extend the results of Study 1 by demonstrating these trends among Whites who have been more actively engaged in collective action behavior and who identify as “allies” in the pursuit of racial justice.

Together, results from the first two studies consistently show that witnessing racial discrimination predicts greater willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice among the racially advantaged, and that awareness of racial privilege is a key pathway that links them. Across the two studies, we have also demonstrated this same indirect association among White Americans with varied political orientations who are represented on MTurk (see, e.g., Ross et al., 2010), and among more liberal Whites who identify as “allies” and have taken at least some prior action to promote racial justice.

Nonetheless, a limitation of the first two studies is that they examine the effects of witnessing incidents of racial discrimination and awareness of racial privilege using only self-report measures. In these survey-based studies, we relied on participants' perceptions of incidents as involving racial discrimination, and we could only examine associations between participants' perceptions and their reported willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice. Experimental evidence is needed to more firmly test the hypothesis that witnessing incidents of racial discrimination would cause shifts in White Americans' willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice, as well as to clarify how awareness of racial privilege informs relations between these variables. Study 3, therefore, aimed to test experimentally whether and how witnessing racial

discrimination may lead White people to become more aware of racial privilege and more willing to participate in collective action for racial justice.

We should also note that the sample size in Study 2 was relatively small, and we are aware that a small sample size can undermine the reliability of mediation analyses (e.g., Fritz & MacKinnon, 2007). While recruiting “hard to reach populations” may be challenging (see, e.g., Sadler et al., 2010), we still believe that these data from White individuals who identified as “allies” usefully extend the research by allowing us to consider whether similar patterns of relations are likely to emerge among White allies relative to the patterns observed among White Americans more generally in Study 1. Although the results of Study 2 are in line with the findings of Study 1, we sought to gather a larger sample of participants in Study 3, along with incorporating experimental procedures to examine the effects of witnessing incidents of racial discrimination.

4 | STUDY 3

In 2018, several incidents of racial discrimination were highly publicized and depicted in posts that went viral on social media. For instance, in one well-publicized incident at Yale University, a White resident called the police stating that a [Black] woman “she did not know” was sleeping in the common room of her dormitory; as it happens, the Black woman who fell asleep in the common room was one of her neighbors (Wootson, 2018). In another highly publicized incident, a White employee of a Starbucks coffee store in Philadelphia called the police when she saw two Black men sitting at a table without ordering anything. The men reported that they were simply waiting for their friend to show up, and others present reported that the men did nothing wrong; still, the police escorted these men out of the Starbucks in handcuffs (Stewart, 2018).

Even though these incidents were highly publicized, not all White people in the United States were aware that they had occurred, nor were they aware of how common such incidents tend to be in the lives of Black Americans (see Garcia-Navarro, 2018). Using excerpts from video coverage of these incidents, Study 3 tested experimentally how witnessing incidents of racial discrimination might compel

White participants to become more willing to engage in collective action for racial justice through enhancing their awareness of racial privilege.

4.1 | Method

4.1.1 | Participants and procedure

A total of 258 self-identified White American participants were recruited to participate through Amazon's Mechanical Turk. Participants received \$1.25 USD as compensation for their participation at the end of the study. One hundred forty-six of the respondents identified themselves as female, and 112 identified themselves as male. Respondents' ages ranged from 22 to 78 years ($M = 39.53$, $SD = 12.82$). As in Study 1, participants' political orientations ranged across the political spectrum (1 = *Liberal*, 11 = *Conservative*), with their mean score falling near the midpoint of the scale ($M = 5.89$, $SD = 3.38$).

To introduce the study, the following instructions were given to all participants: "First, we would like you to imagine yourself living in different locations. Please watch the screen, and when prompted, respond to the questions that follow." This strategy was implemented to use a consistent cover story across the two conditions. After these instructions, participants were randomly assigned to either the experimental condition ($n = 131$) or the control condition ($n = 127$).

In the experimental condition, two brief videos of racial incidents (i.e., housing incident at Yale University, Starbucks incident in Philadelphia) were presented to participants in the same order. In the first video, participants watched footage (without sound) from the incident at Yale University with some captions depicting a dialog between the Black student and police officers (e.g., a police officer saying to the Black student: "We need to make sure you belong here"). Toward the end of the first video, a brief reference was made to other recent incidents of racial discrimination experienced by Black people seeking services (e.g., via Airbnb, at Nordstrom) with captions such as: "It's just the latest instance of police responding to false alarms involving people of color" and "in April two Black men were arrested for sitting in a Philadelphia Starbucks."⁶ In the second video, participants watched footage (without sound) from the Starbucks incident in Philadelphia with captions such as "What did they [the police] get called for? Tell me, what did they [the Black men] do?" The total duration of video footage presented to participants in the experimental condition was 2 min and 16 s; we allowed participants to see captions of what was said during the incidents, but not listen to the sound, in order to make participants' experiences across the two experimental conditions as similar as possible. In the control condition, still photographs showing the inside and outside of the dormitory at Yale University and of the Starbucks in Philadelphia

were presented to participants in the same order for the same duration of time (2 min 16 s); scenes from the same locations, without sound, captions, or any notable reference to the discriminatory incidents, were purposely used in the control condition to ensure that any effects of the experimental manipulation would be due to witnessing incidents of racial discrimination and not due to viewing the locations in which such incidents occurred.

After viewing these materials, participants were asked one question as a check for the experimental manipulation: *How often do you think Black people experience discrimination in relations with the police?* (1 = *not at all*; 4 = *extremely frequently*). In addition to the manipulation check, participants completed the same measures used in Studies 1 and 2 to assess awareness of racial privilege (Case, 2007; $\alpha = .95$) and willingness to participate in collective action for racial justice (Odağ et al., 2016; $\alpha = .91$).⁷

At the very end of the study, participants were also asked to indicate whether they had any prior exposure to news coverage of the incidents (locations) depicted in the experimental materials. Specifically, participants were informed that we had a few final questions to ask them, which pertained to recent events that have occurred in different parts of the United States. Participants were then presented with a brief excerpt from a published news article together with a link to the news article—first in relation to the Yale University incident (Wootson, 2018), and then, in relation to the Starbucks incident (Stewart, 2018). After presenting each excerpt, participants were asked if they had heard of any news coverage of each incident before today, and if so, how much news coverage they have seen regarding [the Yale dormitory/Philadelphia Starbucks] incident; scores on each item ranged from 1 = *none* to 4 = *a great deal*. Responses to these two items were correlated ($r = .43$) and averaged to create a composite measure of *prior exposure to discriminatory incidents*.

4.2 | Results and discussion

4.2.1 | Manipulation check

As a check for the witnessing manipulation, an independent samples *t* test compared how often participants randomly assigned to the experimental and control conditions reported that Black people experience discrimination in relations with the police. The witnessing manipulation was successful, $t(255) = -2.77$, $p = .006$. Participants in the witnessing condition were significantly more likely to report that Black people experience discrimination in relations with the police ($M = 3.14$, $SD = .94$) than participants in the control condition ($M = 2.81$, $SD = .96$). It is also worth noting that participants in the two conditions did not significantly differ in their reported exposure to news coverage of these discriminatory

⁶In both incidents, someone called the police on Black people as Black people were suspected that they might be burglars or shoplifters (please see <https://www.cnn.com/2018/05/07/us/airbnb-police-called-trnd/index.html> and https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/get-there/wp/2018/05/17/shopping-while-black-african-americans-continue-to-face-retail-racism/?utm_term=.fd0f705c885d).

⁷It should be noted that, in Study 3, items assessing willingness to engage in collective action were framed in terms of "protests for racial justice" rather than in terms of "Black Lives Matter protests" to allow for a broader focus in this study.

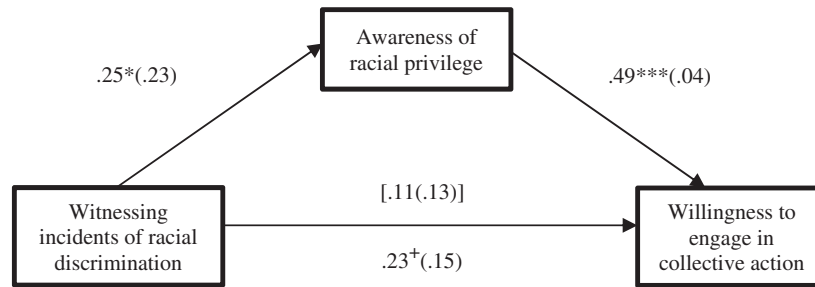


FIGURE 3 Mediation analysis illustrating the direct and indirect associations of witnessing incidents of racial discrimination on awareness of racial privilege and willingness to engage in collective action (Study 3). The figure displays standardized regression coefficients (and standard errors). The numbers in brackets represent the standardized regression coefficient (and standard error) for the relation between witnessing racial discrimination and willingness to engage in collective action after adjusting for awareness of racial privilege. *** $p < .001$, * $p < .05$, + $p = .059$

incidents prior to the experimental manipulation, $t(256) = -.73$, $p = .463$.

4.2.2 | Experimental effects

In line with our predictions, an independent samples t test showed that participants in the witnessing condition reported greater awareness of racial privilege ($M = 4.59$, $SD = 1.90$) than participants in the control condition ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 1.73$; $t(255) = -2.01$, $p = .045$). Participants in the witnessing condition tended to report greater willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice ($M = 2.31$, $SD = 1.29$) than participants in the control condition ($M = 2.02$, $SD = 1.17$); however, this mean difference was not statistically significant according to conventional levels for testing statistical significance, $t(256) = -1.89$, $p = .060$ (see, e.g., Gelman & Hal Stern, 2006; Wasserstein & Lazar, 2016). Supplemental correlations showed that greater awareness of racial privilege was associated with greater willingness to participate in collective action for racial justice ($r = .50$, $p < .001$). Additionally, prior exposure to news coverage of the Yale and Starbucks incidents was associated with both greater awareness of racial privilege ($r = .24$, $p < .001$) and greater willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice ($r = .33$, $p < .001$).

4.2.3 | Mediation analyses

We conducted a mediation analysis by using PROCESS Model 4 with 5,000 bootstrapped samples (see Hayes, 2013) in order to test whether awareness of racial privilege mediates the relationship between the experimental manipulation of witnessing incidents of racial discrimination and reported willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice. We conducted this test of mediation both with⁸ and without including participants' prior exposure to news

⁸Once we included prior exposure to news coverage of the discriminatory incidents as a covariate in the model, the indirect association was not significant, $b = .10$, $SE = .06$, 95% CI $[-.01, .21]$. The experimental manipulation of witnessing racial discrimination did not directly predict willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice once both awareness of racial privilege and prior exposure to the incidents were included in the model, $b = .10$, $SE = .13$, $p = .322$.

coverage of the discriminatory incidents as a covariate, in order to specify more closely the effects of the experimental manipulation; these tests yielded similar results, and the model that does not include prior exposure to news coverage of the discriminatory incidents as a covariate is reported below.

The experimental manipulation of witnessing racial discrimination emerged as a significant predictor of awareness of racial privilege, and awareness of racial privilege emerged as a significant predictor of willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice (see Figure 3). The experimental manipulation of witnessing racial discrimination did not directly predict willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice once awareness of racial privilege was included in the model. Nonetheless, results showed a significant indirect association of the experimentally induced witnessing of discriminatory incidents on willingness to engage in collective action through the pathway of enhanced awareness of racial privilege, $b = .12$, $SE = .06$, 95% CI $[.00, .24]$.⁹ A sensitivity power analysis showed that with the available sample size ($N = 258$), we had 95% power to detect an effect size of Cohen's $d = .06$. Thus, overall, findings from Study 3 provide experimental support for our hypothesis that witnessing incidents of racial discrimination would encourage greater willingness to participate in collective action by enhancing awareness of racial privilege among White Americans.

5 | GENERAL DISCUSSION

Across all three studies, our results showed that witnessing racial discrimination can foster willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice among members of advantaged racial groups, through the pathway of enhanced awareness of racial privilege. It

⁹Hayes's (2013) PROCESS macro with Model 14 was also conducted to see whether the manipulation was more or less effective for those who had not heard of these discriminatory events prior. The results showed that awareness of racial privilege was no longer a significant predictor of willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice, $b = .18$, $SE = .10$, $p = .069$, once prior exposure to the incidents was entered into the model. Neither the experimental manipulation of witnessing racial discrimination, $b = .13$, $SE = .13$, $p = .311$, nor prior exposure to the incidents, $b = .05$, $SE = .21$, $p = .807$, significantly predicted willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice when both were included in the model. The interaction of awareness of racial prejudice and prior exposure to the incidents was also not a significant predictor of willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice, $b = .05$, $SE = .04$, $p = .189$.

is important to highlight that awareness of racial privilege contributed uniquely to accounting for the relationship between witnessing racial discrimination and willingness to engage in collective action, both with and without taking into account Whites' identification with their advantaged racial group (Studies 1 and 2; see also Branscombe et al., 2007; Doosje et al., 1998; Lowery et al., 2006). Moreover, we observed these same patterns of effects using both survey methods (Studies 1 and 2) and experimental procedures (Study 3), including both more liberal White respondents who identify as allies in the pursuit of racial justice (Study 2) as well as those with more varied political orientations that constitute the broader White population of the United States (Studies 1 and 3; see also Ross et al., 2010).

Taken together, findings from these studies point to a common process by which members of advantaged racial groups may come not only to acknowledge racial inequalities, but also to become more motivated to take action against racial injustice targeting the disadvantaged. Although members of advantaged racial groups tend to be less aware of the discrimination and unequal treatment that members of disadvantaged racial groups face on a regular basis (Gallup, 2016; Tropp & Barlow, 2018), witnessing incidents of racial discrimination may lead members of advantaged racial groups to recognize the existence and prevalence of racial discrimination; presumably, this witnessing of discriminatory incidents should make it more challenging for members of advantaged racial groups to deny that such differential treatment exists (Wilkins & Kaiser, 2014; see also Knowles et al., 2014), or to presume that members of disadvantaged racial groups are somehow exaggerating or inaccurately reporting on such occurrences (see ABC News, 2000; Dover et al., 2014).

In light of our findings, it is conceivable that the more advantaged group members witness incidents of racial discrimination, their views of racism may also change, shifting from something that is usually seen as an interpersonal problem (i.e., negative attitudes that individuals hold toward members of different racial and/or ethnic groups), to recognizing racism as a structural problem (i.e., policies, practices, and/or laws that have a disparate impact on members of particular racial or ethnic groups; see Jones, 1997). A growing body of research in the U.S. context suggests that people's conceptions of racism as being rooted in interpersonal versus structural problems can shape how they respond to racial inequality (Rucker, Duker, & Richeson, 2019), and their inclinations to support policies designed to address societal inequality (Adams et al., 2008). Further research is needed to test more directly whether witnessing incidents of racial discrimination not only enhances awareness of racial privilege, but also corresponds with greater perceptions of racism as a structural problem that can and should be addressed through action for racial justice.

What our findings do suggest, however, is that witnessing incidents of racial discrimination may not only encourage members of advantaged racial groups to acknowledge the existence of their own group's racial privilege, but also take action to address racial inequality. Our work complements previous research on privilege awareness by showing that, beyond shifting advantaged group

members' attitudes toward disadvantaged racial groups (e.g., Case & Stewart, 2010; Stewart et al., 2012), or emotional responses to racial inequality (e.g., Iyer et al., 2003), privilege awareness may also shape their willingness to engage in collective action to promote racial equality and justice.

As such, this research also has practical implications for designing strategies to combat racial inequality in the broader society. As shown in Study 3, enhanced awareness of racial privilege can grow from witnessing incidents of racial discrimination, even in settings where information about discriminatory incidents may be transmitted through social media. These findings suggest that witnessing need not always be observed directly in situations to have meaningful effects, and indirect strategies may also be effective for disseminating information about discriminatory incidents, such as through videos and stories that may be shared with members of the general public. Indeed, as journalist Ernest Owens (2018) remarked:

(t)hanks to social media, the nation is tuning in to a phenomenon of everyday racial profiling that's been impeding the lives of black people for decades. Whether it's sitting, golfing, exercising, renting, shopping, working or even napping while black -- the truth has become hard to deny: America is beginning to see how difficult it is living while black.

Thus far, we have only examined the extent to which witnessing racial discrimination and the heightened awareness of racial privilege that grows from doing so may motivate members of advantaged racial groups to participate in collective action for racial justice. However, it is conceivable that witnessing incidents of racial discrimination may have farther-reaching effects, such as influencing the degree to which advantaged group members are willing to support social policies relevant to racial inequality or their own willingness to intervene when witnessing such incidents in the future. Earlier work on bystander intervention suggests that people typically may not intervene for a variety of reasons, including fear of standing out (see Hudson & Bruckman, 2004), or believing that intervention is not needed if others are not intervening (see Milgram & Gudehus, 1978; Prentice & Miller, 1996). Future studies might, therefore, explore the degree to which witnessing racial discrimination, either directly or indirectly, may predict intervening behaviors as other routes to taking action against racial injustice.

One limitation of the present work is that it relied on cross-sectional data to conduct mediation analyses. Even though Study 3 features an experimental manipulation, it still relies on correlations between measures assessed at the same time point to test for mediation. As several scholars have noted, using cross-sectional data for mediation analysis can lead to biased estimates even under ideal conditions (Maxwell & Cole, 2007); moreover, when used to examine mechanisms underlying the effects of experimental manipulations, mediation analysis relies on the stringent assumption that the tested mediator is the only existing mediator (Fiedler et al., 2011). Though still common practice in psychological research (Fiedler et al., 2018), this analytic strategy does not allow for testing whether a variable is

indeed a mediator of the relevant effect. Future studies should test for mediation using longitudinal or experimental research designs.

Another limitation of the present research is that White American participants were not asked directly about the extent to which they perceive themselves, or other White people, to be targets of racial discrimination. Given that many White Americans now believe that discrimination against White people is as big a problem as discrimination against Black people (Gonyea, 2017; Norton & Sommers, 2011), it is possible that witnessing incidents of racial discrimination against Black people would do little to shift awareness of privilege or willingness to combat racial inequality among those Whites who feel racially targeted.

On the contrary, White people who report having been discriminated against due to other social identities (e.g., gender, sexual orientation, and social class) may be more inclined to support Black people targeted by discriminatory incidents, as they are more likely to be aware of the broader existence of structural inequalities (Batson et al., 1997; Curtin et al., 2015; see also Acar & Uluğ, 2016; Vollhardt, 2009 for related research in other contexts). Future studies may, therefore, consider how Whites' perceptions of discrimination, targeting themselves and others on a range of identity dimensions, may correspond with their awareness of racial privilege and willingness to participate in collective action for racial justice.

Another issue that may be relevant to the present work involves the potential for White people to show avoidant or defensive reactions in response to racial discrimination, rather than inclinations to engage in collective action to promote racial equality and justice. We recognize that some White people may feel defensive or uncomfortable when racial inequalities are made salient, and this may lead them to deny (Knowles et al., 2014), avoid, or become hostile toward disadvantaged racial groups (Plant & Devine, 2003). Prior research has shown that highly identified members of advantaged groups are less inclined to recognize inequality (Doosje et al., 1998), more inclined to have more negative attitudes toward Black people (Stewart et al., 2012) and express greater modern racism (Branscombe et al., 2007). Therefore, future studies should also investigate different reactions to witnessing incidents of racial discrimination by directly measuring both avoidance and defensive responding among both highly identified and low-identified White people.

In addition to awareness of privilege, future studies should also focus on people's perceptions of legitimacy and injustice as important factors in shaping motivations to engage in collective action (for a discussion see Hässler et al., 2020). The materials we used in this research—and particularly in Study 3—may be interpreted in different ways. Even though the incidents depicted in Study 3 clearly indicate racial discrimination from the perspective of members of racially disadvantaged groups (Anderson, 2018), others may see these same events as being race related but not instances of discrimination. It is difficult to know precisely what interpretations grow in the minds of perceivers when they are exposed to such incidents. Given that previous work has shown both perceptions of injustice (van Zomeren et al., 2008) and legitimacy (Thomas & Louis, 2014) to be important predictors of support for collective action, future studies

should, therefore, investigate such beliefs on behalf of perceivers when they are exposed to these incidents.

Finally, future studies could also take into account people's cross-group interactions in order to understand their motivations for social change. For example, other recent studies reveal that White participants' contact experiences with Black Americans (Hayward et al., 2017), their communication with Black Americans about group inequalities (Tropp et al., 2021), and their closeness to Black Americans who they know to be targeted by discriminatory incidents (Tropp & Uluğ, 2019) may further contribute to enhancing their awareness of privilege as well as their willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice.

Nonetheless, findings from the current research strongly suggest that witnessing incidents of racial discrimination can promote a greater willingness to engage in collective action for racial justice among members of advantaged racial groups, through enhancing their awareness of racial privilege. Lowery et al. (2006, p. 973) argue that “[t]o fully contribute to the creation of a just society, members of the dominant group must also cease to use their dominant position to protect and enhance privileges associated with their group membership.” As such, our results offer hope that further steps toward racial equality may be taken as members of advantaged racial groups become more aware of racial discrimination and their own racial privilege, such that they become more motivated to take action for racial justice.

ORCID

Özden Melis Uluğ  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7364-362X>

REFERENCES

- ABC News. (2000). *Perception vs experience in racial discrimination: ABC News poll on racial discrimination*. <https://abcnews.go.com/images/pdf/810Race.pdf>
- Acar, Y. G., & Uluğ, Ö. M. (2016). Examining prejudice reduction through solidarity and togetherness experiences among Gezi Park activists in Turkey. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology, 4*(1), 166–179. <https://doi.org/10.5964/jspp.v4i1.547>
- Adams, G., Edkins, V., Lacka, D., Pickett, K. M., & Cheryan, S. (2008). Teaching about racism: Pernicious implications of the standard portrayal. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology, 30*(4), 349–361. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01973530802502309>
- Anderson, E. (2018). This is what it feels like to be black in white spaces. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/jun/09/everyday-racism-america-black-white-spaces>
- Batson, C. D., Polycarpou, M. P., Harmon-Jones, E., Imhoff, H. J., Mitchener, E. C., Bednar, L. L., Klein, T. R., & Highberger, L. (1997). Empathy and attitudes: Can feeling for a member of a stigmatized group improve feelings toward the group? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 72*, 105–118. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.72.1.105>
- Branscombe, N. R., Schmitt, M. T., & Schiffhauer, K. (2007). Racial attitudes in response to thoughts of White privilege. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 37*(2), 203–215. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.348>
- Case, K. A. (2007). Raising white privilege awareness and reducing racial prejudice: Assessing diversity course effectiveness. *Teaching of Psychology, 34*(4), 231–235. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00986280701700250>
- Case, K. A. (2012). Discovering the privilege of whiteness: White women's reflections on anti-racist identity and ally

- behavior. *Journal of Social Issues*, 68(1), 78–96. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.2011.01737.x>
- Case, K. A., Hensley, R., & Anderson, A. (2014). Reflecting on heterosexual and male privilege: Interventions to raise awareness. *Journal of Social Issues*, 70(4), 722–740. <https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12088>
- Case, K. A., Iuzzini, J., & Hopkins, M. (2012). Systems of privilege: Intersections, awareness, and applications. *Journal of Social Issues*, 68(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.2011.01732.x>
- Case, K. A., & Stewart, B. (2010). Changes in diversity course student prejudice and attitudes toward heterosexual privilege and gay marriage. *Teaching of Psychology*, 37(3), 172–177. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00986283.2010.488555>
- Curtin, N., Stewart, A. J., & Cole, E. R. (2015). Challenging the status quo: The role of intersectional awareness in activism for social change and pro-social intergroup attitudes. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 39(4), 512–529. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0361684315580439>
- Dion, K. L. (2003). Prejudice, racism, and discrimination. In T. Milton, & M. J. Lerner (Eds.), *Handbook of psychology: Personality and social psychology* (Vol. 5, pp. 507–536). Wiley and Sons. <https://doi.org/10.1002/0471264385.wei0521>
- Doosje, B., Branscombe, N. R., Spears, R., & Manstead, A. S. R. (1998). Guilty by association: When one's group has a negative history. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 75, 872–886. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.75.4.872>
- Dover, T. L., Major, B., & Kaiser, C. R. (2014). Diversity initiatives, status, and system-justifying beliefs: When and how diversity efforts delegitimize discrimination claims. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 17(4), 485–493. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430213502560>
- Duncan, L. E. (1999). Motivation for collective action: Group consciousness as mediator of personality, life experiences, and women's rights activism. *Political Psychology*, 20, 611–635. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0162-895X.00159>
- Dunn, T. L., & Szymanski, D. M. (2018). Heterosexist discrimination and LGBTQ activism: Examining a moderated mediation model. *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity*, 5(1), 13–24. <https://doi.org/10.1037/sgd0000250>
- Ellemers, N., & Barreto, M. (2009). Collective action in modern times: How modern expressions of prejudice prevent collective action. *Journal of Social Issues*, 65(4), 749–768. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.2009.01621.x>
- Fiedler, K., Harris, C., & Schott, M. (2018). Unwarranted inferences from statistical mediation tests—An analysis of articles published in 2015. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 75, 95–102. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2017.11.008>
- Fiedler, K., Schott, M., & Meiser, T. (2011). What mediation analysis can (not) do. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 47(6), 1231–1236. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2011.05.007>
- Fritz, M. S., & MacKinnon, D. P. (2007). Required sample size to detect the mediated effect. *Psychological Science*, 18(3), 233–239. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9280.2007.01882.x>
- Gallup. (2016). Nearly half of blacks treated unfairly “in last 30 days”. Social & Policy Issues (Gallup Organization). <http://news.gallup.com/poll/194750/nearly-halfblacks-treated-unfairly-last-days.aspx>
- Garcia-Navarro, L. (2018). Outrage over arrests at philly starbucks fuels twitter conversations. NPR. <https://www.npr.org/2018/04/22/604702057/outrage-over-arrests-at-philly-starbucks-fuels-twitter-conversations>
- Gelman, A., & Stern, H. (2006). The difference between “significant” and “not significant” is not itself statistically significant. *The American Statistician*, 60(4), 328–331. <https://doi.org/10.1198/000313006X152649>
- Gonyea, D. (2017). Majority of White Americans say they believe Whites face discrimination. NPR. <https://www.npr.org/2017/10/24/559604836/majority-of-white-americans-think-theyre-discriminated-against>
- Hässler, T., Uluğ, Ö. M., Travaglino, G. A., & Kappmeier, M. (2020). Intergroup contact and social change: A new integrated contact-collective action model. *Journal of Social Issues*, 77(1), 217–241. <https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12412>
- Hayes, A. F. (2013). *Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis: A regression-based approach*. Guilford Press.
- Hayward, L. E., Tropp, L. R., Hornsey, M. J., & Barlow, F. K. (2017). Toward a comprehensive understanding of intergroup contact: Descriptions and mediators of positive and negative contact among majority and minority groups. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 43(3), 347–364. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167216685291>
- Horowitz, J. M., Brown, A., & Cox, K. (2019). Race in America 2019. Pew. <https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2019/04/09/race-in-america-2019/>
- Hudson, J. M., & Bruckman, A. S. (2004). The bystander effect: A lens for understanding patterns of participation. *The Journal of the Learning Sciences*, 13(2), 165–195. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327809jls1302_2
- Iyer, A., Leach, C. W., & Crosby, F. J. (2003). White guilt and racial compensation: The benefits and limits of self-focus. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 29(1), 117–129. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167202238377>
- Iyer, A., & Ryan, M. K. (2009). Why do men and women challenge gender discrimination in the workplace? The role of group status and in-group identification in predicting pathways to collective action. *Journal of Social Issues*, 65(4), 791–814. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.2009.01625.x>
- Jones, J. M. (1997). *Prejudice and racism*, 2nd ed. McGraw Hill.
- Kelly, C., & Breinlinger, S. (1996). *The social psychology of collective action: Identity, injustice and gender*. Taylor & Francis.
- Knowles, E. D., Lowery, B. S., Chow, R. M., & Unzueta, M. M. (2014). Deny, distance, or dismantle? How White Americans manage a privileged identity. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 9(6), 594–609. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691614554658>
- Knowles, E. D., & Peng, K. (2005). White selves: Conceptualizing and measuring a dominant-group identity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 89(2), 223–241. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.89.2.223>
- Krieger, N., Smith, K., Naishadham, D., Hartman, C., & Barbeau, E. M. (2005). Experiences of discrimination: Validity and reliability of a self-report measure for population health research on racism and health. *Social Science & Medicine*, 61(7), 1576–1596. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2005.03.006>
- Leach, C. W., Snider, N., & Iyer, A. (2002). “Spoiling the consciences of the fortunate”: The experience of relative advantage and support for social equality. In I. Walker, & H. J. Smith (Eds.), *Relative deprivation: Specification, development, and integration* (pp. 136–163). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511527753.007>
- Lowery, B. S., Chow, R. M., Knowles, E. D., & Unzueta, M. M. (2012). Paying for positive group esteem: How inequity frames affect Whites' responses to redistributive policies. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 102(2), 323–336. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0024598>
- Lowery, B. S., Knowles, E. D., & Unzueta, M. M. (2007). Framing inequity safely: The motivated denial of White privilege. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 33, 1237–1250. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167207303016>
- Lowery, B. S., Unzueta, M. M., Knowles, E. D., & Goff, P. A. (2006). Concern for the in-group and opposition to affirmative action. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 90(6), 961–974. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.90.6.961>
- Mallett, R. K., Huntsinger, J. R., Sinclair, S., & Swim, J. K. (2008). Seeing through their eyes: When majority group members take collective action on behalf of an outgroup. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 11, 451–470. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430208095400>

- Maxwell, S. E., & Cole, D. A. (2007). Bias in cross-sectional analyses of longitudinal mediation. *Psychological Methods, 12*(1), 23–44. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1082-989X.12.1.23>
- McIntosh, P. (1989). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. *Peace and Freedom, 10*–12.
- McIntosh, P. (2012). Reflections and future directions for privilege studies. *Journal of Social Issues, 68*(1), 194–206. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.2011.01744.x>
- McIntosh, P. (2015). Extending the knapsack: Using the White privilege analysis to examine conferred advantage and disadvantage. *Women & Therapy, 38*(3–4), 232–245. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02703149.2015.1059195>
- Milgram, S., & Gudehus, C. (1978). *Obedience to authority*. Harper & Row.
- Norton, M. I., & Sommers, S. R. (2011). Whites see racism as a zero-sum game that they are now losing. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 6*(3), 215–218. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691611406922>
- Odağ, Ö., Uluğ, Ö. M., & Solak, N. (2016). “Everyday I am çapulung”: Çapulcu identity and collective action through social network sites in the Gezi Park protests. *Journal of Media Psychology, 28*, 148–159. <https://doi.org/10.1027/1864-1105/a000202>
- Owens, E. (2018). At Yale, Starbucks and everywhere else, being black in America really is this hard. *CNN*. <https://www.cnn.com/2018/05/10/opinions/while-black-at-yale-and-starbucks-owens-opinion/index.html>
- Pew. (2016). *On views of race and inequality, blacks and whites are worlds apart*. <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2016/06/27/on-views-of-race-and-inequality-blacks-and-whites-are-worlds-apart/>
- Pew. (2019). *Race in America 2019*. <https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2019/04/09/race-in-america-2019/>
- Plant, E. A., & Devine, P. G. (2003). The antecedents and implications of interracial anxiety. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 29*(6), 790–801. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167203029006011>
- Powell, A. A., Branscombe, N. R., & Schmitt, M. T. (2005). Inequality as in-group privilege or outgroup disadvantage: The impact of group focus on collective guilt and interracial attitudes. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 31*(4), 508–521. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167204271713>
- Prentice, D. A., & Miller, D. T. (1996). Pluralistic ignorance and the perpetuation of social norms by unwitting actors. In M. P. Zanna (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology*, Vol. 28 (pp. 161–209). Academic Press. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601\(08\)60238-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60238-5)
- Reimer, N. K., Becker, J. C., Benz, A., Christ, O., Dhont, K., Klocke, U., Neji, S., Rychlowska, M., Schmid, K., & Hewstone, M. (2017). Intergroup contact and social change: Implications of negative and positive contact for collective action in advantaged and disadvantaged groups. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 43*(1), 121–136. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167216676478>
- Ross, J., Zaldivar, A., Irani, L., & Tomlinson, B. (2010). Who are the Türkers? Worker demographics in Amazon Mechanical Turk. *Proceedings from CHI '10: The 28th ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*. Atlanta, GA. <https://doi.org/10.1145/1753846.1753873>
- Rucker, J., Duker, A., & Richeson, J. (2019). Structurally unjust: How lay beliefs about racism relate to perceptions of and responses to racial inequality in criminal justice. Manuscript submitted for publication. <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/sjkeq>
- Sadler, G. R., Lee, H. C., Lim, R. S. H., & Fullerton, J. (2010). Recruitment of hard-to-reach population subgroups via adaptations of the snowball sampling strategy. *Nursing & Health Sciences, 12*(3), 369–374. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1442-2018.2010.00541.x>
- Selvanathan, H. P., Techakesari, P., Tropp, L. R., & Barlow, F. K. (2018). Whites for racial justice: How contact with Black Americans predicts support for collective action among White Americans. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations, 21*(6), 893–912. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430217690908>
- Stewart, E. (2018). Two black men were arrested in a Philadelphia Starbucks for doing nothing. *Vox*. <https://www.vox.com/identities/2018/4/14/17238494/what-happened-at-starbucks-black-men-arrested-philadelphia>
- Stewart, T. L., Latu, I. M., Branscombe, N. R., Phillips, N. L., & Denney, H. T. (2012). White privilege awareness and efficacy to reduce racial inequality improve White Americans' attitudes toward African Americans. *Journal of Social Issues, 68*(1), 11–27. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.2012.01733.x>
- Thomas, E. F., & Louis, W. R. (2014). When will collective action be effective? Violent and non-violent protests differentially influence perceptions of legitimacy and efficacy among sympathizers. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 40*(2), 263–276. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167213510525>
- Thomas, E. F., & McGarty, C. A. (2009). The role of efficacy and moral outrage norms in creating the potential for international development activism through group-based interaction. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 48*, 115–134. <https://doi.org/10.1348/01446608X313774>
- Tropp, L. R., & Barlow, F. K. (2018). Making advantaged racial groups care about inequality: Intergroup contact as a route to psychological investment. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 27*(3), 194–199. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721417743282>
- Tropp, L. R., & Uluğ, Ö. M. (2019). Are White women showing up for racial justice? Intergroup contact, closeness to people targeted by prejudice, and collective action. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 43*(3), 335–347. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0361684319840269>
- Tropp, L. R., Uluğ, Ö. M., & Uysal, M. S. (2021). How intergroup contact and communication about group differences predict collective action intentions among advantaged groups. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 80*, 7–16. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2020.10.012>
- Uluğ, Ö. M., Odağ, Ö., & Solak, N. (2020). Voices against misogyny in Turkey: The case of a successful online collective action against a sexist commercial. *International Journal of Communication, 14*, 5575–5596.
- van Zomeren, M., Postmes, T., & Spears, R. (2008). Toward an integrative social identity model of collective action: A quantitative research synthesis of three socio-psychological perspectives. *Psychological Bulletin, 134*, 504–535. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.134.4.50>
- van Zomeren, M., Postmes, T., Spears, R., & Bettache, K. (2011). Can moral convictions motivate the advantaged to challenge social inequality? Extending the social identity model of collective action. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations, 14*(5), 735–753. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430210395637>
- Vollhardt, J. R. (2009). Altruism born of suffering and prosocial behavior following adverse life events: A review and conceptualization. *Social Justice Research, 22*, 53–97. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11211-009-0088-1>
- Wasserstein, R. L., & Lazar, N. A. (2016). The ASA statement on p-values: Context, process, and purpose. *The American Statistician, 70*(2), 129–133. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00031305.2016.1154108>
- Wilkins, C. L., & Kaiser, C. R. (2014). Racial progress as threat to the status hierarchy: Implications for perceptions of anti-White bias. *Psychological Science, 25*(2), 439–446. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797613508412>
- Wootson, C. R. (2018). A black Yale student fell asleep in her dorm's common room. A white student called police. *The Washington Post*. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/grade-point/wp/2018/05/10/a-black-yale-student-fell-asleep-in-her-dorms-common-room-a-white-student-called-police/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.c985ccba2718
- Wright, S. C., & Tropp, L. R. (2002). Collective action in response to disadvantage: Inter-group perceptions, social identification, and

social change. In I. Walker, & H. J. Smith (Eds.), *Relative deprivation: Specification, development, and integration* (pp. 200–236). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511527753.010>

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Additional supporting information may be found online in the Supporting Information section.

How to cite this article: Uluğ ÖM, Tropp LR. Witnessing racial discrimination shapes collective action for racial justice: Enhancing awareness of privilege among advantaged groups. *J Appl Soc Psychol.* 2021;51:248–261. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jasp.12731>