Effective for Whom? Ethnic Identity and Nonviolent Resistance

Devorah Manekin*       Tamar Mitts†

February 20, 2020

Abstract

A growing empirical literature finds that nonviolence is more successful than violence in effecting political change. We suggest that a focus on this association is incomplete, because it obscures the impact of ethnic identity on campaign outcomes. Specifically, we argue that because of prevalent negative stereotypes associating minority ethnic groups with violence, such groups are perceived as more violent even when resisting nonviolently, reducing public sympathy, increasing support for repression, and hampering campaign success. We test this proposition using observational and experimental data. Results show that, cross-nationally, the effectiveness of nonviolence is significantly moderated by ethnicity, such that nonviolence increases success but only for dominant groups. Employing survey experiments in the U.S. and Israel, we find that nonviolent resistance by ethnic minorities is perceived as more violent and requiring more policing than nonviolent resistance by majorities. These findings highlight the importance of ethnic identity in shaping campaign outcomes, underscoring the obstacles that widespread biases pose to nonviolent mobilization.

*Assistant Professor, Department of International Relations, Hebrew University of Jerusalem
†Assistant Professor, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University
Introduction

In recent years, the world’s attention was gripped by mass protest movements agitating for social and political change. From the Arab Spring to Black Lives Matter to the Yellow Vests, large crowds mobilized to demand greater representation, equality, and social justice. Inspired by such events, scholars of conflict processes have turned to the systematic analysis of the determinants and consequences of nonviolent resistance (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011; Chenoweth and Cunningham 2013; Nepstad 2011). The central, oft-cited finding of this literature is that nonviolent campaigns are far more effective than violent campaigns in achieving their stated goals (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011; Chenoweth, Pinckney, and Lewis 2018). The policy implications of this finding are significant: if nonviolence is a far more effective means of social and political change, then reduction in violence becomes not only a moral but a strategic imperative.

Yet a closer look at the data reveals that nonviolent resistance is not equally effective for everyone. Rather, as shown in Figure 1, the effectiveness of nonviolent resistance crucially depends on group status. Minority and marginalized ethnic groups are far less likely to successfully achieve their goals using nonviolent campaigns than majority groups. This relationship between group status and nonviolence effectiveness, which, to our knowledge, we are the first to systematically document, poses an important challenge to the emerging empirical literature on nonviolent resistance. This literature generally argues that nonviolent campaigns are more effective because they are more likely to attract broader participation, which, in turn, makes opposition to the movement more costly. Our finding suggests, however, that these strategic benefits may not accrue to certain groups, raising a major empirical puzzle: for whom is nonviolence effective, and why?

The answer, we argue, lies in the important but understudied role of group identity in shaping attitudes towards nonviolent resistance. Drawing on an extensive literature on negative stereotyping in social psychology, which finds that members of stereotyped groups are often associated with violence and threat, we argue that when marginalized groups engage
Figure 1: Probability of Campaign Success by Ethnic Group Identity and Tactic

(A) Group Status

(B) Group Size

**Note:** The figure plots the probability of success of violent and nonviolent campaigns by group status and size. Data come from the Nonviolent and Violent Campaign Outcomes (NAVCO) 2.0 and the Ethnic Power Relations datasets (Chenoweth and Lewis 2013; Vogt et al. 2015; Thurber 2018), described below. Panel (A) shows that the success of nonviolence is moderated by group status, such that the effect of nonviolence on success is substantial and statistically significant for dominant groups only. Panel (B) shows a similar pattern for group size.

in nonviolent contentious behavior, they may nevertheless be *perceived* by observers as more violent than their dominant-group counterparts, thereby alienating audiences rather than mobilizing them, and undermining what is posited to be the key advantage of nonviolent campaigns – their ability to attract widespread participation. Consequently, the ability of marginalized or minority groups to capitalize on the theorized benefits of nonviolence is reduced, raising questions about the availability of nonviolent resistance strategies to stigmatized groups, and suggesting caution regarding general, optimistic claims as to their efficacy.

Yet despite the important implications of this argument, it has not yet been examined directly. The literature on the effects of race and ethnicity on political and criminal justice outcomes is vast, but its insights have rarely been engaged in the recent empirical literature.
on nonviolent campaigns and civil resistance. In one exception, Svensson and Lindgren (2011) argue that, in non-democracies, unarmed insurrections that challenge state identity are less likely to succeed because they increase polarization among various groups in society and induce fear and mistrust. However, their study is limited to non-democracies, and focuses on structural ethnic cleavages rather than ethnic power hierarchies. More directly related to our study is Thurber (2018), who in an important recent study finds that politically excluded or small ethnic groups are less likely to initiate nonviolent campaigns, due to pessimism about their ability to attract mass participation or induce elite defections. While the theoretical logic is related, that study examines campaign onset rather than campaign effectiveness, and it does not test the proposed mechanism directly. More generally, these studies rely on analysis of cross-national observational data, and so have not been able to provide direct evidence of a negative stereotyping mechanism that could inhibit the success of nonviolent campaigns by minority groups.

To address this gap, we first empirically establish that there is in fact a negative relationship between ethnic group identity and the probability of success of nonviolent campaigns (see Figure 1). To do so, we draw on the Nonviolent and Violent Campaign Outcomes (NAVCO) 2.0 dataset (Chenoweth and Lewis 2013), as well as the Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) dataset (Vogt et al. 2015), which were recently combined by Thurber (2018). We find that the probability of success of nonviolent campaigns is significantly moderated by group status and size, and that this finding is robust to a variety of measurement strategies and model specifications.

Using this core finding to motivate our study, the bulk of our analysis is devoted to testing our argument that nonviolent resistance by marginalized groups is perceived by the observing public as more violent and requiring more repression than nonviolent resistance by majority

\[1\] Relatedly, in their study of the effects of protester race on police response in the United States, Davenport, Soule, and Armstrong (2011) note the striking near-absence of race from the empirical literature on protest policing.
group members. We draw on a series of survey experiments that we conducted in the United States and Israel, two contexts that have recently witnessed nonviolent campaigns with varying levels of success by groups with different social identities. We presented respondents with a hypothetical protest vignette and manipulated two of its features: protester identity, and protest tactic. In the U.S., we randomized whether the protesters were black or white, and in Israel, we randomized whether the protesters were Israeli Arabs, Israelis of Ethiopian origin, or white Israeli Jews. In both settings, we randomized three tactic levels: marching in the streets; marching and blocking traffic, and destroying property.

We find a strikingly similar pattern for all groups examined. When protesters are depicted as violent (destroying police cars or garbage cans), their ethnic identity has no significant effect on audience perceptions. However, when tactics are not violent, minority protesters, whether African American, Ethiopian Israeli, or Arab Israeli, are perceived as more violent and requiring more police action than members of the majority group. This effect is driven, as expected, by the perceptions of the majority group: nonviolent protests by minority groups are perceived as 25-30% more violent than majority groups, and are up to 47% more likely to be seen as requiring police action. The ethnicity of the protesters does not, in general, exercise a significant impact on the perceptions of relevant minority groups.

We next empirically investigate our proposed mechanism, namely, that negative stereotyping might drive disparate attitudes towards minority and majority protesters. After asking respondents whether they approve or disapprove of the way the protesters expressed their concerns, we asked them to explain their decision in an open-ended format. This technique has two advantages: first, it allows respondents to explicitly state the mechanism driving their choice in their own words. Second, we believe it presents advantages in terms of social desirability bias. Measuring racial prejudice is notoriously challenging due to social
desirability effects (Huddy and Feldman 2009). The open ended-format is less direct and obtrusive than a specific close-ended one, yet arguably allows for more “authentic,” associative reasoning. Using automated text analysis to analyze these responses, we find that attitudes towards nonviolent protests by minority and majority groups are associated with significantly different descriptions, which generally attribute violence to minorities. This revealing evidence provides further support for our argument.

Our findings contribute most directly to the rapidly growing empirical literature on nonviolent resistance (Braithwaite and Braithwaite 2018; Chenoweth and Stephan 2011; Chenoweth and Cunningham 2013; Nepstad 2015). Recent studies in this field have highlighted various factors that are linked with the onset of nonviolent campaigns (Chenoweth and Ulfelder 2017), government responses to them (Chenoweth, Perkoski, and Kang 2017), and their effectiveness (Celestino and Gleditsch 2013; Chenoweth and Stephan 2011; Stephan and Chenoweth 2008). We contribute to this literature by focusing on the moderating role of ethnic identity in shaping perceptions and effectiveness of nonviolent resistance. In line with recent calls to disaggregate the study of nonviolent campaigns (Braithwaite and Braithwaite 2018), we turn to the micro-level for causal leverage, employing an experimental design that allows us to isolate the effects of ethnic identity while ruling out potential confounders.

Our findings also contribute to a literature on the consequences of negative stereotyping for political outcomes. This literature builds on extensive research in social psychology, which has for decades documented a stereotype of Black Americans as associated with violence and crime (e.g. Eberhardt et al. 2004). Lab experiments have shown, for example, that blacks are perceived as more violent or threatening than whites when perpetrating the same mildly aggressive behavior (Duncan 1976; Sagar and Schofield 1980), and that they are more likely to be shot at (and shot faster) in shoot/don’t shoot simulations (Correll et al. 2002). Political

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2To address this issue, some scholars have used implicit measures of prejudice. However, it is unclear whether quick gut reactions are an appropriate indicator of political behavior, which allows for more thoughtful calculations (Kinder and Ryan 2017). Put differently, people typically have more than a few milliseconds to formulate opinions about protests.
scientists have built on these findings to examine how racial stereotypes affect such outcomes as support for political candidates (Krupnikov, Piston, and Bauer 2016; Weaver 2012), and attitudes towards policies on crime, welfare, and education (Gilens 1996; Dyck and Hussey 2008; Feldman and Huddy 2005; Peffley and Hurwitz 2002). We expand this literature to the domain of the effectiveness of nonviolent activism, a particularly pressing issue for both scholars and activists, and add a comparative case to the existing focus on the United States.

Finally, our results point to the importance of analyzing public opinion as a mechanism for the effectiveness of nonviolent resistance. As Davenport, Rose, and Armstrong (2018, p. 169) observe, “the narratives that emerge from contentious events can profoundly influence future notions of what is acceptable and what is not, as well as of who should be held accountable for what transgressions and how.” The role that ethnic identity exercises, explicitly or implicitly, on public perceptions of nonviolent campaigns can thus have far-reaching impact on the movement’s ability to mobilize support and, ultimately, on its likelihood of successfully achieving its goals.

Protester Identity and Nonviolent Resistance

Until recently, the study of nonviolent resistance had largely been neglected by conflict scholars. As Chenoweth and Cunningham (2013, 272) observe, scholarship on nonviolent struggle tended to be “primarily applied, descriptive, or normative” rather than empirical or analytical. In recent years, however, a wave of empirical research has emerged on nonviolent strategies (see Schock 2013; Nepstad 2015, for reviews). An important finding emerging from this research, based on the pathbreaking work of Chenoweth and Stephan (2011), is that nonviolent campaigns are far more likely than violent ones to succeed in achieving

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3 Following Chenoweth and Ulfelder (2017, 320), we use the terms “nonviolent mobilization”, “nonviolent resistance,” and “nonviolent campaign” interchangeably, to denote “a form of active conflict in which unarmed civilians use a combination of tactics such as strikes, boycotts, protests, go-homes, stay-aways, and demonstrations to disrupt and apply pressure against a state opponent without physically harming or threatening to physically harm the opponent.”
their goals. This effectiveness is posited to be a consequence of the increased appeal of nonviolent campaigns, which engenders a participation advantage: Nonviolent resistance, the logic goes, attracts more domestic and international support, winning over bystanders and causing defections among status quo supporters (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011, 2014).

The theory that nonviolent resistance has a mobilization advantage was, until recently, largely untested in the literature (Wittels 2017). Much of the work in this area relies on aggregate, cross-national data, comparing the efficacy of campaigns across time and space. Such methods can reveal important correlations, but by nature they obscure the mechanisms and processes that drive campaign outcomes. A number of recent studies address this gap using experimental methods. Huff and Kruszewska (2016), for example, conduct a survey experiment in Poland and find that in general, respondents are less supportive of government negotiations with groups that bomb government buildings than groups that employ nonviolent tactics such as demonstrations and occupation. Simpson, Willer, and Feinberg (2018) find that the use of violent protests by otherwise popular groups (anti-racist protests against white nationalists) reduces their public support, and increases support for their opponents. Muñoz and Anduiza (2019) find that violent riots reduced support for the Spanish 15-M movement, primarily among those who were not core supporters of the movement. These studies provide evidence that nonviolent tactics do in fact receive more support from the greater public.

Yet while the average effects of nonviolent protests on public attitudes are important, we argue that a focus on average effects obscures the important role of group identity in moderating the effects of nonviolent tactics on public attitudes. Minority or marginalized groups often contend with negative stereotypes that can limit their ability to attract public support, even through nonviolent means. Though the content of particular group stereotypes is context specific, a large literature suggests that numerous marginalized ethnic groups are stereotyped as violent or criminal (cf. Stewart et al. 2015). We focus on such stereotypes here, and return to the issue of variation in stereotype content in the conclusion.
The Effect of Ethnic Identity on Perceptions of Protester Violence

Though nonviolence is generally viewed in the empirical literature as a stable, objective category, a large literature suggests that perceptions of violence vary by identity group due to negative stereotyping. In the United States, for example, numerous studies have identified a prevalent automatic stereotype associating blacks with violence and criminality (Devine and Elliot 1995; Johnson and King 2017; Unnever and Cullen 2012). Lab experiments show that individuals are more likely to misidentify benign objects as weapons and shoot suspects when primed to think of blacks (Payne 2001; Correll et al. 2002; Greenwald, Oakes, and Hoffman 2003). Outside the lab, Peffley and Hurwitz (1998) find using nationally representative survey data that one in two Americans agree that most blacks are aggressive. Survey data show that negative stereotypes of blacks remain prevalent two decades later (Hutchings 2009; Piston 2010; Kinder and Ryan 2017; Yadon and Piston 2018).4

Negative stereotypes in the United States are not limited to African Americans. A number of studies have identified a stereotype of Muslims and Muslim-Americans as violent and untrustworthy (Sides and Gross 2013; D’Orazio and Salehyan 2018), and there is some evidence that Latino men are also stereotypically associated with violence and criminality (Unnever and Cullen 2012; Welch et al. 2011). Relatedly, Timberlake and Williams (2012) find that immigrants from Middle Eastern and Latin American countries are rated by survey respondents as significantly more violent than immigrants from European and Asian countries.

Negative stereotypes of minority ethnic groups extend, of course, far beyond the United States (Dixon and Telles 2017; Pettigrew 1998). In the European context, much of the research has focused on analyzing public opinion toward immigration, and has documented various stereotypes associated with different groups (Hellwig and Sinno 2017). A number of

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4In 2008 and 2012 the question measuring stereotypes towards blacks on a violent-peaceful scale was not included in the American National Election Survey (ANES), allowing to probe for negative racial stereotypes in general but not for violent stereotypes specifically. The question was included again in 2016.
studies, for example, find that anti-Muslim prejudice in Europe is significantly higher than prejudice against other foreigners or immigrants (Strabac and Listhaug 2008; Spruyt and Noll 2017). And in Latin America, studies have found evidence for negative stereotypes against blacks (Lehmann et al. 2019; Peña, Sidanius, and Sawyer 2004).

Returning to nonviolent civil resistance, we build on the large literature documenting the pervasiveness of negative stereotypes associating minority and marginalized groups with violence and hostility to formulate the following hypothesis:

**H$_1$**: Nonviolent protests by members of marginalized ethnic groups are perceived as more violent than identical protests by members of majority ethnic groups.

## The Effect of Ethnic Identity on Punitive Attitudes Toward Protesters

An extensive literature links stereotypes of minority groups as violent and criminal with support for more punitive policies (see Unnever 2014, for a review). In the United States, a large body of work finds that beliefs about race are the “single largest and most consistent predictor of crime policy preferences” (Lerman and Weaver 2014, p. 52), with majority whites more supportive of punitive justice policies than racial and ethnic minorities (Bobo and Johnson 2004), and racial animus consistently associated with support for harsher criminal justice measures (e.g. Peffley and Hurwitz 2002). Much of this research builds on group-based threat theories, which posit that the association between subordinate groups and criminality is a powerful means of maintaining dominant group power (Unnever 2014). Members of the dominant group justify harsh policies that primarily target minority groups by believing that they are necessary to protect the innocent.$^5$ A link between racial and ethnic animus and punitive attitudes has also been documented in Europe, Canada, and Japan (Unnever, Cullen, and Jonson 2008; Unnever and Cullen 2010; Ousey and Unnever 2012), in Russia

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$^5$Negative stereotypes can also serve elite political needs, who can use racially or ethnically coded “tough” policy positions to increase their support among those who hold racial and ethnic prejudices, in turn legitimizing and extending such prejudices (Hurwitz and Peffley 2005; Lerman and Weaver 2014).
Of particular interest here is the study of public attitudes towards policing in general, and policing of protest in particular. In the United States, there is a substantial and growing race gap in opinions of the police (Weitzer 2017). Studies show that race is a significant predictor of support for police use of force (Thompson and Lee 2004), and that racial prejudice among whites is associated with increased support for such force (Barkan and Cohn 1998; Carter and Corra 2016; Johnson and Kuhns 2009). Conversely, blacks and, to a lesser extent, Latinos, are more likely to hold negative opinions of the police than whites (Schuck, Rosenbaum, and Hawkins 2008; Weitzer 2014) and to believe that police use excessive force frequently (Weitzer and Tuch 2004). These attitudes reflect real-life disparities: black Americans are significantly more likely than whites to be stopped by the police, searched, and arrested (see Braga, Brunson, and Drakulich 2019, for a recent review).

Though less studied, racial and ethnic identity also matters for protest policing. In one of the few exceptions, Davenport, Soule, and Armstrong (2011) observe the striking absence of research on how protester race affects police response. Using data on more than 15,000 protest events, they find that African American protests are more likely to involve police, and that police involved are more likely to make arrests and use violence, though these effects vary over time. Even less research examines how the ethnic identity of protesters affects public opinion regarding protest policing. In an important exception, Davenport, Rose, and Armstrong (2018) argue that the identities of protesters, police, and public matter in shaping attitudes toward confrontations between dissidents and the state. Drawing on a survey experiment that manipulates the identities of protesters and police officers, they find, in line with the research cited above, that whites are more likely than blacks to blame protesters when police and protesters are of the same race. They find, further, that whites are less likely than blacks to blame police for a confrontation with protesters when the police are white and the protesters are black. Taken together, these findings suggest that observers will be more supportive of policing of minority protesters, generating the following hypothesis:
**H₂:** Nonviolent protests by members of marginalized ethnic groups are perceived as requiring more police action than identical protests by members of majority ethnic groups.

### Data and Analysis

We begin by presenting our observational data and analysis, establishing the core empirical pattern that, cross-nationally, the success of nonviolent campaigns is significantly moderated by ethnic group identity. We then turn to the experimental analysis, providing detail on our study’s design and then presenting our experimental results. Finally, we explore the mechanisms underlying our experimental findings.

### Observational Analysis

To examine whether the success of nonviolent resistance varies by ethnic group identity, we draw on the Nonviolent and Violent Campaign Outcomes (NAVCO) 2.0 dataset (Chenoweth and Lewis 2013), as well as the Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) dataset (Vogt et al. 2015), which were recently combined by Thurber (2018). These data include information on the social and political status of 220 groups that were involved in violent and nonviolent resistance between 1946 and 2006 in 110 countries around the world. Campaigns are included in the dataset if they lasted for at least one week and consisted of at least 1,000 participants (Chenoweth and Lewis 2013). In addition, campaigns had to have been initiated by groups that were identified as ‘politically relevant’ in the Ethnic Power Relations dataset; that is, they were politically represented by at least one political actor, or they faced discrimination by the state (Vogt et al. 2015).

Since our goal is to study the link between group identity and the outcomes of nonviolent resistance, we focus on the group as the unit of analysis. The dataset assembled by Thurber

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6This resulted in the exclusion of 34 cases that did not involve ‘politically relevant’ groups, resulting in a dataset of 217 cases of the 251 included in the NAVCO 2.0 dataset (Thurber 2018).
(2018) consists of information on the social and political status of groups that engaged in violent and nonviolent resistance, including cases where multiple groups were involved in a campaign. Groups’ status comes from the EPR dataset, and is measured along two dimensions: (i) the group’s size as a share of the total population, and (ii) the group’s political status in each country. The latter measure includes various categories ranging from complete exclusion to complete control of state power (Vogt et al. 2015).

To study campaign success by group identity, we merged into Thurber’s dataset the ‘success’ variable from NAVCO 2.0. A campaign is defined as successful if it achieved all of its stated goals within a year of the peak of its activities (Chenoweth and Lewis 2013). Since the structure of the dataset includes yearly observations for each group engaging in violent and nonviolent resistance, we regressed the success variable on an indicator measuring the initiation of a nonviolent resistance campaign by a group, interacted with a measure of that group’s status. In our analysis, we control for various structural and time-varying variables that have been identified as important for the initiation and success of nonviolent campaigns (Thurber 2018, see Section 2 of the SI for details).

Table 1 shows the results when examining the interaction between nonviolent resistance and group status. In Columns (1) to (3), group status is measured as an ordinal variable ranging from 1 to 7, where 1 indicates the lowest status and 7 indicates the highest. In Columns (4) to (6) group status is a binary variable coded 1 for excluded groups (groups with status of self-exclusion, powerless, or discriminated) and 0 for non-excluded groups. We find that the success of nonviolent campaigns is strongly moderated by group status, where more socially dominant groups are much more likely to succeed when engaging in nonviolence than marginalized groups. In fact, the data show that for marginalized groups, nonviolent resistance is not significantly related to the success of a campaign. This result

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7The full range of values is as follows: 1=Discriminated; 2=Powerless, 3=Self-Exclusion; 4=Junior Partner; 5=Senior Partner; 6=Dominant; and 7=Monopoly (Vogt et al. 2015). See Section 2 of the SI for full definitions.
can be visually seen in Figures 1 and 2. We find the same pattern when using group size rather than group status as a moderating variable, as shown in Table A1 of the Appendix.

Table 1: The Probability of Nonviolent Campaign Success and Group Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Group Status (Ordinal)</th>
<th>Excluded Groups (Binary)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NV Campaign</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>−0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.024)</td>
<td>(0.028)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPR Status</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
<td>(0.005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPR Status × NV Campaign</td>
<td>0.031***</td>
<td>0.033***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPR Status: Excluded</td>
<td>−0.008</td>
<td>−0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.011)</td>
<td>(0.016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPR Status: Excluded × NV Campaign</td>
<td>−0.202***</td>
<td>−0.188***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.025)</td>
<td>(0.028)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.022**</td>
<td>0.307***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.010)</td>
<td>(0.072)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Controls
Cubic polynomials for time
R²
Observations

Note: The table reports regression estimates of the success of a resistance campaign on an interaction of campaign tactic (nonviolent or violent) with the status of the group initiating the campaign. Data come from the Nonviolent and Violent Campaign Outcomes (NAVCO) 2.0 and the Ethnic Power Relations datasets (Chenoweth and Lewis 2013; Vogt et al. 2015; Thurber 2018). *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

These patterns show that the effectiveness of nonviolent resistance strongly depends on group status: while nonviolence generally works for majority groups, it is far less likely to succeed when minority groups initiate the campaigns. Yet while these findings reveal important patterns at the cross-national level, they do not allow us to test the mechanisms that drive variation in campaign outcomes. In the next section, we turn to experimental analysis, examining whether the success of nonviolent resistance could be driven by the perception that minority groups are more violent when engaging in nonviolent campaigns.

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8See Section 2 of the SI for tabular results.
Figure 2: The Probability of Nonviolent Campaign Success by Group Status

Note: Data from the Nonviolent and Violent Campaign Outcomes (NAVCO) 2.0 and the Ethnic Power Relations datasets (Chenoweth and Lewis 2013; Vogt et al. 2015; Thurber 2018).

Experimental Analysis

Case Selection

To test our hypotheses, we conducted online survey experiments in the United States and Israel. The American survey was administered by YouGov in three waves between November 2018 and January 2019 and included a sample of 2,269 respondents. The Israeli survey was conducted in two waves between February and March 2019 and included a sample of 3,192 respondents. We report summary statistics for both samples in Section 3 of the SI. We fielded the survey in two countries to increase the external validity of our study.

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9 The respondents were matched to a sampling frame based on gender, age, race, region, and education.
10 The Israeli survey was administered by iPanel, Israel’s largest opt-in Internet survey firm, which uses quota sampling to generate samples that conform to the demographics of the Israeli Jewish population. The samples were stratified by gender, age, religiosity and residence.
11 Given our research question, we oversampled black Americans and Arab Israelis. In this paper, we present the attitudes of the entire population, using sample weights to correct for this oversampling.
and ensure our findings are not artefacts of a particular case. We chose the United States and Israel because both have recently witnessed nonviolent campaigns with varying levels of success, by different ethnic groups with diverse histories of marginalization. In the United States, the Black Lives Matter movement has organized protests since 2013 to protest police violence and racial disparities and injustice more broadly (Williamson, Trump, and Einstein 2018). Though a salient case – most of the literature on negative stereotyping and punitive attitudes has focused on African Americans – it is arguably also a unique one, given the legacy of racial oppression of African Americans in America. The argument that we make is general, and should thus apply to any context in which minority groups are negatively stereotyped as threatening.

We therefore also examine two minority groups in Israel: Israeli Arabs, and Israelis of Ethiopian origin. The relationship of the two groups to the white Jewish majority differs considerably. The Arab minority is mostly Palestinian and, therefore, though holding Israeli citizenship, also relates to the Jewish majority through the lens of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In contrast, the Ethiopian minority is Jewish and immigrated to Israel with substantial investment and support from the government. Nevertheless, both groups have been involved in longstanding nonviolent resistance campaigns. Arab Israelis have organized to protest discrimination by the Israeli government, especially related to land expropriation and house demolitions. Ethiopian Israelis have mobilized against police violence and discrimination. Given the many differences between these three groups, consistent findings across all cases would strengthen the generalizability of our experimental findings.

\[12^\text{See e.g. Jack Khoury and Noa Shpigel, “Ten Israeli Arabs Wounded in Clashes with Police During House Demolition,” } Haaretz, \text{ July 24, 2019, and Hassan Shaalan, “Arab Sector Launches General Strike over Home Demolitions,” ynet, November 1, 2017.}\]

\[13^\text{For the most recent wave of protests, sparked due to the killing of an Ethiopian youth by an off-duty officer, see e.g. Noga Tarnopolsky, “Ethiopian Israelis protest after officer in shooting of unarmed man is released and faces lesser charge.} \text{ Los Angeles Times, July 15, 2019.}\]
Experimental Design

Our experiment presented respondents with simulated news articles, based on real news articles, describing nonviolent activism. First, participants read the following introductory text:

Citizens sometimes mobilize to change policies that they oppose. We will describe one such event to you and ask you a few questions about your reactions. While the description is based on real events, some aspects are fictional for scientific validity. We are asking you to imagine how you would feel about these events if they were happening in the real world today. Please read the description carefully, as we will ask you questions about specific details at the end.

In the news articles, we randomly varied the identity of the protesters between dominant and marginalized groups, as well as the tactics employed in the campaign. In the U.S. survey, protester identity included two experimental conditions: white (majority) and black (minority); in the Israeli survey there were three conditions: white Jews (majority), Ethiopian Jews (minority), and Israeli Arabs (minority). In both surveys, the tactics arm consisted of three levels that varied from least to most violent: marching in streets, shutting down traffic, and destroying property. This generated a $2 \times 3$ factorial design for the American survey and $3 \times 3$ factorial design for the Israeli survey. Balance tests, reported in Section 3 of the SI, indicate that demographic covariates are balanced across our experimental conditions.

In the U.S. survey the vignette signalled racial identity by using distinctive names, as well as a photo of a protesting crowd, in which identity differed by experimental condition. In the Israeli survey, reflecting news coverage of actual protests, the identity of the group is noted in the title of the simulated news article. We manipulate tactic because nonviolent resistance can refer to a wide repertoire of behaviors, some of which may be considered

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14 Though this is a common method of signalling race in empirical studies (see Butler and Homola 2017, for an empirical justification), some have argued that it is problematic because it can conflate racial identity with other factors such as socioeconomic status (see discussion in Gaddis 2017; Sen and Wasow 2016). To address this issue, we drew on Gaddis (2017) to select names – Charlie and Tyrone – that differ empirically in their association with race but do not differ as starkly as other pairs of names with respect to SES.
nonviolent by those who campaign and violent by audiences (Chenoweth 2019). By escalating activism tactics, from marching in the streets, to shutting down traffic, to damaging police cars, we can empirically account for this issue. Figure 3 shows an example of a vignette from the American survey, where the identity condition was black protesters and the tactic was shutting down traffic.\footnote{Full wordings for all experimental conditions are reported in the SI.}

Figure 3: Example of a News Article Vignette

\textit{In Washington, Protesters March in Streets and Shut Down Traffic}

WASHINGTON - Protesters made themselves heard in the nation’s capital Friday, where they marched in the streets and shut down traffic in the vicinity of the National Mall. Demonstrators were holding signs demanding policy change and were chanting as they marched. The group, which expected more than 10,000 participants, planned to gather in the afternoon at McPherson Square, where a stage and sound system would feature a series of speakers. “I wanted my voice to be heard,” said Tyrone, one of the demonstrators. “I hope people will wake up because we deserve better.”

Following the vignette, as an attention check, we asked respondents where the protests took place.\footnote{Over 80 percent of respondents in both samples correctly identified the location of the protests. Following Aronow, Baron, and Pinson (2019), we retain respondents who failed the checks to avoid biasing effect estimates.} We then asked questions relating to our two outcomes: perceptions of protester violence, and perceptions of the extent to which police action is required. We measure perceptions of protester violence with two indicators. First, we ask respondents to indicate, on a scale of 0-10, where 0 is completely nonviolent, and 10 is extremely violent, how violent they would say the protest was (\textit{Perceived degree of violence}). Second, after asking all our
outcome measure questions, we provided respondents with a list of tactics (marching in the streets, blocking traffic, damaging police cars, looting local stores (or throwing rocks at police, in the Israeli version), or don’t know/don’t remember) and asked them to check all the tactics that were used by the protesters (Recall violence).\textsuperscript{17} The advantage of this survey measure is that it allows us to probe, in an indirect way, whether audiences actually remember minority protesters as more violent than their majority counterparts. To measure perceptions of whether police involvement is required, we ask respondents to indicate, on a scale of 0-10, to what extent they would say police action is required to address this protest (Police action required).

**Experimental Results**

Table 2 reports the main effects of our two treatments, ethnic identity and tactic.\textsuperscript{18} Results are reported for the entire sample, weighted to reflect the demographic composition of the population. The base categories in all regressions are whites (ethnic identity) marching in the street (tactic). Thus the “intercept” row in each panel reports the baseline level of each condition. Columns show results for each of our dependent variables: perceived degree of violence, recalled violence, and belief that the protest requires police action.

Panel (A) presents the results for the U.S. sample. We find that, on average, black protesters significantly increase the degree to which nonviolent protests are perceived as violent. Moving from the baseline condition, which reflects white protesters marching in the streets, to black protesters marching in the streets, we find an increase of 8.5% in the perception that the protests are violent. We find even stronger results for our violence recollection measure, with black protesters marching in the streets recalled as being significantly more violent than whites engaging in the same activity, a 75% change. Column (3) shows

\textsuperscript{17}Our measure of recalling violence is coded 1 when respondents recalled any or all of the following tactics: damaging police cars, looting local stores, or throwing rocks at the police, and 0 otherwise.

\textsuperscript{18}Adding pre-treatment covariates to our model does not affect the results, see Section 3.3 of the SI.
that respondents are also significantly more likely to believe that police action is required against nonviolent black protesters. Moving to the effects of various protest tactics, we find, as expected, that shifting to more violent tactics, such as shutting down traffic or destroying police cars, increases perceived violence, recalled violence, and belief that police action is required.

Panel (B) reports results for the Israeli sample. We find similar patterns to the results found in the U.S. sample, whereby minority protesters, whether Ethiopian or Arab, significantly increase perception and recollection of the protests as violent. When compared to white Jewish protesters marching in the streets, Ethiopian and Arab protesters engaging in the same activity are seen as 11% and 16% more violent and are 87% and 43% more likely to be recalled as violent, respectively. As in the U.S. sample, public support for police action against the protesters is significantly higher when protesters are Arab, reflected in an increase of 21%. For Ethiopian protesters, the effect is in the expected direction but is not statistically significant.

Though the patterns in both samples are generally similar, a couple of differences stand out. First, the size of the effects differ across minority groups. In Israel, Arab protesters exercise a larger effect on perceptions of violence and, especially, on belief in the necessity of police action, than Ethiopian protesters. This is not surprising, as we would expect effect sizes to vary depending on stereotype content and the particular configuration of exclusion experienced by different groups. Second, Israeli respondents appear less disposed toward nonviolent protest in general. While in the U.S. sample the baseline level of violence attributed to a nonviolent protest by white protesters is 2.8, the baseline level in Israel is 3.9. Similarly, while in the U.S. the baseline level of belief that police action is required (for a nonviolent protest by white protesters) is 3.8, in Israel it is 4.7.¹⁹

¹⁹These differences may reflect different cultural attitudes toward protest, or they may reflect differences in social desirability bias, and specifically in the reluctance to express critical attitudes in surveys, which we suspect is lower in the Israeli case.
Table 2: Group Identity and Support for Nonviolent Resistance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Perceived degree of violence</th>
<th>Recall violence</th>
<th>Police action required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(A) U.S. Sample</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black protesters</td>
<td>0.235**</td>
<td>0.039**</td>
<td>0.268**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.117)</td>
<td>(0.018)</td>
<td>(0.127)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shut down traffic</td>
<td>0.271*</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>0.429***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.143)</td>
<td>(0.022)</td>
<td>(0.155)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destroy police cars</td>
<td>3.382***</td>
<td>0.644***</td>
<td>2.971***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.143)</td>
<td>(0.022)</td>
<td>(0.155)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept: White protesters, March in streets</td>
<td>2.774***</td>
<td>0.052***</td>
<td>3.837***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.117)</td>
<td>(0.018)</td>
<td>(0.127)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.235</td>
<td>0.322</td>
<td>0.160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>2,269</td>
<td>2,269</td>
<td>2,269</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(B) Israel Sample

|                                | Perceived degree of violence | Recall violence | Police action required |
|                                | (1)                          | (2)             | (3)                    |
| Ethiopian protesters           | 0.421***                     | 0.079***        | 0.188                  |
|                                | (0.107)                      | (0.022)         | (0.118)                |
| Arab protesters                | 0.620***                     | 0.039*          | 0.962***               |
|                                | (0.107)                      | (0.022)         | (0.119)                |
| Shut down traffic              | 0.231**                      | −0.032          | 0.389***               |
|                                | (0.108)                      | (0.022)         | (0.119)                |
| Destroy garbage cans           | 2.533***                     | 0.398***        | 2.156***               |
|                                | (0.106)                      | (0.022)         | (0.118)                |
| Intercept: White protesters, March in streets | 3.923***                 | 0.091***        | 4.673***               |
|                                | (0.099)                      | (0.021)         | (0.110)                |
| R²                             | 0.192                        | 0.131           | 0.130                  |
| Observations                   | 3,084                        | 3,192           | 3,073                  |

Note: The table reports regression results from ordinary least squares regressions, where the dependent variables reported in the columns are regressed on the two treatment variables: protesters’ ethnic identity and tactic. The results are reported for the entire sample, weighted to reflect the demographic composition of the population. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
In order to evaluate whether the tactics employed by protesters affect how identities shape public perceptions, we next examine the interaction effects of ethnic identity and protest tactic. Figure 4 reports the conditional effects of ethnic identity and tactic on perceptions of violence and beliefs in the necessity of police action.\textsuperscript{20} The overall pattern that emerges from the figure is that ethnic identity exercises a greater impact as the protest tactic becomes less violent. Beginning with the U.S. sample, shown in the top panel, we find that when protesters are destroying police cars, there are no differences in the levels of violence attributed to black and white protesters, nor in the degree to which they require police action. Rather, identity exercises the strongest effect when the protest is not violent. We do not find significant effects of identity on recalling violence in the U.S. sample.

We find even stronger effects of ethnicity in the Israeli sample. Both Ethiopian and Arab Israelis are perceived as more violent, recalled as more violent, and believed to require more police attention than the white Jewish majority when employing nonviolence. The effects are strongest for the least violent tactic – marching in the streets – and just slightly smaller for shutting down traffic. The effects diverge somewhat for the more violent protests – destroying property. For Arab protesters, the pattern is similar to blacks in the U.S. – ethnic identity has no impact on perceptions of more violent protests. For Ethiopian Israelis, we find that protesters who destroy property are perceived as less violent and requiring less police action than white protesters. We delve deeper into this finding in the next section, where we use open text responses to gain insight into the mechanisms driving these effects.

\textsuperscript{20}For tabular results see Table A7 in the SI.
Figure 4: Attitudes towards Nonviolent Resistance by Group Identity and Tactic

Note: The figure presents estimated coefficients from an ordinary least squares regression of the dependent variables for different protest tactics: march in the streets, shut down traffic, and destroy police cars or garbage cans. The top panel presents perceptions of Blacks in the United States, the middle panel presents perceptions of Ethiopians in Israel, and the bottom panel presents perceptions of Arabs in Israel.
The results presented thus far report findings for the pooled sample. However, it is likely that the effects of ethnicity of the protesters vary based on the ethnic identity of respondents. In Table 3, we examine whether the tendency to view nonviolent minority protesters as violent is driven by respondents from the majority group. We focus on the nonviolent, ‘march in streets’ condition, and evaluate heterogeneity in perceptions of nonviolent protests by minority and majority group. The table reports estimated means for our three outcomes, the difference between means, its p-value, and the percent change reflected in the difference. Each row in the table displays the attitudes of respondents from different groups.\textsuperscript{21} We find a very clear pattern, where nonviolence by minorities is seen as violent by majorities: Minority groups marching in the streets are perceived by majority-group respondents as 25-30\% more violent than majority groups, and are up to 47\% more likely to be viewed as requiring police action. The table further shows that the ethnicity of the protesters does not, in general, exercise a significant impact on the perceptions of respondents from minority groups.\textsuperscript{22}

Table 3: Perceptions of Nonviolent Protests by Majority and Minority Group Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean (Majority Protesters)</th>
<th>Mean (Minority Protesters)</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(A) United States (Minority: Blacks)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived degree of violence by Whites</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>28.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived degree of violence by Blacks</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>-0.18</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>-5.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police action required by Whites</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>15.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police action required by Blacks</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>5.97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B) Israel (Minority: Arabs)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived degree of violence by White Jews</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>30.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived degree of violence by Arabs</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>11.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police action required by White Jews</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>5.64</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>46.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police action required by Arabs</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>6.51</td>
<td>-0.49</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>-7.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(C) Israel (Minority: Ethiopians)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived degree of violence by White Jews</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>25.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived degree of violence by Arabs</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>38.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police action required by White Jews</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>4.94</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>28.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police action required by Arabs</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>6.62</td>
<td>-0.38</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>-5.38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{21} We were not able to sample sufficient numbers of Ethiopian respondents, due to coverage limitations of the survey company. Ethiopian citizens comprise less than 2\% of the Israeli population.

\textsuperscript{22} We focus on majority groups here, and analyze minority attitudes in separate research.
Mechanisms

The evidence presented in the previous section supports both of our hypotheses, showing that, in general, minority groups are perceived as more violent and recalled as more violent than majority groups, and that they are believed to require more policing. In this section, we illuminate the mechanisms underlying this effect by analyzing responses to an open-ended survey question. We first asked respondents whether they approve or disapprove of the way the protesters expressed their concerns. Consistent with our theory, we find that approval of nonviolent protests is higher for white protesters than black protesters in the United States (59% vs. 55%) and higher for white protesters (87%) than Ethiopian or Arab protesters in Israel (83% and 48%, respectively). Next, to understand the reasons behind these preferences, we asked respondents to explain their response, in a sentence or two.

We use the open-ended responses as a non-obtrusive way to test our proposed mechanism that negative stereotyping drives attitudes towards minority nonviolent protesters. Given our theoretical concerns, we focus here on the responses of majority group respondents who were assigned to the nonviolent, march in streets experimental condition only.

First, we illustrate via several qualitative examples the kinds of descriptions used by majority respondents to explain their attitudes toward nonviolent protests by minorities. Panel (A) in Table 4 shows descriptions of Black protesters in the United States; Panel (B) shows descriptions of Arab protesters in Israel; and Panel (C) shows descriptions of Ethiopian protesters in Israel. In all these examples, respondents viewed nonviolent protests by minorities as violent, even though the vignette showed only nonviolent tactics. Frequently in the description of these protests, respondents justified their lack of support by saying things like: ‘these were violent protests, and I do not support violence.’ While some respondents acknowledged that the vignette that they read described a nonviolent protest, they nonetheless argued that minority protests tend to turn violent, as can be seen, for example, in a description of nonviolent protests of Israeli Arabs: ‘...unfortunately, protests by the Arab population tend to escalate into violence and property damage,’ or in the description of
nonviolent protests of black Americans: “These things always start with good intent and end in violence and people getting hurt.”

Examining the open-ended responses also sheds light on the unique way Israeli respondents view Ethiopian protesters engaging in nonviolence. On one hand, many respondents acknowledged that there is widespread discrimination against Ethiopians in Israel, which merits protest. On the other hand, many also said that the protests shown to them in the vignette were violent, and therefore were not justified. In other words, even though the cause of Ethiopian protesters seemed legitimate in the eyes of many Israeli respondents, they nonetheless viewed Ethiopian protesters as more violent than whites, leading to lower public support for their campaign.

### Table 4: Examples of Descriptions of Minority Protesters Marching in the Streets

**(A) United States (Minority: Blacks)**

1. “They are violent”
2. “There are other, better ways to protest that aren’t violent.”
3. “These things always start with good intent and end in violence and people getting hurt”
4. “Violence and distain are a negative way to express oneself.”
5. “They are NEVER 100% peaceful. There is always some trouble.”

**(B) Israel (Minority: Arabs)**

1. “They are terrorists”
2. “It is a democratic country and it is their right to protest, even if their opinion is opposed to mine. Yet unfortunately, protests by the Arab population tend to escalate into violence and property damage”
3. “From my recollection, this was a violent protest with Palestine flags, which makes me feel threatened living in my country”
4. “Minorities are usually intolerant and violent; in my opinion, everything they do is expressed violently”

**(C) Israel (Minority: Ethiopians)**

1. “Their complaints are legitimate but the protest was violent”
2. “I believe their voices need to be heard, but I do not believe that violence is the way”
3. “There is serious discrimination against Ethiopians in Israel, and there is a need for their voice to be heard and take steps to increase equality”
4. “All Jews are equal”

*Quotes from the Israel survey were translated from Hebrew to English by the authors.

To systematically examine differences in reactions to nonviolent protests by minority and majority groups, we analyze the text of the open-ended responses with a Structural Topic
Model (STM). An STM is a topic model that inductively discovers themes in a corpus of text by drawing on document structure and word frequencies. Unlike many other topic models, the STM allows incorporating document-level metadata, such as whether the respondent writing the text was exposed to minority or majority protesters, as a covariate in the model (Roberts et al. 2014; Blei, Ng, and Jordan 2003; Lucas et al. 2015). This is useful here, as it allows us to statistically test whether descriptions of nonviolent protests by majorities significantly differ from the descriptions of the same protests by minorities. We estimated Structural Topic Models with five topics on both English and Hebrew open-ended responses, and estimated the relationship between document metadata—namely, the identity of the protesters in the vignette—and topic prevalence.

Figure 5 shows the results for the U.S. sample. Positive coefficients reflect topics that were more frequently used in descriptions of black protesters marching in the streets, while negative coefficients reflect topics that were more prevalent in descriptions of white protesters. The words next to each coefficient represent the top words associated with each topic. The results show that while descriptions of white nonviolent protesters frequently include words such as “free,” “America,” and “peace,” descriptions of black protesters engaging in the same activity include words such as “riot,” “violence,” and “danger.”

We find a similar pattern in Figure 6, which shows the differences in respondents’ descriptions of nonviolent protests by white Jewish and Arab protesters in Israel. The figure shows that nonviolent protests by the Jewish majority are described as “organized” “truth” and “Israeli”, while nonviolent protests by the Arab minority are described with words such as “violent” “harm” and “incitement”.

When examining descriptions of Ethiopian protesters in Israel (Figure 7), we find that the topic most distinctively associated with Ethiopian protesters is racism and discrimination. We also find that a topic associated with words such as “police” “block” and “offense” is also

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23 See Table A8 in the SI for the top 20 words associated with each topic.
more likely to appear in descriptions of Ethiopian protests, but its prevalence is much lower than the content referring to discrimination. This pattern is consistent with our earlier finding that Israelis are less likely to support police action against violent Ethiopian protesters than for whites (see Figure 3). A potential explanation for these findings is that the topics of policing and discrimination against Ethiopians were salient in the minds of responders. A few weeks before our survey, a wave of Ethiopian protests against police discrimination took place, with demonstrators blocking Israel’s main highway to protest the killing by police of an Ethiopian man. It is therefore possible that many Israeli respondents were aware of claims of police discrimination against Ethiopians, and answered with these issues in mind.

Figure 5: Topic Prevalence by Group Identity, U.S. Sample

Note: The figure reports estimates from a Structural Topic Model with 5 topics open-ended responses to nonviolent protests by minority and majority groups. Positive coefficients reflect topics that were more frequently discussed in descriptions of black protesters marching in the streets, while negative coefficients reflect topics that were more prevalent in descriptions of white protesters engaging in the same activity.
Figure 6: Topic Prevalence by Group Identity, Israel Sample (Arab Minority)

Note: The figure reports estimates from a Structural Topic Model with 5 topics open-ended responses to nonviolent protests by minority and majority groups. Positive coefficients reflect topics that were more frequently discussed in descriptions of Arab protesters marching in the streets, while negative coefficients reflect topics that were more prevalent in descriptions of white Jewish protesters engaging in the same activity.

Figure 7: Topic Prevalence by Group Identity, Israel Sample (Ethiopian Minority)

Note: The figure reports estimates from a Structural Topic Model with 5 topics open-ended responses to nonviolent protests by minority and majority groups. Positive coefficients reflect topics that were more frequently discussed in descriptions of Ethiopians protesters marching in the streets, while negative coefficients reflect topics that were more prevalent in descriptions of white protesters engaging in the same activity.
Discussion and Conclusion

A growing empirical literature finds that nonviolent resistance campaigns are far more successful in achieving their goals than violent campaigns. We have argued that this overall trend, while important, obscures the central role of ethnic identity in shaping campaign outcomes. Drawing on the same data used to demonstrate the effectiveness of nonviolence, we find that the effect of nonviolence on campaign success is significantly moderated by ethnic identity, such that nonviolent campaigns by minority groups far less likely to succeed than nonviolent campaigns by majorities: between 1946 and 2006, only one in five nonviolent campaigns by minority groups succeeded in achieving its goals, compared to one in two nonviolent campaigns by majority groups.\textsuperscript{24} These results join recent findings by Thurber (2018), which show that politically disadvantaged ethnic minorities are less likely to initiate nonviolent campaigns, highlighting the importance of taking ethnic identity into account in the study of nonviolent resistance.

We theorize that the lower likelihood of success of nonviolent resistance by ethnic minorities is due to the prevalence of negative stereotypes that associate many minority ethnic groups with violence and hostility and lead to support for more punitive policies, which are far more likely to target minorities. Evidence from a diversity of contexts supports our argument. African Americans, Arab Israelis, and Ethiopian Israelis, though experiencing very different configurations of exclusion, are all perceived by the general public as more violent than the dominant majority group when engaging in nonviolent resistance, and as requiring more policing. Moreover, whereas respondents associate protests by dominant majorities with words relating to democracy, participation, and change, they generally associate protests by minority ethnic groups with words relating to violence, extremism, or threat.

Our results further show that ethnic identity exercises little impact on perceptions of violence protest, but rather becomes more influential as resistance tactics become less vio-

\textsuperscript{24}See Table A2 in the Appendix.
lent. Put differently, minority groups pay a public opinion tax when turning to nonviolent resistance, which can offset some of the benefits that have been associated with it in the literature.

These findings should not be interpreted as a critique of nonviolent resistance, nor do they imply that violent tactics are more effective in achieving political change. On the contrary, the vast majority (93%) of violent campaigns initiated by minority groups end in failure. Beyond the moral and philosophical justifications for nonviolence (see Howes 2013; Nepstad 2015, for discussion), nonviolent campaigns by minorities have, in some instances, led to remarkable achievements. Wasow (2017), for example, finds that, in the 1960s, proximity to black-led nonviolent civil rights protests increased white Democratic vote-share, while proximity to black-led violent protests reduced it. Rather, our results point to the limitations of the main mechanism posited to underly nonviolent success – the mobilization advantage arising from its presumed appeal to broader audiences – and highlight the structural barriers that some groups face in capitalizing on these advantages. Specification and testing of alternative mechanisms of campaign success or failure would be a fruitful topic for additional research.

Though our observational results indicate that ethnic identity plays an important role in campaign outcomes globally, our experimental results examine three groups in two empirical contexts. This raises natural questions about generalizability. In particular, an important question that arises is which groups can be expected to have such effects on audience attitudes, given variation in stereotype content across different contexts. Research on punitive attitudes in other contexts draws on racial threat theory to argue that minority groups will be viewed as more threatening as they grow larger, thereby challenging the status quo that benefits dominant groups. This theory suggests that the effects we observe should extend to various other group that are perceived as threatening (cf Stewart et al. 2015). Replication

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25Ibid.
of this study in other empirical settings can shed further light on this question.

Marginalized groups engaged in campaigns for social and political change are often urged to adopt nonviolent tactics, or chided for not doing so. Our study shows that such tactics, even when adopted, are often perceived as more violent than they are and as requiring more repression by the state. From a policy perspective, our findings thus suggest a shift in focus from the campaigners to the broader public, underscoring the importance of greater awareness of when nonviolent resistance is interpreted as violent activity, and of the implicit and explicit biases that shape these interpretations.
Table A1: The Probability of of Nonviolent Campaign Success and Group Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NV campaign</td>
<td>0.070***</td>
<td>0.082***</td>
<td>0.086***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.019)</td>
<td>(0.021)</td>
<td>(0.023)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPR group size</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>0.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.019)</td>
<td>(0.023)</td>
<td>(0.029)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPR group size × NV campaign</td>
<td>0.134***</td>
<td>0.116***</td>
<td>0.148***</td>
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<td>(0.035)</td>
<td>(0.038)</td>
<td>(0.043)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.023***</td>
<td>0.362***</td>
<td>0.438***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cubic polynomials for time</td>
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<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.070</td>
<td>0.086</td>
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<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>2,099</td>
<td>1,901</td>
<td>1,569</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* The table reports regression estimates of the success of a resistance campaign on an interaction of campaign tactic (nonviolent or violent) with the size of the group initiating the campaign. Group size captures the size of the group as a percentage of country’s total population (Vogt et al. 2015). Data come from the Nonviolent and Violent Campaign Outcomes (NAVCO) 2.0 and the Ethnic Power Relations datasets (Chenoweth and Lewis 2013; Vogt et al. 2015; Thurber 2018). *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
Table A2: Distribution of Violent and Non-Violent Campaign Outcomes, by Group Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Non-violent protest by majority</th>
<th>Violent protest by majority</th>
<th>Non-violent protest by minority</th>
<th>Violent protest by minority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campaign failure</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaign success</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The table reports the proportion of violent and non-violent resistance campaigns documented in the NAVCO 2.0 dataset that ended in success and failure, disaggregated by group status. Data on group status comes from the Ethnic Power Relations dataset.
References

Aronow, Peter, Jonathon Baron, and Lauren Pinson. 2019. “A Note on Dropping Experimental Subjects who Fail a Manipulation Check”. *Political Analysis* https://doi.org/10.1017/pan.2019.5.


