Political Behavior
https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-023-09889-4

ORIGINAL PAPER

Critical Race Theory and Asymmetric Mobilization

Pia Deshpande[1] · Scott Blatte[2] · Yonatan Margalit[2] · Carolina Olea Lezama[2] · Brian F. Schaffner[2] · Aadhya Shivakumar[2] · David Wingens[2]

Accepted: 1 August 2023

Abstract

Teaching Critical Race Theory (CRT) in schools quickly became a salient issue nationally and in local elections despite CRT's origins as an academic theory. In this paper, we argue that elite asymmetries regarding the importance of CRT spillover to the electorate. We show that Republican legislators and conservative media's use of the term "critical race theory" dwarfed that of Democratic legislators and liberal media, respectively. A spike in general interest in the term happened concurrently with this elite push. We then hypothesize that in part due to this asymmetry in exposure to the term "critical race theory" itself in elite messaging, CRT policy may have an asymmetric effect on political mobilization, favoring Republicans, who tend to oppose the teaching of CRT in schools. To test this hypothesis, we conduct a survey experiment and find that Republicans presented with a pro-CRT policy change are politically mobilized, while Democrats presented with an anti-CRT policy change are not. In particular, Republicans exposed to the pro-CRT policy reported a higher likelihood of voting, encouraging others to vote, and contacting their local politicians. Thus, the case of CRT helps to illustrate the conditions under which issues can asymmetrically mobilize citizens.

Keywords Critical race theory · Mobilization · Partisanship · Campaigns · Elections

✉ Brian F. Schaffner
brian.schaffner@tufts.edu

[1] University of California, Berkeley, USA

[2] Tufts University, Medford, MA, USA

Published online: 24 August 2023

Introduction

> The President has directed me to ensure that Federal agencies cease and desist from using taxpayer dollars to fund these divisive, un-American propaganda training sessions [...] all agencies are directed to begin to identify all contracts or other agency spending related to any training on "critical race theory," "white privilege," or any other training or propaganda effort that teaches or suggests either (1) that the United States is an inherently racist or evil country or (2) that any race or ethnicity is inherently racist or evil (Vought, 2020)
> - Russel Vought,[1] former Director of the White House Office of Management and Budget during Trump's presidency

In an era of polarized public opinion, it is often difficult for parties to find issues on which they can attract broad-based support. When party elites take opposing positions on an issue, their supporters often follow suit, leaving little room for a middle ground (Druckman et al., 2013). But parties can find (or create) advantageous issues even when public opinion is closely split if that issue mobilizes their supporters to take action more than it mobilizes the other side. In other words, issues can mobilize *asymmetrically.*

In this paper, we explore the potential for asymmetric mobilization on an emerging issue—the teaching of Critical Race Theory (CRT) in schools. Broadly, CRT posits that race is culturally constructed and used to oppress people of color (especially Black people) and that U.S. laws and institutions have historically created and continue to maintain inequality between white and non-white people. Opponents of CRT often claim that it essentializes race, creating division where there was none, or demonizes being American by stating that structural racism is real (Dorman, 2021). In this way, CRT is an issue that emerges from the increasingly explicit divide between the parties on race and racism. CRT is polarized on partisan and ideological grounds, with Republicans and conservatives having much less favorable opinions of the framework than Democrats and liberals (Backus & Salvanto, 2022; Sharpe, 2022). While CRT as a formalized framework has largely been confined to academia since its inception, conservative activists and politicians made a concerted effort to inject the term into the mainstream political discussions starting in 2021 (Meckler & Dawsey, 2021).

We ask whether the asymmetric, elite-driven origins of CRT's political salience impact people's propensity to engage in political action. After documenting that the term "critical race theory" has been almost exclusively used by Republican politicians and conservative news outlets, we hypothesize that respondents will mobilize in a manner aligned with the asymmetric attention to CRT at the elite level. We conduct an experiment to test how respondents' likelihood to engage in political activities is affected by reading a vignette where government officials either (1) ban the teaching of CRT in schools, (2) mandate the teaching of CRT in schools, or (3)

[1] In 2021, Vought founded The Center for Renewing America. One of the Center's main aims is combatting Critical Race Theory.

take no action at all. We find that opponents of CRT (who tend to be Republican) are more likely to vote, encourage others to vote, and contact their local politicians when exposed to a vignette where the government mandates the teaching of CRT. By contrast, CRT supporters are not motivated to take political action when told that the government banned the teaching of CRT. The influence of the CRT issue is especially pronounced among Republicans and those who deny the existence of racism. Ultimately, our study provides insight into the conditions that might mobilize some citizens while having little influence on others, even on issues where opinion is closely divided. It is also an example of how the asymmetric weaponization of language can lead to asymmetric mobilization.

Critical Race Theory as a Political Issue

Despite the recent emergence of CRT as a salient political issue, the term itself first came into usage during the 1980s, most notably by Professor Derrick Bell.[2] Bell's seminal lecture on CRT came after the publication of the controversial book written by Charles Murray and Richard Herrnstein, *The Bell Curve*, which Bell (1995) says "suggests great social policy significance in the fact that black people score, on average, fifteen points below whites on I.Q. tests." To push back against arguments that posited that such perceived racial inequities are inherent characteristics, Bell argued that one had to adopt CRT, which acknowledged the advantages white Americans held over racial minorities in the United States, in particular Black Americans.

The term "critical race theory" was confined to the academic world until 1993 when President Bill Clinton nominated Professor Lani Guinier to run the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division. Republicans opposed her nomination, in part because she had allegedly been a proponent of CRT (Harris, 2021). After this incident, CRT stayed off the national political stage and only gained widespread notoriety when conservative activists like Christopher Rufo began hearing about the framework in 2020 (Meckler & Dawsey, 2021) and quickly recast the issue as a national crisis (Kaplan & Owings, 2021). In response, liberals generally argued that the focus on CRT was misleading because it is rarely taught in public education (Allen, 2022; Gaudiano, 2021), although some argue that ceding the debate by minimizing the prominence of the issue is a problematic choice (Allen, 2022).

In 2021, there was a 15-fold increase in the number of mentions of CRT at local government meetings (Curate 2021). These mentions of CRT were not limited to school board meetings; indeed, 63% of all mentions of CRT occurred at a venue other than a school board meeting. The following year, there were ongoing legislative initiatives in 36 states attempting to restrict CRT education while proposals

[2] Though Derrick Bell is colloquially credited as the godfather of Critical Race Theory, the phrase was officially promulgated at a 1989 workshop led by Professors Kimberlé Crenshaw, Neil Gotanda, and Stephanie Phillips on the topic (Lang 2020).

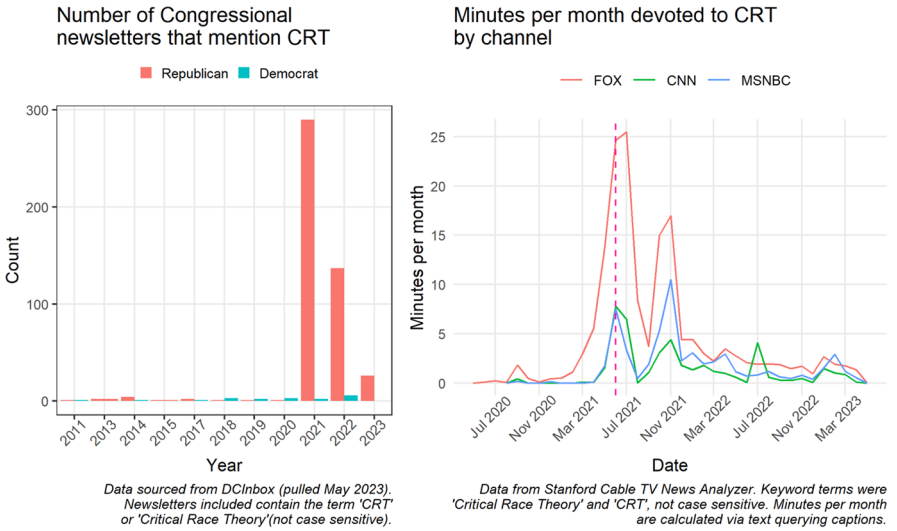

Fig. 1 Congressional newsletters that mention Critical Race Theory over time (left) and minutes per month devoted to Critical Race Theory by TV channel (right)

intended to protect the right to teach CRT were considered in 17 states (Stout & Wilburn, 2022).[3]

Discussions of CRT were not limited to local government. Figure 1 plots the occurrence of the terms "critical race theory" or "CRT" in congressional newsletters from 2011 through 2023 and on cable news stations from July 2020 through March 2023. Prior to 2021, CRT was seldom mentioned in these newsletters or talked about on cable news. However, in 2021, the number of Republican newsletters that used the term reached its apex at two hundred and ninety (Cormack, 2017), and Fox News similarly reached the peak of its CRT coverage, affording the term up to 25 min a month in coverage (Hong et al., 2021). Democratic politicians and liberal-leaning news outlets (CNN and MSNBC) largely avoided the issue during this period.[4]

As quickly as CRT gained national prominence in 2021, attention to the issue quickly waned. Fewer newsletters used the terms in 2022 and media coverage of CRT declined within just a couple of months. But the spike in attention was enough to draw interest from some members of the American public. To demonstrate this, Fig. 2 presents Google Trends data, plotting the relative popularity of the search term "critical race theory" over time. The term reached its peak search volume in

[3] Some state legislatures have introduced both pro- and anti-CRT legislation.

[4] Even at its peak popularity in newsletters in 2021, correspondences that mentioned CRT only made up a maximum of 3.4% of total newsletters sent out by Republican legislators. This is still a notable absolute volume of newsletters. For a more detailed figure on what percentage of total newsletters mentioned CRT, see Figure A1 in Supplementary Information.

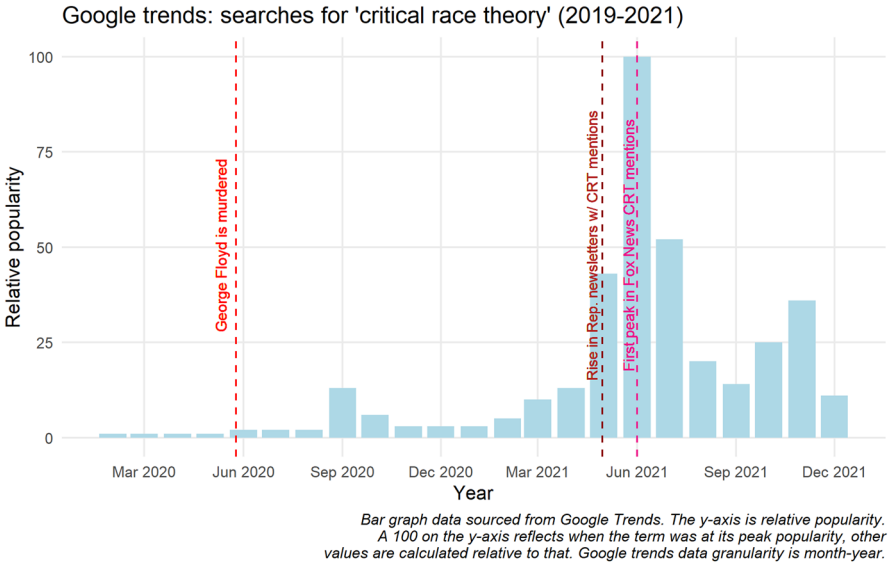

Fig. 2 Google Trends data for CRT from 2020 to the end of 2021. Includes important annotated events: the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, the rise in Republican newsletters with CRT mentions (sourced from DCInbox), and the first peak in Fox News CRT coverage (sourced from the Stanford Cable TV News Analyzer)

June of 2021. Before 2020, the term was relatively obsolete.[5] To get a better idea of what was happening around the spike in CRT's relative popularity in Google searches, we focus on April 2020 to December 2021—the time around the uptick. George Floyd was murdered on May 25, 2020, setting off a surge in Black Lives Matter protests, but there was no sizable increase in the searches for CRT after his death. This surge happens later, and coincides with the beginning of the rise in Republican Congressional newsletters mentioning CRT (late April to early May 2021) and the first peak in the minutes per month Fox News devoted to covering CRT (June 2021).

From the above analysis we can infer that CRT was discussed much more by Republican elites than their Democrat counterparts. Despite this attention, many Americans lacked knowledge of CRT, especially when the issue first gained national attention in mid-2021 (Morning Consult 2021). For example, in late 2021, 70% of Democrats, 80% of Independents, and 64% of Republicans were "not at all" or "not very" familiar with CRT (Safarpour et al., 2021). Thus, the issue was not well-known among any group, though Republicans were slightly more aware of it than Democrats. Our own experiment was fielded in April 2022, nearly a year after the first spike in elite attention.

[5] See the Supplementary Information for a graph of this Google Trends data for the entire period (2004 to May 2023).

CRT and Political Mobilization

Our main research question is whether the issue of teaching CRT in public schools has an asymmetric mobilizing effect, specifically when using the language "critical race theory" to refer to the framework explicitly. This way, we capture the weaponization of the conflict surrounding CRT as an issue and the weaponization of the term itself.[6]

As noted above, we expect that the asymmetric balance of elite cues will play an important role in this process (Zaller, 1992). Voters use signals from politicians and media to agenda-set (Eshbaugh-Soha & Peake, 2005; Walgrave & Van Aelst, 2016; Langer and Gruber 2021) and form opinions (Iyengar and Kidder 2010; Lenz, 2012; Broockman & Butler, 2017; Barber & Pope, 2019; Huang et al., 2021). There is some experimental evidence suggesting elite cues are a substitute for knowledge, and that a well-informed electorate relies less on cues (Boudreau & MacKenzie, 2014; Bullock, 2011; Grossman 2014). But especially when it comes to more complex and less salient issues, individuals rely heavily on cues they receive from trusted (and typically co-partisan) elites (Zaller, 1992).

As we show above, "critical race theory" was almost exclusively used by Republican (and not Democratic) elites. As a result, people who identify as Republicans were receiving clear signals from co-partisan elites about how they should react to CRT while Democratic identifiers were receiving very little guidance. Because of this, when individuals are confronted with CRT as an issue, we believe Republicans will have more clarity on how to respond than Democrats. And because most Republicans oppose the teaching of CRT, we likewise expect that CRT opponents will be more mobilized than CRT supporters.

While we expect that CRT mobilization will be limited to Republicans and CRT opponents, we also expect that this mobilization will only occur when the described action being taken on CRT is against an individual's preferences. One reason for this expectation comes from prospect theory and the phenomenon of loss aversion—the notion that people are more affected psychologically by losses than they are by equivalent gains (Tversky & Kahneman, 1992). Loss aversion affects public opinion on a variety of policy issues: people are more opposed to policies when those issues are framed in terms of they might lose (Mercer, 2005). We extend this logic to consider how loss aversion might affect whether somebody is likely to take political action. Specifically, we expect that people who are in a "domain of loss"—presented with a situation where their side was going to lose the policy debate over CRT—will be more motivated to take action to avoid the loss than those who are poised to win that policy debate (Mercer, 2005).

While loss aversion explains why people might pay more attention to situations where they are suffering policy losses, research on affect may also help explain why those policy losses may lead to increased mobilization. When government action runs against an individual's preferences on an issue, that person is more likely to

[6] We define CRT for respondents earlier in the survey before our experiment. For more details, see Data and Methods.

feel anger, an emotion that leads to an increased likelihood of engaging in political actions (Valentino et al., 2009; Valentino et al., 2011; Valentino and Neuner, 2017; Young, 2021; Weber, 2013). This pattern is especially true for partisans (Webster, 2020). For example, Groenendyk and Banks (2014) show that voters who identify with a party are more likely to react with anger and enthusiasm in their political environment rather than fear. They also find that fear is not linked with increased political participation, while anger and enthusiasm are.

By contrast, we expect that experiencing a policy victory will not lead to mobilization. Prospect theory stipulates that the benefits felt by winning are more ephemeral in our psyches than the negative feelings when we suffer a loss. While Valentino et al. (2011) and Weber (2013) find a positive link between anger and political participation, enthusiasm—the kind you may feel when your representative passes a law you agree with—was shown to produce little effect (though see Brader, 2005; Marcus et al., 2000). Though there is some mixed evidence when it comes to positive emotions, the balance of scholarship in this area suggests that people are more likely to be mobilized when they lose the debate over teaching CRT but not when they win it.

Finally, we expect CRT to be especially influential in mobilizing those for whom racial threat is especially salient. This expectation is the result of Republican leaders emphasizing the vulnerability of white identity as a key issue at stake (Webster, 2020). This increase in perceived threat leads to a heightened sense of white identity around which many white people have mobilized politically in recent years (Jardina, 2019). For example, Donald Trump's rhetoric focusing on how whites were threatened by a diversifying America helped fuel increased turnout among white people, especially white Republicans with high levels of racial resentment (Fraga, 2018; Banda and Cassesse, 2021; see also Luttig, 2017). Similarly, we expect that people who have more racist views will be most mobilized by action that mandates the teaching of CRT – it is among these respondents where the policy loss on the issue will be most keenly felt because it ties into the broader loss frame within which these individuals view the shifting demography of America.

Data and Methods

We fielded an online survey experiment in April 2022 using subjects recruited through the sample provider firm Lucid.[7] Lucid provides a sample of national adults that is designed to hit population benchmarks on variables such as race, age, gender, and education. 2199 respondents started the survey, but we implemented two filters for dropping inattentive respondents: one that asked respondents to select a certain response to a grid question and one that pruned respondents who took the survey too quickly (less than 2.5 min).[8] A total of 1706 adults passed these benchmarks

[7] This study was not pre-registered.

[8] Respondents who did not correctly answer the attention check question were excluded from the survey before they reached the experiment. In the Supplementary Information we show that our results are consistent when subjects who took the survey too quickly are included in the analysis.

and completed the survey. Subjects were both demographically and politically diverse, as can be seen from the descriptive statistics available in the Supplementary Information.

The experiment follows a pre-/post-test design, following the recommendations of Clifford et al. (2021). Participants first answered a battery of questions gauging their general likelihood of participating in five different political activities and were then exposed to one of six treatments relating to government action on the teaching of CRT before responding to similar participation questions following the treatment. Repeated measurement designs like ours increase power by measuring the dependent variables twice for each subject, thereby eliminating any residual error from the random assignment of participants to treatments. Clifford et al. (2021) replicate six established experiments using this approach and find that a pre-post design reduced standard errors by 20%–50%. More importantly, they compare the estimated treatment effects between each experimental design, finding no notable changes in the estimate produced by a pre-post design. By improving precision, a pre-post design allows us to analyze heterogeneous effects with more statistical power than a post-only design.

Prior to the experiment, we included a question designed to gauge respondents' views on the teaching of CRT:

> According to critical race theory, race is culturally constructed and used to oppress people of color, and U.S. laws and institutions have historically created and continue to maintain inequality between white and non-white people. Do you support or oppose the teaching of critical race theory in public schools?[9]

We use the phrase "critical race theory" in our policy vignettes because of the recent popularization of the term by Republican elites, and subsequent media attention around the phrase. We understand that individuals may talk about curriculum that uses CRT's framework without explicit use of the term; however, we wanted to mimic how the issue has typically been discussed since 2021.

The above question was designed to introduce and define CRT for subjects. Providing a definition is also important given the data we cited above, which suggests that many Americans were unfamiliar with CRT. In response to this question, 39% of respondents indicated that they supported teaching CRT, 38% noted that they were opposed, with the remaining 23% stating they were not sure. When we separate the results by partisanship, we see clear polarization on the issue. Among Democrats (including independents who lean towards the Democratic Party), 61% said that they supported teaching CRT, 19% were opposed, and 20% were not sure. By

[9] This definition was adapted from the one provided by Encyclopedia Britannica ("Critical race theory. Encyclopædia Britannica. Retrived May 11, 2023, from https://www.britannica.com/topic/critical-race-theory."), which reads: "intellectual and social movement and loosely organized framework of legal analysis based on the premise that race is not a natural, biologically grounded feature of physically distinct subgroups of human beings but a socially constructed (culturally invented) category that is used to oppress and exploit people of colour. Critical race theorists hold that racism is inherent in the law and legal institutions of the United States insofar as they function to create and maintain social, economic, and political inequalities between whites and nonwhites, especially African Americans.".

Fig. 3 Screen shots of survey items for measuring activites

comparison, 67% of Republicans opposed teaching CRT, 15% supported it, and 18% were not sure.

Respondents encountered our experiment later in the questionnaire. The vignette provides a hypothetical action taken by either their state or local government on the topic of teaching CRT in public schools. The experiment follows a 3×2 design, where we randomize both the level of government we describe as acting on the issue as well as the action taken. Here we present the passage that subjects were shown with the placement of the randomized content in brackets:

> Imagine that your [government body] debated whether to include critical race theory in public-school social studies curricula. Ultimately, the [government body] [outcome]. Do you support or oppose this decision?

The government body field was randomized so that subjects either saw "state legislature" or "city or town council."[10] Subjects were then also randomized to see one of three outcomes: (1) "decided that they would not take any action on the issue of critical race theory," (2) "decided to mandate that public schools include critical race theory in their curricula," or (3) "decided to prohibit public schools from including critical race theory in their curricula." We refer to these as the No Action, Teach CRT, and Ban CRT conditions.

In our results section, we first present treatment effects for the full sample but then we examine whether treatment effects differ depending on whether a subject supports CRT, opposes CRT, or has no opinion on the issue. We use the question about CRT that we asked earlier in the experiment to create these three groups in order to avoid any potential post-treatment bias.

For measures of mobilization, we asked subjects about their likelihood of voting, encouraging friends and/or family to vote, contacting an elected official, volunteering on a campaign, and running for office as our participation variables. We sought to account for the differing inputs required for political actions, including time commitment, financial resources, and accessibility. We believe these five each reflect a

[10] We found no statistically significant effects for the venue randomization and therefore do not further discuss this in the paper. Results are reported in Supplementary Information.

different combination of those inputs. On both the pre-test and post-test, subjects indicated the likelihood of undertaking these actions at both the state and local level. For each question, participants were asked to rate their likelihood using a 0–100 scale with 100 representing the highest likelihood and zero the lowest likelihood. An example of a pre-test and post-test question on the same dependent variable is included below. The post-test questions presented to respondents are dependent on the specific CRT policy vignette they received, which varies on the venue and action taken. Descriptive statistics for these items can be found in the Supplementary Information (see Fig. 3).

Pre-/post-test designs, while increasing the statistical power of the results by measuring the dependent variable twice, could be subject to bias because the respondent has already seen and responded to the same question (a form of priming). Clifford et al. (2021) found no evidence across any of their replication studies that this bias altered the estimated treatment effect. Their surveys intentionally maximized the time between the pre-test and post-test dependent variables. To best follow their structure and guard against priming, this survey included nine unrelated questions between the pre-treatment questions and the experiment. After answering those questions, subjects were shown the vignette, which asked them to consider hypothetical government action on CRT.

After viewing and responding to the vignette, subjects were asked to answer the same set of participation questions in light of the hypothetical action in the treatment. The post-test questions were worded slightly differently from the pre-test questions to reflect a more realistic respondent reaction to the CRT policy vignette. Accordingly, rather than simply taking the difference of the post-treatment and pre-treatment items, we instead estimate ordinary least squares (OLS) regression models in which we control for the subject's pre-treatment level for each activity when predicting the post-treatment value for that same action.

Finally, it is important to note that our post-test participation questions are not directly capturing mobilization, but rather an individual's motivation to participate under a hypothetical scenario. With regard to using self-reported intentions to participate, we believe these are valid and useful outcomes for study for several reasons. First, our usage of these items is in line with many other experimental studies that use self-reported intention to vote as a key dependent variable (e.g. Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1996; Fowler & Kam, 2006; Fowler, 2006; Gerber and Rogers, 2009). Second, intentions to participate are strongly related to actual behavior. For example, in the 2020 Cooperative Election Study survey in which respondents are matched to their actual voter file records, 73% of respondents who said that they definitely planned to vote actually did have a record of voting while the voting rate among those who said they would not vote was just 5%. If a person's stated intentions of participating increase, it is likely that their actual participation will increase as well. What is less clear is the precise way in which one's intention to participate translates into actual behavior. As Gerber and Rogers (2009, p. 188) note, "a limitation of research that relies on vote intention is that a change in vote intention suggests the direction of the treatment effect, but provides little guidance as to its magnitude". We follow this guidance in our discussions of the results and take care to interpret the size of the treatment effects solely as they relate to an individual's intention to

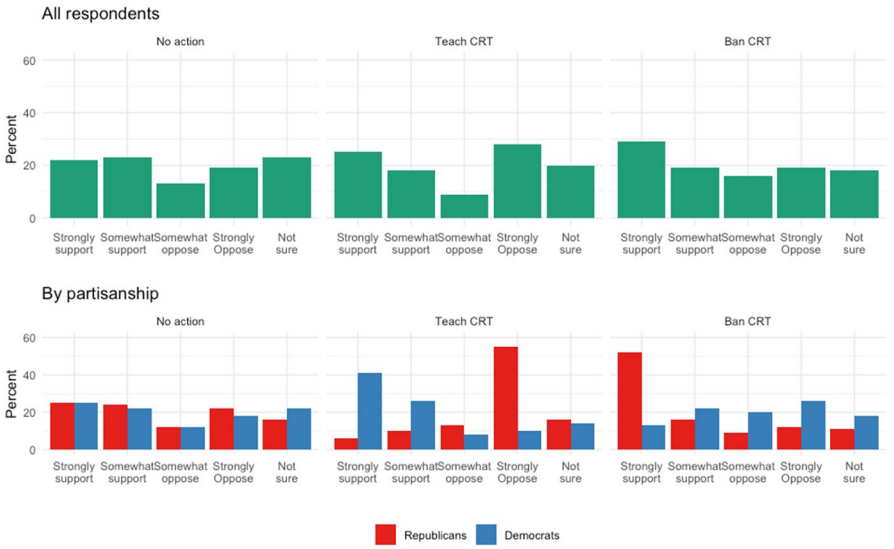

Fig. 4 Subjects' responses to question asking whether they supported or opposed the action taken in the experimental vignette

participate rather than assuming that the effects we observe would produce a change in actual participation of a similar magnitude.

We also note that the intentions to participate are being asked under hypothetical conditions. Previous experimental studies have also studied outcomes that measure subjects' intentions to participate under hypothetical scenarios (e.g. Iyengar and Ansolabehere 1996; Fowler & Kam, 2006; Fowler, 2006). The pre-/post-test randomized design of our study should minimize the type of bias identified by Graham and Coppock (2021) who note that asking subjects to self-report how their attitudes or behaviors would *change* under hypothetical scenarios can produce bias. They instead advise that "a standard treatment-versus-control comparison remains the best way to obtain an unbiased estimate of the ATE" (p. 50). Therefore, our experimental treatment versus control design should minimize the bias that comes from asking respondents about their behavior under hypothetical scenarios.

Results

Before analyzing our main dependent variables capturing the likelihood of participating, we start by presenting findings on how subjects responded to the question that was immediately connected to our treatment, which asked respondents whether they supported or opposed the decision made in the vignette. Figure 4 shows how subjects responded to this question based on the treatment condition they were assigned to and then in the bottom row also separates the analysis based on the respondent's partisanship. About one-fifth of the full set of subjects indicated that they were not sure how they felt about the action taken in the vignette. That said,

when the vignette described the government taking action to mandate that CRT be included in the curriculum (the top-middle plot in Fig. 4), more than half of subjects had a strong reaction to the decision, with 25% saying that they strongly supported it and 28% indicating strong opposition. When the vignette indicated that the government banned the teaching of CRT (top-right plot), 29% strongly supported the decision while just 19% strongly opposed it. CRT opponents tended to respond more strongly to the vignette compared to CRT supporters, and this was particularly true when it came to opposing an action they did not like. Mandating the teaching of CRT generated 28% strong opposition, whereas banning the teaching of CRT resulted in just 19% strongly opposed.

The bottom row of the figure separates the results by partisanship. Here again, we see evidence of asymmetry in responses to the vignette. More than half of the Republicans in our sample reacted strongly to the government taking action on CRT; 55% strongly opposed mandating that it be taught (bottom-middle plot) and 52% strongly supported banning the teaching of CRT (bottom-right plot). By contrast, Democrats did not have such strong views on government action on this issue. Just 26% of Democrats strongly opposed banning the teaching of CRT in schools. Overall, the results from Fig. 4 support the notion that CRT opponents and especially Republicans feel more strongly about policies related to CRT than do CRT supporters.

We now turn to analyzing the treatment effects on our main dependent variables. Table 1 presents results from 10 ordinary least squares regression models, each predicting a subject's likelihood of engaging in five activities at both the local and state level after seeing the vignette about the government taking action on CRT. Each model includes an indicator for whether the subject was assigned to an experimental condition where the government took action to mandate or ban the teaching of CRT and the baseline condition is where the government took no action. As we noted above, our experiment also included a second randomization where the hypothetical action was attributed to either the local government or the state government. However, the effects of this randomization were null across all models so for simplicity we do not include this indicator in Table 1. For a table of estimates that includes an indicator for this additional randomization, see Table A2 in the Supplemental Information. Each model in Table 1 also includes a control for the respondent's likelihood of engaging in each activity measured before the experiment.

Starting with the row of coefficients for the condition where the government took action to mandate teaching CRT, we see statistically significant effects on six of the dependent variables.[11] Specifically, subjects in this condition were 3.92 points more likely to say they would vote in a local election and 3.47 points more likely to vote in a state election compared to people in the no action condition.[12] These subjects were also 4.27 points more likely to say that they would contact a local representative and

[11] We include traditional p-value calculations in the main paper. For p-values adjusted for multiple testing bias, please see Supplementary Information.

[12] Self-reports of projected political participation are on a 100-point scale, with 0 being the smallest likelihood and 100 being the largest likelihood.

Table 1 OLS regression testing effect of experimental conditions on likelihood of engaging in political activities

	Vote		Campaign		Run		Contact		Encourage	
Predictors	Local	State	Local	State	Local	State	Local	State	Local	State
Intercept	9.35* (1.62)	6.53* (1.60)	7.13* (1.08)	5.97* (1.05)	6.17* (0.94)	6.07* 0.88)	8.68* (1.30)	8.73* (1.33)	9.35* (1.48)	7.67* (1.44)
Teach CRT condition	3.92* (1.60)	3.47* (1.52)	2.53 (1.40)	2.10 (1.35)	1.82 (1.25)	0.90 (1.18)	4.27* (1.64)	5.48* (1.65)	6.47* (1.57)	4.93* (1.49)
Ban CRT condition	2.22 (1.59)	2.70 (1.51)	− 0.28 (1.39)	0.38 (1.34)	0.01 (1.24)	− 0.53 (1.17)	0.11 (1.62)	0.01 (1.63)	0.79 (1.56)	1.14 (1.48)
Pre-election value	0.77* (0.02)	0.80* (0.02)	0.76* (0.02)	0.81* (0.02)	0.82* (0.02)	0.88* (0.02)	0.72* (0.02)	0.73* (0.02)	0.77* (0.02)	0.80* (0.02)
N	1632	1622	1582	1542	1553	1515	1596	1575	1635	1617
R^2	0.539	0.573	0.506	0.553	0.539	0.576	0.412	0.428	0.552	0.596

Entries are OLS coefficients. Standard errors in parentheses. *$p < 0.05$

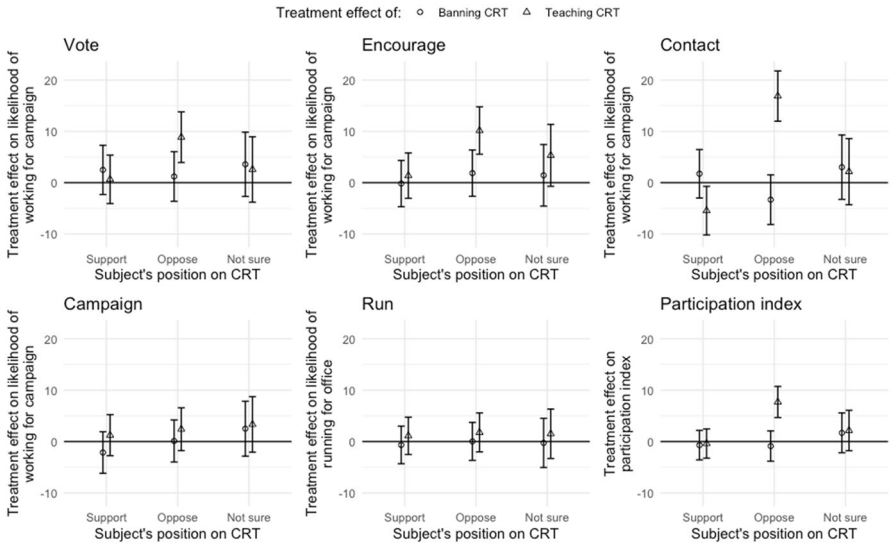

Fig. 5 Treatment effect of hypothetical government action on CRT on likelihood of taking action, conditional on opinion towards CRT. Vertical lines represent 95% confidence intervals. Treatment effects generated by OLS models controlling for pre-treatment levels of mobilization

5.48 points more likely to say that they would contact a state representative. Finally, compared to the control group, respondents in this condition were 6.47 points more likely to say that they would encourage others to vote in a local election and 4.93 points more likely to say they would encourage others to vote in a state election. The coefficients in the other four models (working on a campaign or running for office) are also positive, but they are small and not significant at the 0.05 level.

Shifting to the next row of coefficients, when the government took action to ban the teaching of CRT we do not find any statistically significant treatment effect on the average likelihood of participating. While all but one coefficient for this variable are positive, their magnitude is relatively small and none are statistically significant.

Finally, as expected, the pre-treatment measure of a subject's likelihood of engaging in each activity is a strong and statistically significant predictor of their post-treatment likelihood.

The results in Table 1 demonstrate that action to mandate the teaching of CRT mobilizes while action to ban teaching CRT does not. This is our first indication that mobilization is asymmetric. However, to fully test the extent to which this mobilization is asymmetric we need to explore whether CRT supporters and opponents react differently to these conditions. Figure 5 plots the treatment effects of banning or mandating the teaching of CRT (versus no action) on the likelihood of engaging in each activity, but separating the effects depending on whether a respondent was a supporter or opponent of CRT using our pre-treatment question about support for CRT. Because we found no clear differences in treatment effects for local vs. state-directed activities in Table 1, we combine those measures in Fig. 5 by taking the average likelihood of each activity at both the local and state level. For example, the

dependent variable for the first plot is the post-test average likelihood of voting in state and local elections.

Additionally, we use factor analysis to create an index of a respondent's overall level of activity on the pre- and post-treatment measures. The pre-treatment index is created by estimating a factor analysis of all 10 pre-treatment measures of participation and the post-treatment index includes all 10 post-treatment measures. Details on the factor analyses are provided in Supplementary Information, but all items loaded on the first factor at 0.46 or higher. After extracting factor scores for each respondent, we re-scaled these scores to range from 0 to 100 so that they matched the other participation variables.

Figure 5 provides clear support for the asymmetric mobilization hypothesis. There are three positive treatment effects in the figure and in each case that positive treatment effect relates to CRT opponents becoming mobilized by a vignette that relays action on CRT that is contrary to their views (e.g. mandating the teaching of CRT). CRT opponents who saw the vignette where the government took action to mandate the incorporation of CRT into the curriculum said they were 8.9 points ($p < 0.01$) more likely to vote in the next election, 10.2 points ($p < 0.01$) more likely to encourage others to vote in the next election, and 16.9 points ($p < 0.01$) more likely to contact their elected representatives about the issue compared to when they saw a vignette where the government took no action. However, there were no significant treatment effects for the more costly actions of working for a campaign or running for office.

Interestingly, there was also one negative treatment effect – when CRT supporters saw a vignette where the government took action to mandate the teaching of CRT they reported that they were about 5 points ($p = 0.02$) *less* likely to contact an elected official.[13] It makes sense that people would be less likely to contact a public official to discuss a policy when the government had just taken an action that the person preferred. Indeed, we also see a negatively signed effect for CRT opponents when the vignette indicated that the government had banned CRT, but in this case, the treatment effect is not significant ($p = 0.13$).

The final (bottom right) panel in Fig. 5 shows the treatment effects for the participation index which combines all participation measures. The results for this index are consistent with the broader patterns in the figure; opponents of CRT were mobilized when the government took action against their preferences, but neither vignette mobilized CRT supporters.

Treatment Effects Conditional on Partisanship

As noted above, we consider both a top-down and bottom-up explanation for why people might be mobilized by government action on CRT. The top-down explanation centers on the importance of elite cues; specifically, the fact that the controversy surrounding the teaching of CRT was largely pushed by Republican politicians.

[13] Though this result is no longer significant when we apply a correction for multiple testing bias (see the SI).

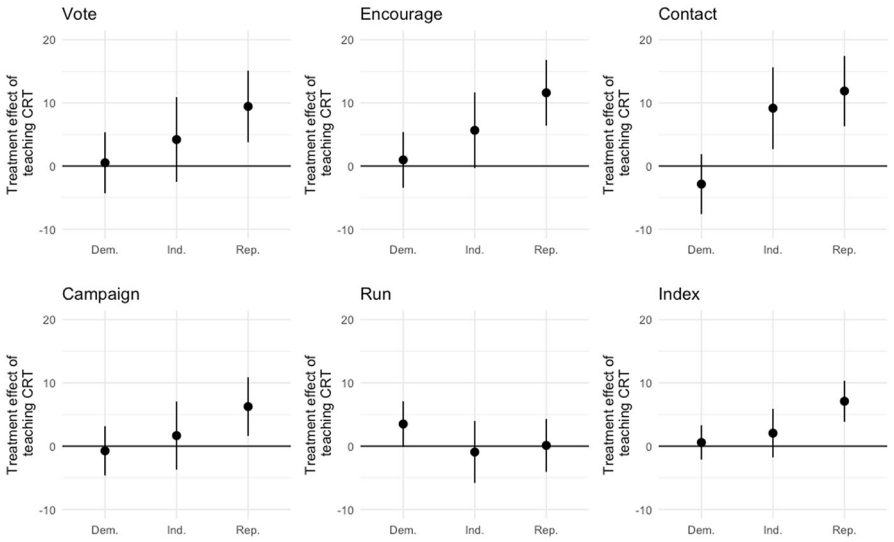

Fig. 6 Treatment effects of mandating the teaching of CRT by partisanship. Vertical lines represent 95% confidence intervals. Treatment effects generated by OLS models controlling for pre-treatment levels of mobilization and racial attitudes

If people are mostly just responding to partisan cues on the issue, then we would expect to find the treatment effects to be largely confined to individuals who identify as Republicans. To explore whether the treatment effects are conditional on partisanship, we include a variable indicating which party each respondent identifies with. This partisanship variable categorizes party identifiers and independents who lean towards a party as partisans; using this approach, our sample includes 752 Democrats, 593 Republicans, and 361 who do not lean towards either party. We interacted this variable with the treatment indicator and the results are plotted in Fig. 6. Note that for this analysis we focus solely on the treatment in which the teaching of CRT was mandated relative to the control group since that is the only treatment variable that produces statistically significant results.

Overall, the results in Fig. 6 show that it is mostly Republicans who respond to our experimental treatment about the government taking action on CRT. Republicans react by indicating an increased likelihood of voting, encouraging others to vote, contacting public officials, and working for a campaign. The divergence among the parties mirrors the divergence among party elites discussed above. Republican pundits and politicians are more likely to talk about CRT, and Republican respondents are more likely to express an intention to participate when CRT is invoked. The only other statistically significant treatment effect in Fig. 6 is for Independents, who express an increased likelihood of contacting public officials when exposed to the government taking action to mandate the teaching of CRT. It is interesting that Independents show an increased likelihood of contacting public officials that is on par with the increase we see among Republicans even though there is no statistically significant treatment effect for that group with any of the other election-oriented

activities. This may be due to the fact that Independents generally have less interest in electoral politics (Klar & Krupnikov, 2016) and therefore are more prone to respond by reaching out to public officials when they are unhappy with a governmental decision.

The bottom right panel is for the summary index of participation likelihood, and here we see confirmation of the patterns from the individual metrics—it is only those identifying as Republicans who indicate an increased likelihood to participate in politics when exposed to the teach CRT treatment. This provides strong support for the top-down mechanism that Republicans are reacting to this stimulus because it is their co-partisan elites driving the political discourse. Republican elites paint CRT as a threat while Democrats tend to dismiss the issue as trivial or avoid discussing it altogether.

Treatment Effects Conditional on Racial Attitudes

Having established evidence for the top-down effect of elites on mobilizing Republicans on CRT, we now turn to exploring potential bottom-up effects. An individual's position on teaching CRT is strongly associated with their racial attitudes and as we noted above, Americans with more racist attitudes are most likely to feel threatened by the teaching of CRT. Here, we measure racial attitudes using two items from the FIRE scale (DeSante & Smith, 2020) which capture the extent to which an individual accepts or denies the presence of racism in America.

(1) White people in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin.
(2) Racial problems in the U.S. are rare, isolated situations.

Individuals were asked to register their agreement or disagreement with each statement on a 6-point scale.[14] People who disagree with the first item and agree with the second statement are demonstrating a higher level of denial that racism exists while those taking the opposite stances acknowledge the presence of racism. Our scale takes the average responses to the two items (after reversing one of them) and then rescaling from 0 to 1 where 0 represents those most strongly accepting the presence of racism and 1 are those who most strongly deny the existence of racism.

We expect that racism deniers are those who will be most mobilized by this issue because those individuals feel most threatened by the teaching of CRT in schools. We estimated a model that conditioned our treatment indicator on both a respondent's party affiliation and their score on the racism denial scale. Figure 7 plots the treatment effects of mandating CRT for each dependent variable across values of the racism denial scale while holding partisan affiliation constant. As

[14] The six response categories are strongly agree, somewhat agree, slightly agree, slightly disagree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree.

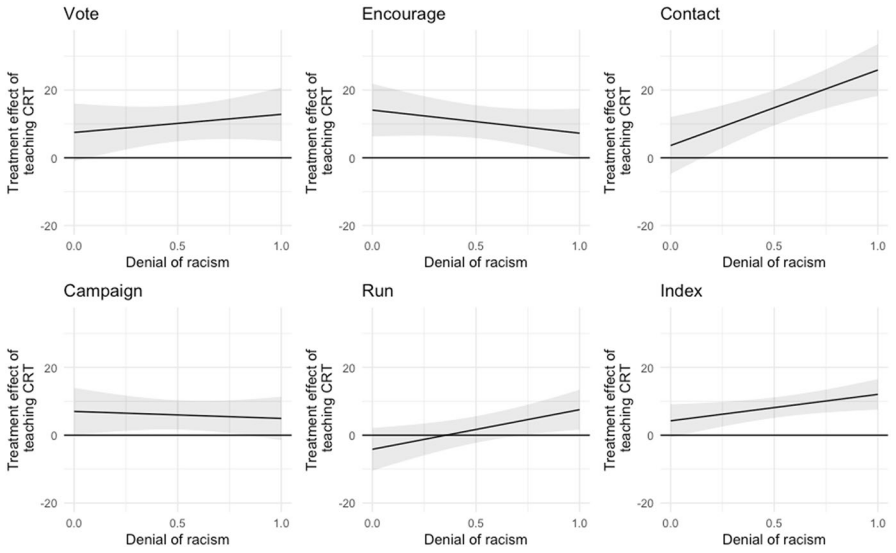

Fig. 7 Predicted treatment effects across values of the denial of racism scale. Shaded area represents 95% confidence intervals. Treatment effects generated by OLS models controlling for pre-treatment levels of mobilization and partisanship. The partisanship variable is held constant at Republican for these plots

with Figs. 5 and 6, these estimates are produced from OLS models that also control for pre-treatment levels of participation.

Once we control for partisanship, racism denial is statistically significant in three of the six models. First, in the model for contacting elected officials, the interaction term is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) and the coefficient is in the expected direction. The top-right plot in Fig. 7 plots these conditional effects; respondents with the highest levels of racism denial were about 22 points more likely to say they would contact elected officials when exposed to the teach CRT condition compared to those with the lowest levels of racism denial. The interaction term is also statistically significant ($p = 0.014$) in the run for office model; people with the highest levels of racism denial were about 12 points more likely to say they would run for office when they heard about actions to mandate the teaching of CRT compared to people with the lowest levels of racism denial. This same pattern is also evident on the participation index—subjects with the highest levels of racism denial are about 8 points more likely than those with the lowest levels of denial to express an intention to engage in political participation when exposed to the teach CRT vignette.

The teaching of CRT has been framed by many on the right as a threat to white Americans, one that would be strongly felt by white Americans who maintain a strong sense of denial about the existence of racism. Racism deniers are likely to be threatened and angered by governments mandating the teaching of CRT, emotions that would mobilize those individuals to vote, contact elected officials, and perhaps even run for office.

Conclusion

This paper provides evidence that the issue of teaching CRT in schools is mobilizing, but only for particular types of people under particular conditions. Specifically, CRT opponents and Republicans report that they are more likely to participate in several political activities when the government takes action to mandate the teaching of CRT in schools. These same CRT opponents were not mobilized when the vignette described them as winning the policy debate (e.g. by the government banning the teaching of CRT). CRT supporters and Democrats were not mobilized by either government action. We find the above even when we define CRT for respondents in our experiment, and argue that elite weaponization of the term "critical race theory" and stoking controversy by Republican legislators and conservative helps to explain our results.

Mobilization effects for CRT opponents were dependent on how costly a type of mobilization was. CRT opponents who saw the vignette where the government took action to mandate the incorporation of CRT into the curriculum said they were significantly more likely to vote, more likely to encourage others to vote in the next election, and most notably *much more likely to contact their elected representatives about the issue* compared to the inaction vignette. These effects are substantively significant, and though self-reported intentions to participate do not perfectly translate into actual participation, the two concepts are strongly correlated making the study of intentions to participate valuable (Gerber and Rogers 2009).

We also find that those with the highest levels of racism denial were the most mobilized by government action on this issue, even after controlling for partisanship. When racism-denying subjects were exposed to a situation in which the government mandated that CRT be taught in schools, they became significantly more likely to express a desire to contact public officials and run for office than those who acknowledged the existence of racism.

Our findings add to a small but growing political science literature on public opinion toward Critical Race Theory. Our experiment establishes a baseline for support for CRT and establishes important relationships between policy outcomes and asymmetric political mobilization on many different factors. Voting is not the only way individuals mobilize, and our secondary analysis to discuss how CRT policy that one disagrees with motivates some forms of mobilization but not others will serve as an interesting comparison to literature on how other issues mobilize.

The paper also contributes to scholarship seeking to understand when political issues mobilize people to participate in political activities and when they do not. First, we find that asymmetric mobilization is more likely to occur when elite discourse is also asymmetric. In this case, it was almost entirely Republican elites who used the term CRT and referred to the issue, and we subsequently find that only Republican subjects were mobilized. Second, we found that the type of action also mattered—people who lost a policy debate or felt most threatened by government action on an issue would be especially mobilized by

that issue. Government action to ban the teaching of CRT did not mobilize subjects, but action to mandate the teaching of CRT did mobilize people who were opposed. What this suggests is that the term "critical race theory" and the issue itself can be used as an issue to mobilize Americans—mostly Republicans—who feel aggrieved by racial progress and that taking action to ban the teaching of CRT in schools will not lead to counter-mobilization from those who favor racial progress. These results demonstrate that even issues on which opinion is closely divided can sometimes be advantageous for one party when that issue holds the potential for asymmetrical mobilization.

Supplementary Information The online version contains supplementary material available at https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-023-09889-4.

Acknowledgements For their excellent comments and suggestions, thank you to Deborah Schildkraut, Eitan Hersh, and Rebekah Jones. Thanks are due as well to the Department of Political Science at Tufts University, which funded this work.

Funding This work was funded by Tufts University.

Declarations

Conflict of interest The authors declare none.

Code Availability All data and code needed to replicate the results in this article are available on the Dataverse at https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/9QGIUH.

References

Allen, J. (2022). Teachers Union Wants Democrats to Fight Back against Republicans' Critical Race Theory Attacks. *NBC News*. Retrived July 13, 2022, from https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2022-election/teachers-union-wants-democrats-fight-back-republican-crt-attacks-rcna38001.

Ansolabehere, S., & Iyengar, S. (1996). Can the press monitor campaign advertising?: An experimental study. *Harvard International Journal of Press/politics, 1*(1), 72–86. https://doi.org/10.1177/1081180X96001001006

Backus, Fred, and Anthony Salvanto. (2022). Big Majorities Reject Book Bans–CBS News Poll. CBS News. Retrived 2022, from https://www.cbsnews.com/news/book-bans-opinion-poll-2022-02-22/.

Banda, K. K., & Cassese, E. C. (2021). Hostile sexism, racial resentment, and political mobilization. *Political Behavior*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-020-09674-7

Barber, M., & Pope, J. C. (2019). Does party trump ideology? Disentangling party and ideology in America. *American Political Science Review, 113*(1), 38–54. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055418000795

Bell, D. A. (1995). Who's afraid of critical race theory. *University of Illinois Law Review., 4*, 893–910.

Boudreau, C., & MacKenzie, S. A. (2014). Informing the electorate? How party cues and policy information affect public opinion about initiatives. *American Journal of Political Science, 58*(1), 48–62. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12054

Brader, T. (2005). Striking a responsive chord: How political ads motivate and persuade voters by appealing to emotions. *American Journal of Political Science, 49*(2), 388–405. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0092-5853.2005.00130.x

Broockman, D. E., & Butler, D. M. (2017). The causal effects of elite position-taking on voter attitudes: field experiments with elite communication. *American Journal of Political Science, 61*(1), 208–221. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12243

Bullock, J. G. (2011). Elite influence on public opinion in an informed electorate. *American Political Science Review, 105*(3), 496–515. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055411000165

Camerer, C. F. (2004). Prospect theory in the wild: Evidence from the field. *Advances in Behavioral Economics*. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400829118-008

Clifford, S., Sheagley, G., & Piston, S. (2021). Increasing precision without altering treatment effects: Repeated measures designs in survey experiments. *American Political Science Review, 115*(3), 1048–1065. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055421000241

Cohen, G. L. (2003). Party over policy: The dominating impact of group influence on political beliefs. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 85*, 808–822. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.85.5.808

Cormack, L. (2017). DCinbox—Capturing every congressional constituent e-newsletter from 2009 onwards. *The Legislative Scholar, 2*(1), 27–34.

Curate (2021). What local government discussions about critical race theory mean for local policy trends. Retrieved from https://blog.curatesolutions.com/what-local-government-discussions-about-critical-race-theory-mean-for-local-policy-trends.

DeSante, C. D., & Smith, C. W. (2020). Less is more: A cross-generational analysis of the nature and role of racial attitudes in the twenty-first century. *The Journal of Politics, 82*(3), 967–980. https://doi.org/10.1086/707490

Dorman, S. (2021). Legal coalition forming to stop critical race theory training around the country. *Fox News*. Retrived 2021, from https://www.foxnews.com/politics/legal-coalition-critical-race-theory

Druckman, J. N., Peterson, E., & Slothuus, R. (2013). How elite partisan polarization affects public opinion formation. *American Political Science Review, 107*(1), 57–79. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055412000500

Eshbaugh-Soha, M., & Peake, J. S. (2005). Presidents and the economic agenda. *Political Research Quarterly, 58*(1), 127–138. https://doi.org/10.2307/3595602

Google trends "critical race theory". Retrived May 3, 2022, from https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?date=all&geo=US&q=critical%20race%20theory&hl=en

Fowler, J. H. (2006). Altruism and turnout. *Journal of Politics, 68*, 674–683. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2508.2006.00453.x

Fowler, J. H., & Kam, C. D. (2006). Patience as a political virtue: Delayed gratification and turnout. *Political Behavior, 28*(2), 113–128. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-006-9004-7

Fraga, B. L. (2018). The turnout gap: Race, ethnicity, and political inequality in a diversifying America. *Cambridge University Press*. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108566483

Gaudiano, N. (2021). Democrats plan to swing back aggressively at republicans on critical race theory claims. Business insider. Retrived April 30, 2023, from https://www.businessinsider.com/democrats-critical-race-theory-strategy-should-be-aggressive-against-republicans-2021-11.

Gerber, A. S., & Rogers, T. (2009). Descriptive social norms and motivation to vote: Everybody's voting and so should you. *The Journal of Politics, 71*(1), 178–191.

Graham, M. H., & Coppock, A. (2021). Asking about attitude change. *Public Opinion Quarterly, 85*(1), 28–53. https://doi.org/10.1093/poq/nfab009

Groenendyk, E. W., & Banks, A. J. (2014). Emotional rescue. *Political Psychology, 35*, 359–378. https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12045

Grossmann, M. (2014). The varied effects of policy cues on partisan opinions. *Politics & Policy, 42*(6), 881–904. https://doi.org/10.1111/polp.12102

Harris, A. (2021). The GOP's 'Critical Race Theory' Obsession. *The Atlantic*. Retrived 2021, from https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2021/05/gops-critical-race-theory-fixation-explained/618828/.

Hong, J., Crichton, W., Zhang, H., Fu, D.Y., Ritchie, J., Barenholtz, J., Hannel, B., Yao, X., Murray, M., Moriba, G. & Agrawala, M. (2021). Analysis of Faces in a Decade of US Cable TV News in *Proceedings of the 27th ACM SIGKDD International Conference on Knowledge Discovery & Data Mining*. Association for Computing Machinery. Retrived 2021, from https://tvnews.stanford.edu/

Huang, J., Cook, G. G., & Xie, Yu. (2021). Large-scale quantitative evidence of media impact on public opinion toward China. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications, 8*(1), 1–8. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-021-00846-2

Iyengar, S., & Kinder, DR. (2010). *News That Matters: Television and American Opinion, Updated Edition*. Chicago Studies in American Politics. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Retrived 2010, from https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/N/bo10579884.html.

Jardina, A. (2019). *White identity politics*. Cambridge University Press.

Kaplan, L. S., & Owings, W. A. (2021). Countering the furor around critical race theory. *NASSP Bulletin, 105*(3), 200–218. https://doi.org/10.1177/01926365211045457
Klar, S., & Krupnikov, Y. (2016). *Independent politics: How american disdain for parties leads to political inaction*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316471050
Lang, C. (2020). What Is Critical Race Theory?. *Time*. Retrived from https://time.com/5891138/critical-race-theory-explained/
Langer, A. I., & Gruber, J. B. (2021). Political agenda setting in the hybrid media system: Why legacy media still matter a great deal. *The International Journal of Press/politics, 26*(2), 313–340. https://doi.org/10.1177/1940161220925023
Lenz, GS. (2012). *Follow the Leader?: How Voters Respond to Politicians' Policies and Performance*. Chicago Studies in American Politics. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Retrived from https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/F/bo11644533.html.
Luttig, M. D. (2017). Obama, race, and the Republican landslide in 2010. *Politics, Groups, and Identities, 5*(2), 197–219. https://doi.org/10.1080/21565503.2015.1068699
Marcus, G. E., Russell Neuman, W., & MacKuen, M. (2000). *Affective Intelligence and Political Judgment*. University of Chicago Press.
Meckler, L., & Josh D. (2021). Republicans, Spurred by an Unlikely Figure, See Political Promise in Targeting Critical Race Theory. *Washington Post*. Retrived June 21, 2021, from https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2021/06/19/critical-race-theory-rufo-republicans/
Mercer, J. (2005). Prospect theory and political science. *Annual Review of Political Science, 8*, 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.8.082103.104911
Morning Consult/Politico. (2021). National Tracking Poll 2106137. Retrived June, 2021, from https://assets.morningconsult.com/wp-uploads/2021/06/23065402/2106137_crosstabs_POLITICO_RVs_v1_LM.pdf
Safarpour, A., David, L., Jennifer, L., Caroline, H. P., James, D., Matthew, B., Katherine, O., Perlis, R., Santillana, M., Trujillo, K. L., Uslu, A., Quintana, A., Green, J., Shere, A., Qu, H. (2021). The COVID States Project #73: American Attitudes Toward Critical Race Theory. Retrived 2021, from https://osf.io/crv95/
Sharpe, J. (2022). UMass Amherst Poll Examines Americans' Views of Race Issues Including Critical Race Theory, Systemic Racism and Reparations : UMass Amherst. Retrived January 14, 2022, from https://www.umass.edu/news/article/umass-amherst-poll-examines-americans-views-race-issues-including-critical-race-theory
Stout, C & Thomas, W. (2022). CRT MAP: Critical Race Theory Legislation and Schools. *Chalkbeat*. Retrived from https://www.chalkbeat.org/22525983/map-critical-race-theory-legislation-teaching-racism
Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. (1992). Advances in prospect theory: Cumulative representation of uncertainty. *Journal of Risk and Uncertainty, 5*(4), 297–323.
Valentino, N. A., Brader, T., Groenendyk, E. W., Gregorowicz, K., & Hutchings, V. L. (2011). Election Night's Alright for Fighting: The role of emotions in political participation. *The Journal of Politics*. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022381610000939
Valentino, N. A., Gregorowicz, K., & Groenendyk, E. W. (2009). Efficacy, emotions and the habit of participation. *Political Behavior, 31*(3), 307–330. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-008-9076-7
Valentino, N. A., & Neuner, F. G. (2017). Why the Sky Didn't Fall: Mobilizing anger in reaction to voter id laws. *Political Psychology, 38*(2), 331–350. https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12332
Vis, B. (2011). Prospect theory and political decision making. *Political Studies Review, 3*, 334–343. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1478-9302.2011.00238.x
Vought, R. (2020). Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies. Retrived from https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/M-20-34.pdf
Walgrave, S., & Van Aelst, P. (2016). Political agenda setting and the mass media. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*. https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.46
Weber, C. (2013). Emotions, campaigns, and political participation. *Political Research Quarterly, 66*(2), 414–428.
Webster, S. E. (2020). *American Rage How Anger Shapes Our Politics*. Cambridge University Press.
Young, L. E. (2021). Mobilization under threat: emotional appeals and pro-opposition political participation online. *Political Behavior*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-021-09711-z
Zaller, J. R. (1992). *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. Cambridge University Press.