Marching Backwards to Freedom:
Black Strategies to Expand the Scope of Conflict *

Matthew B. Platt

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Abstract

Theories of agenda setting claim that political entrepreneurs must broaden their bases of support in order to place new issues onto the formal agenda. This paper takes that claim seriously by examining the role of black protest and descriptive representation in securing white recognition of black policy issues. Making use of a new data set that provides measures of media attention and congressional bill sponsorship from 1948 to 1997, I show that both protest and descriptive representation were instrumental in gaining white recognition of black policy demands, culminating in the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act. However, the potency of protest and descriptive representation has lessened in response to the black social and political advancement of the post-civil rights era. It seems that black strategies of conflict expansion have become victims of their own success.

In terms of agenda setting, the 1965 march from Selma to Montgomery is one of the most successful failures in American history. On March 7, 1965 five hundred advocates for black voting rights were attacked by the police while they were peacefully marching from Selma to Montgomery. The next day, major newspapers around the nation reported these events under the headline, "Bloody Sunday." In the March 9 issue of the *New York Times* Republican and Democratic members of Congress were quoted as calling for federal intervention in Selma and new voting rights legislation from the president. At the same time, sympathy protests erupted across the nation, including a 10,000 strong march in Detroit led by Governor George Romney. After a week of pressure from politicians and the public, on March 15, President Lyndon Johnson delivered a nationally televised address to Congress in which he defined black disenfranchisement as an "American problem" that challenged the very values of the nation. Finally, on March 17, 1965 – only ten days after the initial failed march from Selma to Montgomery – the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was introduced in Congress.

The story of Selma is a remarkable example of what Schattschneider (1975) described as "expanding the scope of conflict." In just ten days, what began as an issue of black Americans petitioning the state of Alabama for the right to vote had been defined by the president as a national problem impacting all Americans. Selma exemplifies the idea that disadvantaged groups must garner broader support if they want to successfully place their issues on the national agenda. For black agenda setting this requirement becomes more specific: black issues cannot reach the formal agenda without white recognition that these issues address legitimate problems (McClain 1993). Bloody Sunday is a particular instance of how the issue of black voting rights secured white recognition. In this paper I address the more general question: what accounts for white recognition of black issues?

Political participation and descriptive representation are the two answer that will be explored in this paper. The major works on agenda setting all agree that political activity is an important method of gaining access to the agenda (Cobb and Elder 1972; Schattschneider 1975; Cobb, Ross and Ross 1976; Baumgartner and Jones 1993). However, this theoretical focus has not been matched with empirical results. I argue that black protests send signals to the public and pol-

icymakers (Lohmann 1993, 1994). These signals inform white Americans that social conditions disproportionately impacting black people are problems in need of government redress. Conversely, Kingdon (1995) emphasizes the role of political entrepreneurs relative to activists. Under this type of thinking, black members of Congress are the best-positioned entrepreneurs to educate their colleagues and inform the broader public about the problems and issues of importance to black Americans. Using a new data set spanning the period 1948-1997, I find that white recognition of black issues has increased over the past fifty years. More stories on black issues appear in the media and more bills addressing black issues are introduced in Congress. However, the tools used for securing this recognition – protest and descriptive representation – have been blunted by the Voting Rights Act.

The remainder of the paper proceeds in five sections. Section 1 defines black issues and white recognition. Section 2 elaborates on the central claim that black protest and representation secure white recognition through their roles in problem definition. Section 3 introduces new data that creates a variety of opportunities for studying black agenda setting and details the methods that are used for the analysis. Section 4 presents the key findings that both protest and representation were effective at securing white recognition prior to 1966; however, the marginal effects have declined since the passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965. Section 5 concludes with a discussion of the contributions of this work. Studying the acquisition of white recognition for black issues addresses an important, yet under-studied, aspect of black agenda setting. More importantly, this paper establishes a link between political activity and problem definition that has been a vital theoretical component of the agenda setting literature.

1   Defining the Puzzle

In order to understand how participation and representation relate to white recognition of black issues, there are a few preliminary tasks. First, we need to define black issues and recognition. Second, the case has to be made for why white recognition is essential to black agenda setting. I argue that if we want to know how black issues navigate the policy process, then the focus should not be on the origins of black issues but on how those issues are recognized by a broader, white

public whose support is essential to success. That is the process I am investigating.

1.1 What are Black Issues and How are They Recognized?

The first step in the investigation of how white recognition is gained for black issues is to define what black issues actually are. Regardless of individuals' self-identification, people who are phenotypically black (in a somewhat broad sense) are vulnerable to racism, and that shared vulnerability can be the basis of political solidarity (Shelby 2005). Therefore, I define black issues as policies that attempt to fight racism and/or promote racial justice in the United States. In a less abstract sense, black issues must satisfy at least one of the following conditions:

1. **Anti-Racist**: Policies that erect legal protections against racial discrimination and remedies for the negative effects of past discrimination. Hate crime legislation, civil rights bills, the voting rights acts, minority set asides, and affirmative action are all examples of this criterion.

2. **Cultural**: Cultural policies are those landmarks, commemorations, holidays, and monuments that celebrate black achievements and history while simultaneously undermining negative racial stereotypes of inferiority.

3. **Social Welfare**: Social welfare is limited to policies which explicitly address some racial disparity; explicitly attempt to remedy urban poverty; and those which disproportionately impact black Americans. These policies must foster non-stigmatizing, non-discriminatory social programs such as full employment, a guaranteed income, federal control over programs, or an opposition to work requirements. This encompasses a wide range of policies from expanding benefits under AFDC to funding research on sickle cell anemia to increasing federal funding of elementary and secondary education.

Throughout the paper, whenever I speak of black issues I am referring to a policy topic that meets at least one of the criteria outlined above.

Jones and Baumgartner (2005) discuss attention in lieu of what previous work has considered the formal agenda, the set of policies that receive serious consideration by policymakers (Cobb, Ross and Ross 1976, 126). Recognition is the term I use to refer to issues reaching the public agenda. When an issue receives recognition, then the public or policymakers are aware that there is some problem in legitimate need of government resolution, but no further action is necessarily taken. For the practical purposes of this paper, recognition means that either a bill has been introduced or a news story has been written addressing an issue. Bill introductions are considered

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congressional recognition, and news stories are considered public recognition. This paper is about how black issues receive recognition.

1.2 The Case for Conflict Expansion

Black issues require non-black congressional recognition because black members of Congress lack agenda setting power. Cox and McCubbins (2005) show that agenda setting power in Congress is reserved for a "procedural cartel" that includes the Rules Committee, the Speaker, the majority leader, and committee chairs. From the 41st to the 109th Congress there have been fifteen black MCs who have held a total of twenty assignments as committee chairs for a cumulative total of 100 cartel-years (Amer 2005). By comparison, Sam Rayburn and James Eastland combine for fifty-one cartel-years. Black MCs generally do not have access to the levers of agenda power; however, non-black MCs generally lack the motivation to use their power in favor of black issues. Public recognition provides non-black MCs with incentives to recognize black issues. We know that MCs are motivated by goals of reelection, institutional advancement, and good public policy (Fenno 1973; Mayhew 1974; Fenno 1978; Arnold 1990). If public recognition of black issues was sufficiently high to gain the interest of majority white constituencies, then MCs could electorally benefit from responsiveness to black issue demands. Non-black members of Congress need to recognize black issues before they can become public policy. Public recognition is required to show MCs the benefits of responding to black issue concerns. The question is how this recognition is actually obtained.

2 Tools of Recognition: Protest and Representation

Black protest and descriptive black representation secure white recognition through their roles in problem definition. The way issues and problems are defined is the strategic choice of some political entrepreneur (Cobb and Elder 1972; Cobb, Ross and Ross 1976; Baumgartner and Jones 1993; Kingdon 1995), and these entrepreneurial definitions of problems do much of the work in explaining how new issues receive congressional attention. Skillful agenda setters define issues to cut across multiple interests so that the number of groups involved in a conflict increases. As a result, established "policy monopolies" are broken apart by the introduction of new participants

(Baumgartner and Jones 1993; Jones, Baumgartner and Talbert 1993; Baumgartner, Jones and MacLeod 2000; Sheingate 2006). Protest and representation gain white recognition for black issues by defining these issues as superseding narrow racial interests.

Following Wood and Doan (2003), I assume that individuals prefer to define problems in congruence with community or public definitions; that individuals only have some perception of the true public definition of problems; and that both individual definitions and public perceptions are shaped by exogenous events. Although there are any number of conditions that exist in a society – drug abuse, sexual harassment, discrimination, these conditions do not become problems until a sufficient number of individuals define them as such. Recognition is when public institutions, such as Congress or the news media, take note of these changes in the community definition. Conceiving of political activity as an informative signal (Lohmann 1993, 1994; Austen-Smith and Wright 1994; Kollman 1998), I assert that black protest serves as an indicator – to the public and policymakers alike – that existing conditions affecting black Americans are social problems. Mainstream media accounts of black protests, and the issues which motivate these actions, inform white Americans that certain social conditions exist. More importantly, media coverage shapes individuals' perceptions that these conditions are defined as problems by the public. Given that policymakers are unable to process all of the information that is available to them, they also rely on a small set of indicators such as media and protests to define black issues as problems (Jones and Baumgartner 2004; Jeon and Haider-Markel 2001). As a result, higher rates of black protest will yield higher rates of white recognition.

Similarly, I argue that black representatives send cues to non-black MCs through their legislative behavior. Previous research already interprets cosponsorships as tools for intra-institutional signalling (Wilson and Young 1997; Koger 2003). Fowler (2006) takes this logic one step further by conceiving of Congress in terms of cosponsorship networks that are based on party, geography, and ideology. Just as citizens use party labels as cues for how to interpret political events (Bartels 2002), I claim that MCs use the legislative actions of people within their networks as a marker of issue importance. By accessing congressional networks, black representatives provide signals through their legislative actions (such as bill introductions, cosponsorship, and floor speeches). White con-

gressional recognition of black issues should increase when black representatives are more active. Out of this discussion, three hypotheses have emerged:

1. Rising numbers of black protests will increase the public recognition of black issues.

2. Rising numbers of black protests will increase the congressional recognition of black issues.

3. Rising levels of black representation will increase the non-black congressional recognition of black issues.

The message is basic: white recognition is essential for congressional attention to black issues, and black protest and representation are the keys to securing white recognition.

3   Measuring Conflict Expansion

Before these three hypotheses can be addressed, we need to identify measures of public recognition, congressional recognition, black protest activity, and black representation. As stated above, public recognition is measured as coverage of black issues by the mainstream media. More specifically, public recognition is the yearly count of stories in the *New York Times* (NYT) that address black issues. This data is taken from the Policy Agendas Project.[1] Rather than going through and coding every news story for fifty years, the Policy Agendas Project takes a random sample of stories.[2] Using the three criteria for black issues, which are discussed above, I coded the sample of news stories as dealing with black issues or not. Table 1 provides examples of black issue news stories. Congressional recognition is measured as the annual number of black bills introduced by non-black MCs. The Congressional Bills Project (Adler and Wilkerson 2007) has compiled a database of all bills[3] that have been introduced from 1947-1998. Using the criteria for black issues, I coded these bills as addressing black issues or not. Table 2 provides examples of black bills, and the appendix

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[1]The data used here were originally collected by Frank R. Baumgartner and Bryan D. Jones, with the support of National Science Foundation grant number SBR 9320922, and were distributed through the Center for American Politics and Public Policy at the University of Washington and/or the Department of Political Science at Penn State University. Neither NSF nor the original collectors of the data bear any responsibility for the analysis reported here.

[2]Information on how NYT stories are sampled can be found online at www.policyagendas.org

[3]By bills I am referring to legislation of class h.r. or s. This means that resolutions and amendments are not included.

Table 1: Examples of Black Issue News Stories by Topic

Topic	Example	Number	Proportion
Macroeconomics	administration officials commenting on unemployment	52	0.051
Civil Rights	musician refuses to play before a segregated audience	394	0.389
Labor/Employment	Senator Bilbo's fight against the FEPC	37	0.037
Education	Education board to open Central High to Negroes	142	0.140
Law/Crime/Family	black family in Queens charges police brutality	76	0.075
Social Welfare	NYC poverty board on Haryou-Act funding	57	0.056
Development/Housing	state-aided housing project approved	94	0.093
Government Operations	Governor Rockefeller speaks to Negro business leaders	48	0.047
State/Local	racial rivalries in NYC council races	48	0.047
Total		1012	1.000

contains a brief description of how these bills were coded.[4] These two measures, public recognition and congressional recognition, serve as the dependent variables for the analysis.

The primary independent variables are protest and representation. Protest is measured as the number of protest events recorded by the *New York Times* from 1948 to 1997. That data was collected by Jenkins, Jacobs and Agnone (2003). Black representation is measured as the number of black MCs serving in a year. There are two sets of analysis, one for public recognition and one for congressional recognition. I have hypothesized that black protests should increase media coverage of black issues, and I hypothesize that both protest and black representation should impact congressional recognition. However, the literature suggests that the value of protest and representation have been altered by the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (Browning, Marshall and Tabb 1984; Smith et al. 2001; Rustin 2003). To deal with this concern I include a dummy for the period up to and including 1965 and an interaction between this dummy and the variables for protest and representation.[5] Both dependent variables are annual counts, so the analysis was performed using a negative binomial model. Lastly, the total number of news stories and the total number of bills were used as offsets. The results of the estimation are presented

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[4]http://mail[dot]rochester[dot]edu/[tilde]plat/dissertation[dot]html provides a more exhaustive list of coding decisions.

[5]To ensure that the intercept has some interpretation, I re-scale the protest variable such that zero measures when there was one protest event in a year. Basically I subtract one from all the protest observations.

Table 2: Examples of Black Bills by Topic

Topic	Example
Macroeconomics	incentives for manufacturing in high unemployment areas
Civil Rights	extension of the Commission on Civil Rights
Health	tax deductions for medical care expenses or health insurance
Agriculture	domestic food programs for the needy
Labor/Employment/Immigration	earned income tax credit
Education	expand Title III programs under Higher Education Act
Environment	collecting demographic data for waste treatment sites
Energy	low-income home energy assistance
Transportation	public works employment for long-term unemployed
Law/Crime/Family	racially discriminatory use of the death penalty
Social Welfare	establish national minimum for AFDC benefits
Community Development/Housing	revitalization and construction of public housing
Banking/Finance/Commerce	non-discrimination in insurance
Defense	pensions for soldiers in the Brownsville Massacre of 1906
Space/Science/Communication	diverse ownership of local broadcasting
Foreign Trade	job retraining for those displaced by foreign trade
International Affairs	funding domestic microloans programs
Government Operations	King holiday and its commission
Public Lands	national African-American history museum

below.

4   Results

Table 3 presents the coefficients and standard errors from the negative binomial estimation of public recognition. The dependent variable is the annual number of NYT stories on black issues from 1948-1997. All of these coefficients are statistically significant.[6] Looking first at the coefficient

Table 3: Public Recognition of Black Issues

|	Coefficients	Standard Error
Intercept	-3.900*	0.083
Black Protest	0.021*	0.004
Pre-1966	-0.304*	0.160
Pre-1966 Protest	-0.014*	0.004
N	50	
Log Likelihood	-164.256	

for black protests, the hypothesized relationship has been confirmed. Rising levels of black protest activity increase public recognition of black issues. After 1965, one additional black protest event in a year will increase the annual number of news stories on black issues by approximately 2.1%. Second, the dummy for 1948-1965 states that coverage of black issues before 1966 is lower than after 1965. Third, the impact of black protests on news coverage does change in these two periods, and that change is contrary to expectations. The negative and statistically significant coefficient on the interaction term for protests before 1966 shows that black protest has a greater impact on public recognition of black issues in the post-civil rights era. A graphical illustration provides a firmer grasp on how the impact of protest varies before and after the heyday of civil rights activity.

Figure 1 presents the predicted impact of black protests on media coverage of black issues before and after 1965. The plot of open circles shows the effects of rising protests before 1965, and the

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[6]Statistical significance is at the $p < 0.05$ level for one-tailed tests.

plot of crossmarks shows the effects of rising protests after 1965. Black protests are allowed to vary from zero annual events to sixty, and the y-axis displays the predicted rate of NYT stories on black issues given the total number of stories. Black protests have a muted effect on media coverage of

Figure 1: The Impact of Protest on Media Coverage of Black Issues: This figure shows the predicted rate of black news stories as the number of black protests increases. Circles show the effect before 1965, and the crossmarks show the effect after 1965.

Impact of Protest on Public Recognition
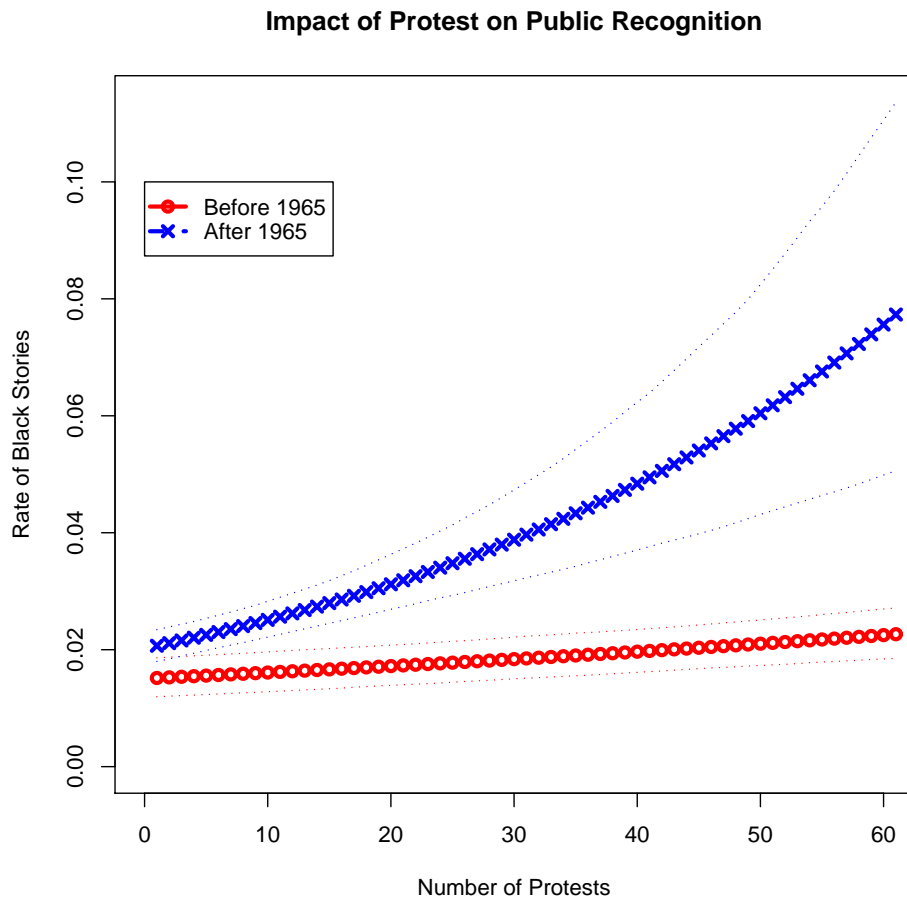
black issues before 1966. Before 1966, a year with zero black protests will only yield 1.5 black issue stories for every 100 additional stories published. Increasing the annual number of black protests from zero to sixty has a decidedly minimal impact of producing 2.2 black issue stories for every 100 additional stories published. It would require 183 annual protest events for coverage of black issues to outpace the growth of the newspaper (meaning that coverage is going to black issues that was

previously allocated to some other area). There is only one year in this sample when the number of black protest events passed this threshold – 1965. After 1965, a year with zero black protests offered 2.1 black stories for every 100 additional stories. Increasing the number of annual black protests to sixty raises the rate to 7.7 black issues for every 100 additional stories. Black issues begin to dominate news coverage when annual protest events exceed 170. However, the maximum number of protests after passage of the Voting Rights Act was 84 in 1967.

The message from Table 3 and Figure 1 is clear. Black protest increases public recognition of black issues; however, the impact of protest on public recognition has grown tremendously in the aftermath of civil rights victories for public accommodations and voting rights. The results suggest that a mass movement launching over 100 protests a year would make black issues the central focus of mainstream media today. Black political advancement has enhanced the power of protest to generate public recognition for black issues. In terms of gaining public recognition, politics have supplemented rather than supplanted protest.

I am interested in white recognition of black issues more broadly, so attention is now turned toward the analysis of congressional recognition. Table 4 presents the coefficients and standard errors for the negative binomial estimation of congressional recognition. The dependent variable is the number of black bills introduced by non-black MCs. The starred coefficients are statistically significant.[7] There are three important points to take away from Table 4. First, political incorporation of black Americans seems to have a generally beneficial impact on congressional recognition. Looking at the negative, statistically significant coefficient for the pre-1966 dummy, on average, the rate of black bills introduced by non-black MCs after 1965 is roughly 51% higher than before 1966. The implication is that enfranchising black Americans has changed the nature of representation more generally. This finding compliments the work of Bullock (1981), who demonstrates the importance of the Voting Rights Act on responsiveness to black constituencies. Second, the interaction for pre-1966 black protest tells the opposite story as was found for public recognition. After 1965, rising levels of black protest negatively impact the number of black bills introduced by non-black members of Congress. Third, black representation positively impacts congressional

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[7]Statistical significance is at the $p < 0.05$ level for one-tailed tests.

Table 4: Congressional Recognition of Black Issues: This table provides the coefficients and standard errors from a negative binomial regression of the annual count of black issue bills introduced by non-black MCs on black protest and black representation.

	Coefficients	Standard Error
Intercept	-3.464*	0.147
Black Representation	0.007	0.007
Black Protest	-0.006	0.004
Pre-1966	-0.511*	0.174
Pre-1966 Representation	0.242*	0.107
Pre-1966 Protest	0.006*	0.004
N	50	
Log Likelihood	-252.342	

recognition both before 1966 and after 1965. However, the marginal effect of representation before 1966 is greater than after 1965. Basically, black representation matters less now than it did prior to the Voting Rights Act. As was the case for public recognition, graphs provide greater intuition for these estimated relationships.

Figure 2 presents the predicted impact of black protests on the introduction of black bills before and after 1965. As in Figure 1, the open-circled plot shows the effects of rising protests before 1965, and the cross-marked plot shows the effects of rising protests after 1965. Black protests are allowed to vary from zero annual events to sixty, and the y-axis displays the expected rate of black bills for every bill introduced by non-black MCs. There is a clear – though not dramatic – upward slope before 1965, showing that rising black protests increase congressional recognition. Before 1966, on average, there will be 1.9 black bills for every 100 bills introduced. When the number of annual black protest events increases to 60, then the number of black bills crawls to 2.0 black bills for every 100 bills introduced. After 1965, on average, there will be 3.6 black bills for every 100 bills introduced when there are zero black protest events. Increasing the number of protests to sixty drops that rate to 2.5 black bills per 100 bills introduced. Despite protests' negative effects, the

post-1965 enfranchisement of black Americans still yields higher levels of congressional recognition than were experienced prior to 1966.

Figure 2: The Impact of Black Protests on Congressional Recognition: This figure shows the predicted rate of black issue bills introduced as the number of black protests increases. Circles show the effect before 1965, and the crossmarks show the effect after 1965.
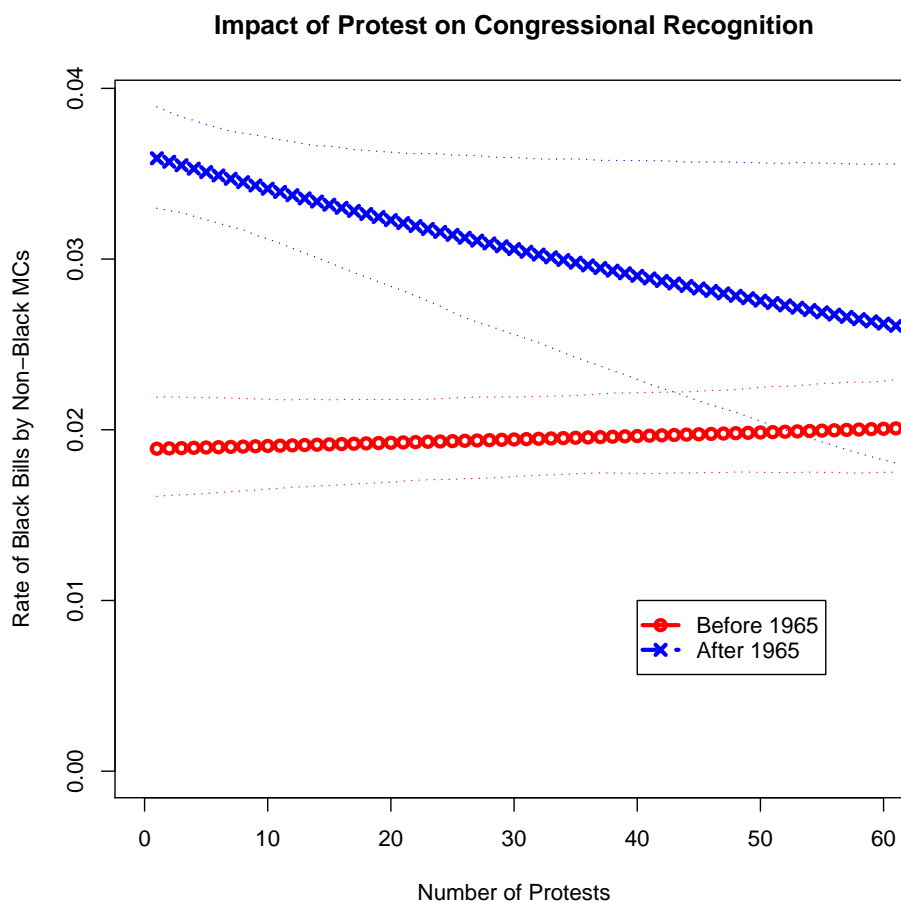

Figure 2 suggests a gradual process of recognition before 1966. Thinking of how civil rights bills were passed in this period, an interpretation of gradualism seems appropriate. Three years separate the major civil rights legislation in 1957 and 1960, periods when protest activity had not yet reached a frantic pace. The major victories of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 came in the wake of a flurry of 132 protest events in 1963 and 240 in 1965. Conversely, it seems that black advancement within institutionalized politics has made protest

counter-productive to achieving responsiveness to black issue demands after 1965. In terms of congressional recognition, politics have not only supplanted protest, but made it detrimental to future progress. Exploring the impact of black representation on congressional recognition offers insight into how political advances have transformed protest into a destructive tool.

Figure 3 presents the expected impact of black representation on the introduction of black bills after 1965 and before 1966. The number of black MCs is allowed to vary from zero to the sample maximum of forty-three after 1965. However, the number of black MCs before 1966 is only allowed to vary from zero to eleven.[8] The dependent variable is the number of black bills introduced by non-black MCs. Just as we observed for black protest in Figure 2, black representation is more efficient in gaining congressional recognition prior to passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Before 1966, on average, when only Adam Clayton Powell and William Dawson were in Congress, there should be 4.2 black bills per 100 bills introduced. After 1965, that rate of black bill introduction will not be surpassed until 1993 when there were forty black members of Congress. The addition of Charles Diggs in 1955 will increase the rate to 5.7 black bills sponsored by non-black MCs for every 100 bills introduced, and the expected black bill introduction rate when there were five black MCs in the 88th Congress (1963-1965) is 1 for every 10 bills introduced. These rates are never expected after 1965. The efforts of Charles Diggs, Robert Nix, William Dawson, Augustus Hawkins, and Adam Clayton Powell were more effective at garnering white recognition for black issues prior to 1966 than the forty members of the Congressional Black Caucus in the 105th Congress. As we saw for protests, descriptive black representation was an effective weapon to achieve black political empowerment, but the blade has been dulled by the realization of black advancement in the post-civil rights era.

5 Conclusion

White recognition is essential to black agenda setting. In this paper, I have investigated the roles of black protest and black descriptive representation in securing both public and congressional recognition. Before 1966, black protests were part of a gradual process of increasing media attention

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[8]This restriction does not change the substantive points in any way, it was only performed to more easily compare the changing impact of representation. Before 1966, the predicted values become very large with large confidence intervals once the number of black bills by black MCs grows beyond the sample maximum.

Figure 3: The Impact of Black Representation on Congressional Recognition: This figure shows the predicted rate of black issue bills introduced by non-black MCs as the number of black MCs in Congress increases. Circles show the effect before 1965, and the crossmarks show the effect after 1965.

Impact of Black Representation on Congressional Recognition
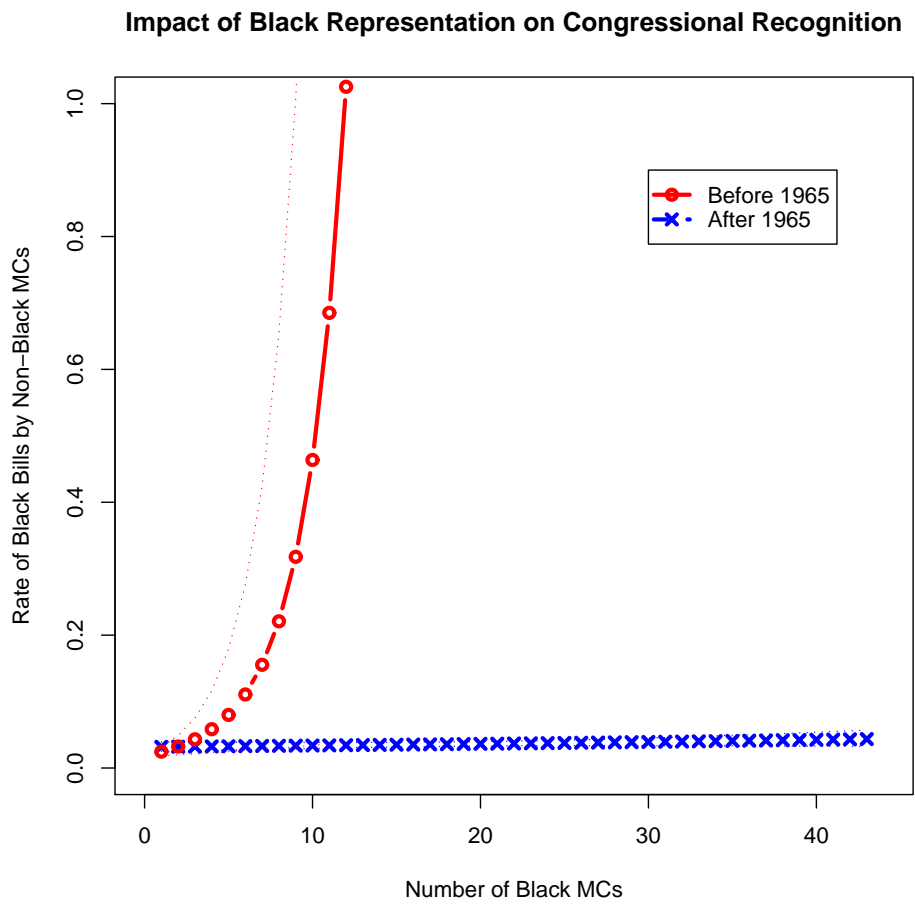
to black issues and raising the rate of black bill sponsorship by non-black MCs. After 1965, protest is more effective at gaining public recognition of black issues, but it is a counter-productive strategy for having black issues recognized by non-black members of Congress. A similar story unfolds for descriptive black representation. Prior to passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, a small group of black MCs pushed their non-black colleagues to relatively high rates of black bill introduction. After 1965, the increasing numbers of descriptive black representatives have had a negligible impact on the congressional recognition of black issues. Basically, the tools employed in the fight for black political empowerment have been blunted by their own success.

Explanations for the paradoxical relationships between black protest, public recognition, and congressional recognition are not obvious. Future research can explore this paradox in a number of ways. First, case studies could provide necessary detail for how specific black protests had the competing effects of creating larger public awareness while resulting in a backlash in Congress. That sort of work would make clear what this apparent paradox of protest is actually about. Second, large-N analysis on the relationship between media coverage and bill introductions is needed to determine if black protest is in fact working at cross-purposes with itself. Third, the paradox might reflect ideas in the racial attitudes literature. Protest-induced media coverage of black issues could be viewed as just another example of undeserving black people crying for handouts rather than working hard. In that case there could be a backlash fueled by "new racism" (Tarman and Sears 2005). Research that links protest, media coverage, and racial attitudes is needed to untangle the potential connections there. Just as securing white recognition is only the beginning of black agenda setting, studying white recognition is only the start of a larger program of research into the changing consequences of protest participation.

Beyond racial politics, this paper makes an important contribution by linking political activity to agenda setting. There have been few studies in political science that analyze the policy consequences of non-voting political participation (Leighley 1995). At the same time, research on agenda setting argues that political activity is an important factor (Cobb and Elder 1972; Baumgartner and Jones 1993), but there have not been any quantitative analyses to provide evidence of such a connection. If we believe Schattschneider's assertions about "expanding the scope of conflict", then studies of

agenda setting must incorporate the impact of political activism into the analysis of how issues move to the formal agenda. This paper takes a first step by showing the relationship between black protests and the recognition of black issues, but the logic easily transfers to any disadvantaged group. Future research can begin to explore how strategies of conflict expansion vary across groups.

The largest contribution is to the study of black politics. Over the fifty years covered by this study black Americans made a number of social, political, and economic advancements. Previous research has argued that further advances will require an even greater emphasis on either protest or politics (Browning, Marshall and Tabb 1984; Tate 1994; Smith et al. 2001). These results suggest a more complicated story. Descriptive representation and black protests were both needed to achieve the gains of the Civil Rights Movement, and the effectiveness of both tactics has suffered in the years following the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Rather than asking whether representation or black protests are the key to black agenda setting, these results suggest the need for a third option. The failure of 500 people to march from Selma to Montgomery galvanized the nation to finally protect black Americans' right to vote. As a result, black protest has become detrimental to congressional recognition of black issues. In the 21st century, black Americans may need to march backwards on the road to freedom.

Appendices

A   Bill Coding Decisions by Topic

1. Macroeconomics bills are predominantly about unemployment and what the government can do to provide more jobs for the poor. This includes full employment legislation, targeted jobs credits for the poor, incentives to develop economically distressed areas, and the creation of enterprise zones.

2. Civil rights bills deal with instances of discrimination in a variety of areas; voting rights issues that impact black people; administering existing civil rights provisions; and remedial actions such as reparations for slavery and minority set asides.

3. Black interest health legislation deals with expanding health care to the poor, caring for pregnant women, and funding for sickle cell and vitiligo research.

4. Agriculture bills use surplus products to provide food assistance to the needy and school children.

5. The labor and employment category consists of job training programs targeted towards the poor or black people.

6. Education legislation is coded as a black issue if it provides targeted benefits to "disadvantaged" students, reduces funding disparities, further Head Start programs, and sets aside funding for historically black colleges.

7. Environmental policies with the location of waste sites in minority communities.

8. Energy bills provide home energy assistance to the poor and compensate those who lost jobs as a result of the oil crisis.

9. Transportation black bills include extended public works projects intended to curb unemployment, representation of minorities and the poor on local transit boards, and amendments to the Urban Mass Transportation act that pertain to the poor.

10. Law, Crime, and Family issues are coded as black when they address disparities in sentencing, prohibitions of police brutality, hate crimes, and programs to help children or poor mothers.

11. Social welfare bills include guaranteed income, appropriations for the Office of Economic Opportunity, and expansions of the food stamp program. Mostly this topic is composed of changes to AFDC that increase benefits, federalize administration, avoid work requirements, and repeal punitive measures.

12. Community development and Housing legislation is coded as black when it expands or improves low-income housing, especially public housing. Issues of fair housing, community development block grants, enterprise zones, and economic development of depressed areas are also included under this heading.

13. Banking, Finance, and Commerce refers to discrimination in the ability of minorities to get reasonable credit and insurance rates. Targeted tax relief for low-income people and inducements to invest in minority business are also included.

14. Defense bills offer remedies to black soldiers for past racial injustices and create special offices for equal opportunity or minority affairs.

15. Space, Science, Technology, and Communications contains issues about the diversity of broadcasting ownership, media portrayal of racial/ethnic groups, and public works employment to build communication infrastructure.

16. Foreign trade bills include some affirmative action measures and job retraining for those displaced by foreign trade.

17. International Affairs does not include many black bills, given the emphasis on domestic policies. The exception is funding for domestic microloan programs.

18. Government operations relate to black interests when they commemorate black people or achievements, preferences for contracts in high unemployment areas, and applying civil rights laws to government offices such as Congress and the Supreme Court.

19. Public lands and water management is devoted entirely to monuments and landmarks that recognize important aspects of black history.

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