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# Public Perceptions of Black Girls and their Punitive Consequences

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# DRAFT

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# Abstract

How do race and gender stereotypes affect public support for the punishment of Black girls? Across the United States, Black girls are suspended, arrested, and detained at disproportionate rates. And yet, little research exists on these troubling patterns in public opinion research. Using an original survey experiment, this paper places the punitive experiences of Black girls at the center of research on American politics. The data illustrate the empirical link between the adultification of Black girls and public support for their punishment. In particular, it reveals that the American public views Black girls as older, more dangerous, and more knowledgeable about sex, thus influencing perceptions of them as deserving of harsher punishments than their peers. These findings have important implications for understanding the general public's potential role in shaping the punitive experiences of Black girls and raise questions about the consequences of their punishment for democracy.

#### Introduction

In May 2020, Michigan judge, Mary Ellen Brenan, made headlines when journalists revealed that she detained a 15-year-old Black girl, referred to as "Grace," for not completing her online homework. Grace joined nearly 25% of public-school students across the United States who had failed to complete their online homework during the global COVID-19 pandemic (Cohen 2020). Why then did she seem to be the only one arrested and incarcerated for it?

Grace's arrest and incarceration drew national attention partly due to its framing by various media outlets as novel, but in reality, the punishment of Black girls is far from unusual (e.g., Morris 2016). Black girls are punished—through suspension, arrests, and incarcerations—at alarmingly high rates in the United States. American schools suspend Black girls seven times more than white girls at school age and more than all non-Black boys. Despite only making up 16% of the student population, Black girls represent 43% of those arrested in school incidents (U.S., Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights 2014). Once arrested, Black girls are nearly four times more likely than white girls to be incarcerated, and, as adults, Black women are imprisoned at twice the rate of white women (Crenshaw et al., 2014).

Despite the jarring statistics on the punitive experiences of Black girls, little research exists on the public perceptions contributing to these troubling patterns across race *and* gender in public opinion research. In political science, much of the work on race, criminal justice, and public opinion has focused on Black men or aggregated population-level data (e.g., Peffley and Huruwitz 2010; Enns 2016). Investigations that center race and gender represent an increasing percentage of recent political science studies (e.g., Brown 2014; Bonilla and Tillery 2020), but *Black women and girls' punitive experiences* remain under-explored. Accordingly, this paper uses original experimental data to investigate public support for the punishment of Black girls. The analysis reveals that the majority of Americans view Black girls as more deserving of harsher punishments than their peers. Further, it illustrates the role of race and gender stereotypes in contributing to perceptions of Black girls as older, more dangerous, and more knowledgeable about sex than their peers - thereby influencing public support for their punishment. The next section will engage in a brief review of research on stereotypes shaping Black women before discussing the specific case of Black girls.

#### **Race-Gender Stereotypes and Public Support for Punishment**

Established research finds that negative stereotypes often shape public perceptions of Black Americans, particularly Black women (e.g., Stephan and Rosenfield 1982; Weitz and Gordon 1993; Niemann et al., 1998). These stereotypes then impact their access to, and engagement with, public policies (Gilens 1996; Schram, Soss, Fording and Houser, 2009). For example, Gilens' (1996) classic work on welfare attitudes finds that Americans' opposition to the policy is directly related to race and gendered stereotypes of Black recipients – most of whom are women - as lazy and undeserving. Similarly, Schram, Soss, Fording, and Houser's (2009) study of welfare violations finds that those responsible for welfare distribution are more willing to sanction Black women for committing the same behaviors as white women. They suggest that the uneven sanctions placed on Black women on welfare are also due, in part, to prevailing stereotypes about these groups (See also, Watkins-Hayes 2009).

Both works have clear implications for the policy experiences of Back women. Yet, like much of American politics research, they do not center their experiences. More typically, Black women are discussed as an outcome of the analysis rather than an integral part of the theoretical foundation (Hancock 2007ab, Simien 2005, 2007). In other words, several studies fail to examine

race and gender jointly, nor is intersectionality a central component of their empirical conceptualization.

Established research on intersectionality explains that race and gender are mutually constitutive for Black women (Crenshaw 1989; Collins 1990, 1993). Therefore, neither a race nor gender lens alone can explain their experiences (e.g., Davis 1983). Regarding the criminal justice system, specifically, Black women experience racialized forms of punishment due to their blackness, while simultaneously experiencing gendered forms of punishment due to their womanhood (e.g., Richie 2012; Ritchie 2017). Accordingly, existing at the intersections of multiple axes of oppression – race and gender – should produce unique experiences within the criminal justice system for Black women.

Intersectional experiences with punishment, in particular, are rooted in racist and sexist practices beginning with slavery (e.g., George 2015). During slavery, the white American majority justified the sexual exploitation of Black women by developing stereotypes that labeled Black women as seductive, hypersexual, and immoral (also referred to as the "Jezebel" stereotype). Now ingrained in American culture, these stereotypes created a hierarchy of femininity, in which white women, understood to be sexually pure and moral, represented the feminine ideal. In contrast, Black women, understood to be sexually promiscuous, represented a deviation. As media and political elites casted Black women as a deviation from the norm, institutions responded by inflicting "social correction" - forms of punishment aimed to "fix" their behavior (George 2015, 102). These stereotypes persisted through the period of Jim Crow, producing unique experiences of gendered racism for Black women, referred to as "Jane Crow" that ran parallel to those experienced by Black men (Murray and Eastwood 1965; Essed 1991). Many of these same perceptions of Black women persist today and affect how they are disproportionately punished

(Morris 2016; Ritchie 2017). In other words, sexism and racism often interact in shaping the carceral experiences of Black women. And yet, the racialized *and* gendered challenges posed by the contemporary carceral state on Black women are often rendered invisible, especially in political science.

To be sure, there is increasing literature on the political evaluations of Black women, either as political candidates or voters (e.g., Sigelman and Welch 1984; Philpot and Walton Jr. 2007; Lemi and Brown, 2019). This research engages in important empirical research at the intersection of race and gender, thereby constituting an analysis that portrays how Black women experience their lives more accurately. Most notably, these works reveal the political burdens of being at the axes of multiple oppressions. For example, they find that stereotypes of Black women candidates (e.g., angry) shape the public's willingness to support them without a higher burden of proof (e.g., Philpot and Walton jr., 2007). Yet, this work rarely investigates the carceral experiences of Black women, the public perceptions shaping them, or their political impacts.

A notable exception is political scientist Ange Marie-Hancock (2004), whose classic work shows how stereotypical depictions of Black women as lazy, hyper-fertile, and irresponsible mothers - based on race and gender - shaped the public debate surrounding welfare reforms. In particular, she demonstrates how African American legislators themselves voted for welfare reform (which disproportionately punishes Black women), reaffirming the same negative tropes of Black women as white legislators. Hancock's work provides an uncommon but crucial example of how public perceptions of Black women can have serious consequences on the punitive policies that affect their lives.<sup>1</sup> This investigation expands on Hancock's important work on Black women by focusing on the perceptions and punishment of Black girls.

#### The Punishment of Black Girls

Indeed, the same negative perceptions that affect the punitive experiences of Black women either start with or trickle down to Black girls (Harris-Lacewall 2001).<sup>2</sup> Research in psychology, childhood studies, and sociology, for example, finds that Black children are often perceived as in need of less socio-emotional support when exhibiting the same or similar behaviors as white students (e.g., Goff et al., 2014; Okonofua and Eberhardt 2015). These perceptions, according to literature, are also a product of the same stereotypes that affect the treatment of Black women. For example, the Strong Black Woman trope that makes medical physicians less likely to take Black women's Pain seriously, or the Angry Black Woman ("Sapphire") trope that makes police officers more likely to arraign Black women for mental breakdowns (see for example, Weisse et al., 2003; Harris-Lacewall 2001). In other words, negative stereotypes of Black women, let alone political candidates.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> It is important to note that it is even less common to see research on Black women and stereotypes in political science beyond those focused on welfare and the "welfare queen" trope.
<sup>2</sup> According to Harris-Lacewall (2001), "The centrality of strength to African American women's self-concept is further reflected in the lessons that Black women pass on to black girls (6)...The strong black woman is at the center of this socialization project for Black girls (7).

While Black women represent a disproportionate percentage of women in prison, Black girls – starting as early as preschool – represent a disproportionate percentage of those suspended, arrested, and eventually detained. Within a school context, these gendered punishments manifest in how they are pushed out of school and into confinement (Morris 2016; Ritchie 2017). For example, between 2013 and 2014, 20% of female preschoolers were Black, but Black girls comprised 54% of female preschool children with one or more suspensions (U.S. Department of Education 2014). In elementary and middle schools, Black girls are five times more likely to be suspended from school than their same-gendered peers (Epstein et al., 2017). Their disproportionately punitive experiences do not stop at the schoolhouse, however.

At the courthouse, Black girls also receive harsher punishments compared to white girls. A study conducted by the American Bar and National Bar Association found that seven of every 10 cases involving white girls were dismissed by prosecutors, compared with only three of every 10 cases involving Black girls (American Bar and National Bar Association 2001). Further, Black girls often fail to receive equal opportunities for diversion - strategies that prosecutors may assign as disciplinary measures instead of formal processing. This treatment extends to the foster care system, where Black girls are three times more likely to be removed from their homes and placed in state custody than their white peers (Roberts 2009; Chesney-Lind and Jones 2010).

Across multiple systems – education, criminal justice, foster care - the unfair nature of Black girls' punishment is clear. And yet, the public's role in shaping these experiences is not. So, what are the public perceptions shaping Black girls? How do race and gender stereotypes affect public support for their punishment? The following section provides a brief literature review on this topic before delving into this investigation's specific goals and contributions.

#### Perceptions of Black Girls and their Punitive Consequences

Established research on the punitive experiences of Black girls argues that these disparities are rooted in racism and sexism (Wun 2016; Morris 2007). As stated by Priscilla Ocen, "histories of racial and gender subordination, including slavery and Jim Crow, ...interacted with the category of childhood to create a liminal category of childhood that renders Black girls vulnerable to sexual exploitation and criminalization (Ocen 2015, 1600)." Since Black girls were not considered children - in the traditional sense of the term – the justice system did not provide them with the privileges that childhood affords—for example, innocence.

In the contemporary period, this historical notion of Black girls as occupying a type of liminal childhood interacts with current stereotypes of Black girls' behavior (e.g., being too talkative, loud, knowledgeable) as inconsistent with traditional feminine norms (Skiba et al., 2002, Crenshaw et al., 2014). The criminalization of Black girls, in particular, is often based on their perceived defiance of these norms (Evans-Winters and Esposito 2010; Morris 2016). Just as is this case with Black women, those who do not conform with the ideals of femininity (e.g., docile, meek, polite, quiet) are targeted and punished as a mechanism of "correcting" their behavior. This practice of engaging in punishment as a mechanism for correcting Black girls' behavior often begins in the classroom (e.g., Wun 2016 b).

Over the past three decades, schools have engaged in disciplining students through the institution of zero-tolerance policies (Blake et al., 2011; Hines-Datiri and Andrews 2020). These zero-tolerance policies – established in 1996 as mandatory punishments for perceived rule violations – have contributed to outsourcing disciplinary responsibilities from schools to juvenile courts and school resource officers. Like prisons, the students most affected by these policies are Black and Brown, with Black students, for example, making close to 30% of school-arrests, despite

only making up 16% of the school population (Nelson and Lind 2015). The outcome of these actions is a school system more akin to the carceral system.

The carceral experiences of Black students are also gendered through the rules and regulations included in the school code of conduct (Aghasaleh 2018). Many dress code requirements, for example, only apply to girls' attires, such as skirt/shorts length and sleeve coverage (e.g., Kosciw et al., 2018). These gendered regulations are often justified with the rationale that female students' bodies can distract their male peers and that it is "unladylike" to dress in ways deemed inappropriate according to traditional gender norms. The consequence, however, is that girls' bodies are policed into submission as violations of them often result in their punishment.

Black girls are doubly disadvantaged by policies such as these because of *how the public views their bodies*. Historically, the American public and popular media stereotyped Black girls as sexually promiscuous or "Jezebels," suggesting that they had heightened sexual appetites (e.g., Collins 1990; Harris-Perry 2011; French 2013). Existing research suggests that these stereotypes continue to shape the ways that Black girls are viewed compared to white girls today, thus demonstrating "how deeply entrenched controlling narratives of Black women and girls are – no matter how young and small they are" (Ritchie 2017, 74). Returning to school policies, specifically, even if Black girls are not actively violating a dress code, school leaders may accuse them of intentionally doing so because of their perceived hypersexuality (French 2013; Townsend et al., 2010).

The perception of Black girls as hypersexual undermines their ability to claim their childhood and often makes them automatically more responsible for their actions (Morris 2016; Epstein et al., 2017). Perhaps the most notable recent example is that of a 9-year-old Black girl

who was arrested and pepper-sprayed by police officers after throwing a tantrum in Rochester, New York, in January 2021. Following the incident, a journalist reported that "at one point, one officer says, 'You're acting like a child,' to which the girl can be heard responding, 'I am a child!'" (Ly and Levenson 2021). The exchange between the officer and 9-year-old girl illustrates how Black girls are explicitly aged-up and thus held responsible for actions that would be considered normal for most children. This perception of Black girls as un-child-like, or rather, adults, likely plays an important role in how they are perceived and thus punished across the nation. Nonetheless, the race, criminal justice, and political opinion literature have not addressed this important topic.

#### Expectations: How the Adultification of Black Girls Shape their Punishment

The lion share of existing studies in political science on the relationship between public attitudes and punishment tends to focus on the perceptions of Black men (e.g., Peffley and Huruwitz 2010). This work finds that most Americans support Black men's incarceration, for example, if they perceive the justice system as fair (Enns 2016). While established research on Black men finds that perceptions of fairness shape attitudes toward punishment, the emerging literature on Black girls (e.g., Epstein et al., 2017) suggest that perceptions of them as more adult-like (e.g., mature, knowledgeable about sex) would lead the respondents to indicate that Black girls deserve more punishment, regardless of belief in fairness.

The "adultification" of Black girls—the process by which Black girls are viewed as more adult-like and, thus, less innocent relative to white girls of the same age—likely plays a significant role in how they are disciplined. A notable 2017 study of attitudes toward Black and white girls from infancy to 19 years of age - revealed that white respondents view Black girls as adults at five years old; that is, five years earlier than Black boys and significantly earlier than every other demographic group studied (Epstein et al., 2017). Further, they found that white respondents viewed Black girls as needing less nurturing, protection, support, comfort as well as more knowledgeable about sex and adult topics than white girls. The authors conclude that these perceptions of Black girls likely shape their disproportionate experiences with punishment, **but this specific relationship** – **between perceptions of adultification and punishment - has not been tested.** Further, this work only compared the experiences of Black girls to white girls. Thus, we know very little about Black girls' punitive experiences compared to white boys and Black boys.

Accordingly, this paper expands on Epstein et al's (2017) important work by investigating the public perceptions shaping the punitive experiences of Black girls. In particular, it examines how race, gender, and age (as measured by their status as school students)<sup>3</sup> shape public perceptions of Black girls and support for their punishment. The paper investigates the following hypotheses:

H1: Black girls are viewed as older than their peers

H2: Black girls are viewed as more of a threat (or a danger) than their peers

H3: Black girls are viewed as more sexual than their peers

H4: Black girls are viewed as deserving of more punishment than their peers

Overall, one would expect that the public (in this case, mostly white Americans) will perceive Black girls as more deserving of punishment than their peers. Further, one would expect Black girls will be perceived as older, more threatening, and more knowledgeable about sex. These relationships should be, in part, dependent upon the extent to which students' behavior is consistent

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The experiment does not specify age in order to avoid priming respondents on the basis of age as opposed to race and gender.

with particular racial and gender stereotypes. Black girls, in particular, are viewed through a stereotype of hyper-sexualization - a central component of adultification.<sup>4</sup> Racist and sexist stereotypes of Black girls as adults should undergird public support for their disproportionate punitive experiences.

#### Methods, Data, and Strategies for Analysis

The hypotheses were tested on one of four scenarios, containing four conditions each, presented to a representative sample of 1466 adults between March 8 and March 15, 2020.<sup>5</sup> Table 1 provides data on the basic demographics of the final sample. The sample is primarily white and

<sup>5</sup> Though online non-probability samples are not nationally representative and, hence, inappropriate for descriptive research or inferences (Baker et al. 2013), they are suitable for experimental survey research. Extant research shows that 1) these samples are more diverse than other types of samples commonly used in experimental research, such as college students (Berinsky, Huber, and Lenz 2012); and 2) experimental effects identified among probabilitybased, nationally representative samples are replicable among online, non-probability based samples, including those provided by Lucid (Coppock and McClellan 2019). We also engaged in a replication of this study in October 2020 (discussed below and in the appendix) using CloudResearch to further test the effects.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> This conception of Black girls as a danger or a threat is not to be confused with the idea of Black boys or men as "violent," but rather as connected to their potential deviance due to perceptions of them as "hypersexual."

relatively highly educated, democratic, and liberal.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, the sample is more diverse than many samples commonly used in experimental survey research (see, e.g., Berinsky, Huber, and Lenz, 2012; Huff and Tingley, 2015).<sup>7</sup>

Total n	1,466
Age (mean)	41.4 years (median=39)
Female	49.1%
Male	50.1%
Transgender/Gender non-	0.8%
conforming	
Education	
Less than high school diploma	0.4%
High school diploma	9.9%
Some college	28.4%
College graduate	43.3%
Graduate or professional school	17.9%
Annual Household Income	
Less than \$10,000	2.9%

 Table 1. Sample Demographics

<sup>7</sup> The central benefit of using Mturk is that it is a much better understood survey system than other platforms (e.g., Lucid, Prolific) with dozens of articles written about its benefits and limitations (see e.g., Berinsky, Huber, and Lenz 2012; Huff and Tingley 2015). For example, many have questioned the external validity of these samples due to the type of respondents that engage with the platform, however the developments of the program have made it much easier to ensure a diverse representative sample than many samples commonly used in experimental survey research. Further, while there have been concerns that Mturk participants are motivated by financial incentives, and thus less attentive, several studies have demonstrated that their attention is the same, if not better, than survey pools that rely on college students (See e.g., Huff and Tingley 2015).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Further, the sample's liberal leaning should act as a more rigorous test of the hypotheses.

\$10,000-\$39,999	28.2%	
\$40,000-\$69,999	33.7%	
\$70,000-\$99,999	19.2%	
\$100,000 and above	15.9%	
Race and ethnicity		
White	77.8%	
Black	8.9%	
Hispanic/Latinx	4.6%	
Asian	6.3%	
Other race or ethnicity	2.3%	
% Living w/school-age	34.7%	
children		
Partisanship		
Democrat/Lean Democrat	55.7%	
Republican/Lean Republican	32.9%	
Pure Independent	11.4%	
Ideology (1-7; 7=extremely conservative)		
Mean	3.6	
Median	3 (Slightly liberal)	
Mode	2 (Liberal)	

The sample population was randomly distributed across four scenarios, one of which was a dress code scenario that varied by name. More specifically, to examine perceptions of punishment, respondents were randomly assigned a scenario regarding a dress code violation that varied by race and gender using the names Keisha (Black girl), Emily (white girl), Jamal (Black boy), and Jake (white boy). Following previous research, the scenario manipulates the perceived race and gender of the individuals through names only. The selected names derive from those used in previous work or which previous work indicates as being disproportionately common among particular racial-gender subgroups (Bertrand and Mullainathan 2004; Okonofua and Eberhardt 2015; Gilliam et al., 2016).

The content of the dress code scenario (varied by name) presented to respondents, was the following:

Consider an instance where a student named \_\_\_\_\_\_ is wearing shorts to school. When \_\_\_\_\_\_ arrives to class, the teacher tells \_\_\_\_\_\_ that \_\_\_\_\_ shorts violate the school's dress code policy. The teacher tells \_\_\_\_\_\_ to leave class and go to the office. This also isn't the first time that \_\_\_\_\_\_ has worn clothes that violate the school's dress code policy. For example, \_\_\_\_\_\_ has previously worn tank tops that are against school rules.

The dress code scenario's content was developed based on qualitative research (e.g., Morris 2016) that demonstrates that the punitive experiences of Black girls begin at the schoolhouse and are commonly overlooked due to their racialized *and* gendered nature.<sup>8</sup> The intersection of both makes them difficult to identify in studies focused on just issues of race *or* gender. Thus, the vignette is meant to capture a scenario that could feasibly happen to both boys and girls but could still be perceived differently if viewed through a racialized and gendered lens (e.g., how clothing may be viewed on Black girls vs. white girls). Dress code violations, specifically, are commonly referenced as an example of this in the relevant literature (see Morris 2016; Perry 2011; Evans-Winters and Espositio 2010).

<sup>8</sup> The decision not to use a scenario focused on fighting, for example, was made in hope that the analysis could avoid re-creating tests that have the potential to erase the gendered nature of punishment. Indeed, part of why girls' punitive experiences have been ignored is because of their differences from the masculinized ways that carceral experiences are typically measured (e.g., imprisonment - as opposed to being forced to change clothes). Accordingly, the investigation wanted to center those events that girls tend to find themselves in as opposed to studying traditional scenarios typically attributed to boys.

Table 2.	Dependent	Variab	les
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DV1 (adult2): How much do students l	ikeact older than their age?
DV2 (adult3): How much are students	like danger to others?
DV3 (adult5): How are students like	experienced with sex?
DV4 (suspension): How harsh is susp	ension is for students like?

Following the presentation of the dress code scenario, respondents were asked about the culpability or innocence of the students - measured by replicating three items developed by Goff et al., (2014). Earlier works designed these items to measure children's perceived innocence within a formal criminal justice context and, in this case, have been adapted to measure the perceived innocence of children within a punitive educational context. Adultification, specifically, is measured by replicating items used by Goff et al., (2014) and Epstein, Blake, and Gonzales (2017), who respectively developed scales measuring qualities associated with adulthood and racial and gender stereotypes that individuals might assign to, and subsequently evaluate Black children as more adult-like. In particular, the survey asked participants 1) if the student was acting older than their age, 2) if the student posed a danger or threat to others, 3) if the student was knowledgeable about sex, and 4) if the school provided the student with the appropriate level of punishment for their behavior (see Table 2 and A.2 in the Appendix). Since all other properties of the scenarios and questionnaire were identical, any observed differences between conditions in responses to the scenario's questions can be attributed to race and gender.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Given the general possibility of question order effects the order in which all covariates and individual items are measured is randomized, and any identities or demographics possibly related to relevant covariates and dependent measures are measured at the end of the surveys (e.g., racial and gender identity).

Figure 1: Mean Likelihood That Name is of a Black Student by Experimental Condition



After the completion of the survey, a manipulation check was conducted in order to determine the effectiveness of using racialized names. Figure 1 displays how likely it was that participants thought the name of the student they read about was the name of a Black student. Responses were rescaled to range from 0 to 1. The figure also provides 95% confidence intervals - to determine which responses are statistically distinguishable from one another more easily. Figure 1 illustrates that respondents were significantly more likely to attribute the names Jamal and Keisha (M=0.76 se=0.03; M=0.71 se= 0.03), as opposed to Jake and Emily (M=0.33 se=0.02; M=0.29 se=0.02), to Black students. The difference between respondents' selection of the Black and White names is about 40 percent, suggesting that the manipulation was effective. These differences are robust across regression analyses controlling for demographic variables.

The following section displays experimental conditions for those variables where significant differences between the Keisha condition and other conditions exist.<sup>10</sup> All statistically

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> All figures provide 95% confidence interval bands and all measures are scaled 0 to 1 for ease of interpretation One can thus determine the percentage by multiplying 100xB (coefficient). In

significant differences were further analyzed with OLS regression controlled for respondent age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, income, and ideology (See table A.3 in Appendix). The analysis involved two types of models: one with dummy variables for the race (1=Black) and gender (1=female) of the student in the treatments and their interaction, and one with dummy variables for each experimental condition - with the Black female student condition serving as the baseline. The latter allows for the identification of statistical differences between the Black female student condition and other conditions.<sup>11</sup>

#### Findings



Figure 2 Mean Perception of Students' Acting Older than Age by Experimental Condition

<sup>11</sup> The survey had sufficient power to detect medium-sized effects (Cohen's d, or the standardized effect size of approximately 0.5). At the 95% confidence level, the survey has power of about 0.90 which is far above the conventional threshold of 0.8. Under powered analysis are not included in paper but are included in appendix.

addition, the results for all respondents (as opposed to compliers) are reported - as a conservative measure of the findings.

Figure 2 displays participant responses to the question of how much students like the one in the dress code scenario act older than their age. The figure provides evidence that adultification is gendered. In particular, the data reveals that respondents view students like Emily and Keisha (M= 0.59 se=0.03 for both) as older than students like Jake or Jamal (M=0.40 se=0.04; M=0.46 se=0.03). For Emily and Keisha, there was a nearly 19 percentage point difference in how respondents viewed them compared to Jake and a 13 percentage point difference compared to Jamal. The effect of the students' genders on participant responses is also robust in the regression analysis controlling for demographic variables at the 0.05 level.

Figure 3: Mean Perception of Danger of Students to Others by Experimental Condition



Figure 3 reveals that perceptions of dress code violations are not only gendered but also racialized. Figure 3 shows that respondents view Keisha as more of a threat than Emily (M=0.24 se= 0.03; M=0.12 se=0.02). In particular, respondents were twice as likely to view Keisha as a threat or danger to others, and this finding is significant at the 0.05 level. In contrast, there were no differences in how dangerous Emily, Jamal, and Jake were perceived to be (M=0.12 se= 0.02; M=0.17 se=0.03; M=0.16 se=0.02). These findings affirm that the public evaluates Black girl students through a unique racial and gender lens.

Figure 4: Mean Perception of Students' Knowledge of Sex by Experimental Condition



Figure 4 shows that respondents viewed Keisha as more knowledgeable about sex than other students (M=0.40 se=0.03), although differences in how they evaluated Keisha and Jamal (M=0.40 se=0.03; M=0.29 se=0.03) and Keisha and Jake (M=0.40 se=0.03; M=0.31 se= 0.03) are only significant at the 0.10 level. The differences between Keisha and Emily (M=0.40 se=0.03; M=0.33 se = 0.03) are significant at the 0.05 level. Across conditions, respondents rate Keisha 7 to 10 percentage points more likely to be knowledgeable about sex.

Figure 5: Mean Harshness of Suspension for Behavior by Experimental Condition



Finally, figure 5 shows that respondents viewed suspension as more (unfairly) harsh for all other students than Keisha. In other words, suspension was most appropriate when the student was Keisha (M=0.78 se=0.03). The nearly ten percentage point differences between the Keisha, Jamal and Jake (M=0.78 se=0.03; M=0.87 se=0.02; M=0.86 se=0.02) conditions are significant at the 0.05 level (Cohen's D = 0.58, power = 0.97). <sup>12</sup>

#### **Discussion and Additional Considerations**

Figures 3-5 are consistent with research on the intersectional nature of the punishment of Black girl students in schools (e.g., Morris 2016; Epstein et al., 2017). They provide indirect evidence that Black girl students are evaluated and seen as more threatening due to racialized and gendered beliefs about sexuality and dress related to adultification. In particular, the investigation reveals differences between how the public views Emily and Keisha once the term danger or threat is included. This difference suggests that the public associates the dangerous aspects of being "older," for example, the ability to corrupt or negatively influence others, with Keisha in a way that they do not associate with Emily. These differences help to tease out how gender alone may contribute to perceptions of girls as adult-like vis-à-vis more positive characteristics, for example being "maternal" or a "care-taker." Yet, when these same gendered characteristics interact with race, they reveal distinctively negative public perceptions of Black girls as hypersexual and thus "deviant." As a result, while respondents view both Emily and Keisha as older, Kiesha is also viewed as relatively more dangerous, knowledgeable about sex, and appropriately punished for violating the dress code.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Differences between the Keisha and Emily (M=0.78 se=0.03; M=0.84 se=0.02) condition are significant at the 0.10 level

The above findings are not without their limits, however. One could argue, for example, that because the experiment was embedded in a larger survey, there was a relatively low number of participants involved thus affecting the power of the results. To address this potential concern, we conducted a power analysis (included in the Appendix). The analysis revealed that the sample size was sufficient to support the findings most relevant to the investigation.<sup>13</sup> However, to be sure of this, we engaged in a replication of the study in October 2020 - nearly six months after the first experiment - on CloudResearch. Since this relatively short period was fraught with multiple major events - a global pandemic, contested election, and racial uprisings - it is unclear to what extent it is a better test than the first. Nonetheless, it allowed us to double the sample population (n = 2266)and ask more questions regarding the extent to which race and gender stereotypes contribute to support for the punishment of Black girls. The Appendix includes the full analyses. In sum, it reveals that respondents (especially compliers) viewed Keisha as the most knowledgeable about sex, the most responsible for her actions, and the most likely to continue violating the school dress code. In a similar vein, respondents supported more severe punishments (suspension and detention) for Keisha than her peers (see figure 7-2 and 7-3 in Appendix).

Finally, tables' 2A and 2B in the Appendix explicitly show whether and how stereotypes surrounding Black girls (e.g., Black girls being more sexual or mature than their peers) affect

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Further, while this smaller sample could skew the reported results, I suspect that this in fact provided a more conservative illustration of the effect sizes.

people's punitive sentiments.<sup>14</sup> In particular, table 2A reveals that respondents who viewed Black girls as more sexual were more likely to support their detention, suspension, and expulsion. Further, table 2B reveals that respondents who viewed Black girls as more mature were more likely to support more severe punishments, including changing their clothes, detention, suspension, and expulsion. Both tables reveal robust, significant, and positive coefficients for these stereotype variables, demonstrating that those who believe that Black girls are more sexual and mature than their peers were also more supportive of punishment, regardless of the experimental condition they were assigned. These findings support the initial hypotheses: public perceptions of Black girls shape support for their uneven punishment.<sup>15</sup>

#### Conclusion

Over fifteen years ago, Evelyn Simien wrote, "empirical assessments of the simultaneous effects of race and gender are indeed rare" in political science (2005, 531). Today, a growing number of political scientists have demonstrated how categories of marginalization intersect with each other

<sup>15</sup> While the theoretical framework for this analysis was conceived of using intersectionality, the use of experimental data on public opinion limits the ability to conduct an investigation that fully captures what is meant by the concept. Instead, it examines race and gender categories together to determine their compounded impact on public perceptions. In so doing, it provides at best, an estimate or approximation of how the public perceives young people at the intersection of race and gender and its implications for their punishment.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Note that *n* is around 550 - this is because we randomly assigned one of the four question sets (i.e., regarding Black women, Black girls, white women, and white girls) for survey length reasons.

to shape Black women's political lives (e.g., Smooth 2006; Bonilla and Tillery 2020). Using the theoretical and empirical tools of intersectionality, these scholars have primarily focused on Black women as political candidates, and to a lesser extent, evaluators of politics (e.g., Simien 2007; Brown 2014). The carceral experiences of Black women or girls, however, remain underexplored.<sup>16</sup>

Accordingly, this investigation places the punitive experiences of Black girls at the center of research on race, gender, and American public opinion. In so doing, it affirms established research on the ways that racialized and gendered stereotypes interact to yield distinct punitive experiences, particularly as it relates to Black girls (Crenshaw 1989; Collins 1990, 1993; Harris-Perry 2011). Further, it lends evidence to research that illustrates how Black girls may be punished by policies that fail to realize their unique experiences due to their intersecting, marginalized identities.

As Ange-Marie Hancock explains in her classic work on intersectionality, research that conflates "group unity" with "group uniformity" - assuming that individuals who share one marginalized identity [Black *or* female] have uniform experiences of discrimination - are incomplete (Hancock 2007a, 65). Hancock explains that the policy solutions that emanate from this research often benefit white women at the cost of women of color and often exacerbate existing inequities (Hancock 2007ab). The limitations of these policies exist for Black girls as well, thus making them the disproportionate and regular recipients of punitive policies. This investigation

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> It is important to note that even research on race-class subjugated communities and the carceral state in political science tend not to take seriously the role of gender and its intersections with race.

specifies the potential role of the general American public – not just political elites or school leaders - in contributing to the uneven punitive experiences these policies produce for Black girls.

Beyond public opinion, this work raises serious questions about the consequences of Black girls' punishment for democracy at large. Indeed, what lessons might Grace draw from her recent experiences with the justice system, and how might they impact her relationship with the government as an adult? Research on the punishment of Black men has found that incarceration lowers political participation—voting, protesting, attending community meetings—of those who have felony convictions and that of their families and neighbors (e.g., Burch 2013). Studies on the political effects of punishment for Black women are less common, but there may be similar negative consequences of high incarceration rates and detention on what has been record levels of political participation (Brown 2014; Farris and Holman 2014).

Ultimately, given the superlative participation of Black women, one would expect the punitive experiences of Black girls to have lasting impacts on the future strength of American democracy – as they become voting-age adults. Still, before Black women become voting adults or candidates, they are Black girls. And as this investigation reveals, Black girls are disproportionately punished with the majority-white American public's robust support. If American democracy is only as strong as its participants, then the punishment of Black girls, and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Hancock (2004) makes clear how public opinion can be especially consequential for the development of punitive policies for Black women. I suspect this to still be the case for Black girls in the contemporary period.

the perceptions shaping them, must not only be understood but also dismantled. In short: public support for the punishment of Black girls can no longer be ignored.

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#### Appendix

#### Survey background/implementation

Time period of data collection:

The survey (HIT) was launched on Amazon's Mechanical Turk from 10:00AM CST to 12:00PM CST on 3/8/2020. Note that during this time, both the Democratic presidential primaries and the coronavirus were occurring at this time, although the coronavirus had not yet been designated a global health pandemic.

#### Survey recruitment materials:

The HIT was advertised to workers on Mechanical Turk with language mirroring that of the consent information, and included the following information:

HIT Title: Answer a short survey about current social and political issues in the United States. HIT description: Take a 15-minute survey about current social and political issues in the United States. This survey is part of a national study being conducted by researchers in x. The survey should take about 15 minutes to complete. In appreciation of your participation, we will give you \$2.50. Keywords: survey, questionnaire, public opinion, social issues, politics

#### Participation criteria:

Workers had to meet two criteria to be eligible to participate: a US IP address and a HIT approval rate of >90. In addition to this, participants had to indicate being at least 18 years of age or older in the survey in order to complete the survey.

#### Payment:

Participants were paid \$2.50 for their participation. Each participant received a randomly generated code at the end of the survey. In order to receive payment, participants had to enter this code into the Mechanical Turk submission page so that their identity and completion could be verified.

#### Consent

Participants begin surveys by reading introductory text and consent information. Participants read the consent language and will be told that clicking they agree to participate signifies their agreement and understanding of the consent document. [full consent document below]

#### Deception

#### The following language was provided upon completion:

Thank you for completing this study. During the course of the study, you read a story about a student or an adult. While you may have been told the story you read was published in print and Internet media, it was not real. The story, and the individual(s) and location included in the story were fabricated for research purposes. We were interested in learning how people react to different kinds of scenarios involving punishment, so these manipulations were essential.

If due to the deception involved in this study, you wish to delete your responses, you may check the box

below and click to the next page to receive your code for payment. Even if you delete your responses, you will be given credit for participating.

If you do not wish to delete your responses, simply click to the next page to receive your code for payment.

If you have any questions about the study, you may contact us at x.

#### **Online Consent Form**

I am conducting a research study to understand people's attitudes about current social and political issues. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to answer a 15-minute survey. The study contains basic questions about you (e.g., demographics), as well as a few questions about your thoughts on current social and political issues including those experienced by children at school and adults in the child-care and justice system.

Your participation in this study does not involve any risk to you beyond that of everyday life. The possible benefits to you from this study include the opportunity to participate in policy-relevant research. Taking part in this study may help researchers to both better understand what people think about some of the country's most pressing issues.

Participation in this study will involve no cost to you. If you complete this study, you will be paid \$2.50. This amount will be automatically placed in your account 2 days after completion of the survey. Please read this consent document. If you decline to participate, or exit the study prematurely, you will still be given credit for participating.

The survey is anonymous. The survey is being hosted by Qualtrics and involves a secure connection. Terms of service, including privacy information, can be found here: <u>http://www.qualtrics.com/terms-of-service/</u>.

The results of the research study may be published, but your name will not be used. Your participation in this research study is completely voluntary. You can skip questions in the survey that you chose not to answer and you can withdraw at any time by just exiting the survey.

If you have any questions about this study, you may contact X Questions about your rights as a research subject may be directed to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Office of X University at (312) 503-9338.

If you want a copy of this consent for your records, you can print it from the screen. If you would like documentation linking you to this research study, please email your request to the Principal Investigator at X

If you wish to participate, please select the Accept button below to begin the survey.

If you do not wish to participate in this study, please select the Decline button, and your session will end.

#### Sample characteristics

Of 1,644 participants who began the survey, 135 explicitly forbade use of their data and 43 did not reach this point in the survey to indicate whether any data they may have provided could be used. These 178 participants are excluded from all analyses, yielding a final sample of 1,466 participants. In total, 1,466 participants completed the survey. All participants were randomly assigned to one of 16 experimental conditions, with sample sizes ranging from 84 to 96 participants. Scenarios varied.

Table A.1 below provides data on the basic demographics of the final sample. The sample is primarily white, and relatively highly educated, Democratic, and liberal. Nevertheless, the sample is more diverse than many samples commonly used in experimental survey research and consistent with research on MTurk samples (see e.g., Berinsky, Huber, and Lenz).

Total n	1,466
Age (mean)	41.4 years (median=39)
Female	49.1%
Male	50.1%
Transgender/Gender non-	0.8%
conforming	
Education	
Less than high school diploma	0.4%
High school diploma	9.9%
Some college	28.4%
College graduate	43.3%
Graduate or professional school	17.9%
Annual Household Income	
Less than \$10,000	2.9%
\$10,000-\$39,999	28.2%
\$40,000-\$69,999	33.7%
\$70,000-\$99,999	19.2%
\$100,000 and above	15.9%
Race and ethnicity	•
White	77.8%
Black	8.9%
Hispanic/Latinx	4.6%
Asian	6.3%
Other race or ethnicity	2.3%
% Living w/school-age children	34.7%
Partisanship	·
Democrat/Lean Democrat	55.7%

Table A.1: Sample Demographics	S
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Republican/Lean Republican	32.9%	
Pure Independent	11.4%	
Ideology (1-7; 7=extremely conservative)		
Mean	3.6	
Median	3 (Slightly liberal)	
Mode	2 (Liberal)	

Experimental analyses: All participants in dress code conditions

The remaining analyses are restricted to only those participants assigned to experimental conditions about student dress code.

#### **Dress Code Scenario**

Consider an instance where a student named \_\_\_\_\_\_ is wearing shorts to school. When \_\_\_\_\_\_ arrives to class, the teacher tells \_\_\_\_\_\_ that \_\_\_\_\_\_ shorts violate the school's dress code policy. The teacher tells \_\_\_\_\_\_ to leave class and go to the office. This also isn't the first time that \_\_\_\_\_\_ has worn clothes that violate the school's dress code policy. For example, \_\_\_\_\_\_ has previously worn tank tops that are against school rules.

#### **Dependent Variables**

DV1 (adult2): How much do students like \${e://Field/name} act older than their age? DV2 (adult3): How much are students like \${e://Field/name} danger to others DV3 (adult5): How are students like \${e://Field/name} experienced with sex DV4 (suspension): How harsh is suspension is for students like

Table A.2 displays the demographics and statistics checking randomization across conditions about student dress codes. Chi<sup>2</sup> tests indicate mostly effective randomization among participants across these conditions, with no statistically significant relationships between experimental conditions, and any of the demographic variables. As the table shows, however, there are some imbalances across conditions, particularly gender and education.

	Condition 1:	Condition 2:	Condition 3:	Condition 4:
	Emily	Jake	Jamal	Keisha
Total n	91	88	84	88
Mean Age	40.0	39.4	41.1	38.3
(Chi <sup>2</sup> =51.066; p=0.59)				
% Female	36.3%	46.6%	52.4%	40.9%
(Chi <sup>2</sup> =5.187; p=0.16)				
% White	72.5%	73.9%	79.8%	67.1%
(Chi <sup>2</sup> =3.585; p=0.31)				
% Some college or less	43.9%	38.6%	27.4%	36.4%
(Chi <sup>2</sup> =7.6124; p=0.57)				
% Income less than	26.4%	31.0%	35.7%	25.0%
\$40,000				
(Chi <sup>2</sup> =8.467; p=0.49)				
% Democrat	53.9%	59.1%	59.5%	50.0%
(Chi <sup>2</sup> =4.636; p=0.59)				

Table A.2: Demographics and Randomization	Checks of Student Dress	Code Conditions-All	participants
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Mean Ideology	3.8	3.6	3.4	3.8
(1-7; 7=extremely				
conservative;				
Chi <sup>2</sup> =2.209; p=0.89)				

Randomization and Manipulation Checks- All participants (dress code conditions only)

To confirm whether the racial manipulation was effective, Figure 1 below displays how likely it was participants thought the name of the student they read about was the name of a Black student. Responses were rescaled to range from 0 to 1. The figure also provides bands indicating 95% confidence intervals, which enable judgments from the figures about which responses are statistically distinguishable from one another. As the figure shows, both of the names Jamal and Keisha were significantly more likely (M=0.76 se=0.03; M=0.71 se= 0.03) than both of the names Jake and Emily (M=0.33 se=0.02; M=0.29 se=0.02) to be thought of as belonging to Black students; these differences are robust to regression analyses controlling for demographic variables. In addition, as the figure shows, there are no differences in the perceived race of the student by gender.







Figure A.2. Mean Perceived Student Age by Experimental Condition

Condition	Mean	Std. Err.
Keisha	14.2	0.190
Emily	14.0	0.191
Jamal	13.6	0.264
Jake	13.2	0.220



Figure A.3. Mean Perception of Students' Acting Older than Age by Experimental Condition

Condition	Mean	Std. Err.
Keisha	0.591	0.0308
Emily	0.593	0.0316
Jamal	0.464	0.0343
Jake	0.402	0.0358

Figure A.4. Mean Perception of Danger of Students to Others by Experimental Condition



Condition	Mean	Std. Err.
Keisha	0.235	0.0350
Emily	0.121	0.0263
Jamal	0.171	0.0307
Jake	0.155	0.0247

Figure A.5. Mean Perception of Students' Experience with Sex by Experimental Condition



Condition	Mean	Std. Err.
Keisha	0.398	0.0318
Emily	0.319	0.0265
Jamal	0.294	0.0279
Jake	0.307	0.0296

Figure A.6. Mean Harshness of Suspension for Behavior by Experimental Condition



Condition	Mean	Std. Err.
Keisha	0.784	0.0321
Emily	0.841	0.0258
Jamal	0.869	0.0256
Jake	0.858	0.0242

 Table A.3. Regression Analysis of Dress Code Scenario

	Dress Code Scenario							
	adult2	adult3	adult5	culp1	culp2	culp3	suspension	severity
Emily	0.008	-	-0.063	-0.017	0.006	-0.034	0.058	-0.047
	(0.046)	0.088**	(0.041)	(0.040)	(0.031)	(0.043)	(0.036)	(0.037)
		(0.040)						
Jamal	-0.100**	-0.016	-0.075*	-0.004	-0.005	-0.065	0.058	-0.056
	(0.047)	(0.041)	(0.042)	(0.041)	(0.032)	(0.044)	(0.037)	(0.038)
Jake	-	-0.063	-0.080*	-0.068*	-0.015	-0.001	0.058	-0.043
	0.195***	(0.040)	(0.041)	(0.040)	(0.031)	(0.043)	(0.036)	(0.037)
	*(0.046)							
Intercept	0.356***	0.125*	0.285***	0.640***	0.639***	0.147*	0.946***	0.179***
	(0.083)	(0.072)	(0.074)	(0.072)	(0.057)	(0.078)	(0.065)	(0.067)

• Control variables: gender, race, education, age, income, ideology (coefficients and std. err. not reported here)

• Robust standard errors are in the parentheses (type = "HC3" following Hayes and Cai 2007).

#### **Power Analysis**

Given the (standardized) effect size, set significance level and sample size, how much power does our survey have (the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis when there is indeed a true effect – i.e., the probability of detecting a true effect?)

The conventional threshold is 0.8. I used pooled variance for power analysis since the ratio between standard deviations is close to 1 for almost all conditions  $S_{pooled}^2 = \frac{(n-1)S_x^2 + (m-1)S_y^2}{n+m-2}$ ). MTurk survey had sufficient power to detect medium-sized effects (Cohen's d, or the standardized effect size of approximately 0.5). At the 95% confidence level, the pilot survey has power of about 0.90 which is far above the conventional threshold of 0.8. The survey, however, did not have enough power to detect small-sized effects (Cohen's d of approximately 0.2); it has power of about 0.26 at the 95% confidence level, and the power of about 0.37 at the 90% confidence level – both of which are far below the threshold of 0.8. (Quick note: per https://www.statmethods.net/stats/power.html, I used variance as the denominator when computing Cohen's d. Using standard deviation as the denominator did not change the results much.)

Overall, the survey has enough power to detect effects for some variables, it was not the case for all dependent variables. The reason is that the standard deviations for these variables (i.e., culp1, culp2, culp3, severity) are larger than other variables – which led to smaller Cohen's d. Unlike other variables with smaller standard deviations, the questions where effects weren't detected had seven answer choices. While it allowed for more granular choices, precisely because respondents had more answer choices, the variance got larger. Underpowered analysis (shown in regression above) were not included in the paper.

# **Replication October 2020**

## Survey Background/Implementation

#### **Sample Characteristics**

Of 2,632 participants who began the survey,

- 5 were under the age of 17;
- 107 did not proceed to the survey, or they declined to proceed to the actual survey;
- 197 did not finish the survey; and
- 57 explicitly forbade use of their data.

These 366 responses are excluded from all analyses, yielding a final sample of 2,266 participants. Table 1 below provides data on the basic demographics of the final sample.

Table 1 below presents the basic demographics of the final sample. As with other online samples, our Prime Panel sample is less Republican, more highly educated (approximately 26% of the respondents said that they have post-baccalaureate degree) and earns higher income (about 30% of the respondents said that their household income in 2019 was \$100,000 or above).

#### Table 1. Summary Statistics (unweighted)

Total n	2,266
Age (mean)	41.08 years (median: 38 years)
Female	60.5%*
Male	39.0%
Transgender/Gender non-	0.35%
conforming	
Education	·
Less than high school diploma	2.3%
High school diploma	17.7%
Some college	27.3%
College graduate	27.2%
Graduate or professional school	25.5%
Annual Household Income	
Less than \$10,000	7.5%
\$10,000-\$39,999	29.7%
\$40,000-\$69,999	19.1%
\$70,000-\$99,999	14.0%
\$100,000 and above	29.5%
Race and ethnicity	
White	62.3%
Black	30.5%*

Hispanic/Latinx	3.2%
Asian	1.5%
Other race or ethnicity	2.3%
% Living with kids having online	51.4%
classes	
Partisanship	
Democrat/Lean Democrat	47.0%
Republican/Lean Republican	29.3%
Pure Independent	23.0%
Ideology (1-7; 7=extremely conser	vative)
Mean	3.78
Median	4.00 (middle of the road)
Mode	4.00 (middle of the road)

\*\* Note: we oversampled Black female respondents.

# **Experimental Analyses**

# Randomization and Manipulation Checks

We randomly assigned the 2,266 participants into one of the four conditions: Emily, Jake, Jamal, and Keisha. If the treatment assignment is truly random, we should see that covariates (e.g., respondent demographics) should be balanced across the four groups. Table 2 presents the summary of randomization check. The results from chi-square tests and Kruskal-Wallis test show randomization worked in general – overall, we do not see any relationship between the treatment group and the distribution of demographic variables.<sup>18</sup>

	Condition 1:	Condition 2:	Condition 3:	Condition 4:
	Emily	Jake	Jamal	Keisha
Total n	570	570	565	561
Mean Age	40.08 (15.69)	41.10 (14.99)	41.13 (16.14)	42.02 (15.64)
(Chi <sup>2</sup> =70.415; p=0.43)				
% Female	58.88%	58.63%	60.71%	64.17%
(Chi <sup>2</sup> =4.63; p=0.20)				
% White	59.75%	64.26%	63.54%	62.14%
(Chi <sup>2</sup> =4.54; p=0.60)				
% Some college or less	46.32%	46.32%	47.61%	48.84%
(Chi <sup>2</sup> =6.03; p=0.74)				
% Income less than	36.8%	37.54%	36.41%	38.32%
\$40,000				
(Chi <sup>2</sup> =23.459; p=0.8901)				

Table 2.	Randomization	Check	(unweighted	sam	ole)
	Manuonnization	CIICCK	lanweighten	Jann	JICJ

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> We do witness slight imbalances across conditions, particularly gender (% female) and race (% white).

% Democrat	50.09%	45.99%	47.60%	45.52%
(Chi <sup>2</sup> =2.8849; p=0.4097)				
Mean Ideology	3.70 (1.84)	3.76 (1.74)	3.79 (1.85)	3.85 (1.87)
(1-7; 7=extremely				
conservative;				
Chi <sup>2</sup> =5.8523; p=0.4399)				

To confirm whether the racial manipulation was effective, we asked the respondents how likely it was that the name of the student they read about (Emily, Keisha, Jake, or Jamal) was the name of a Black student. Responses were rescaled to range from 0 to 1 for easier interpretation. Figure 1 also provides bands indicating 95% confidence intervals.

As the figure below shows, both the names Jamal and Keisha were significantly more likely ( $\mu_{Jamal} = 0.57 \ (0.01)$ ;  $\mu_{Keisha} = 0.56 \ (0.01)$  than both the names of Jake and Emily ( $\mu_{Emily} = 0.38 \ (0.01)$ ;  $\mu_{Jake} = 0.37 \ (0.01)$  to be thought of as names of Black students.<sup>19</sup>

However, the differences between Black student conditions and white student conditions are smaller compared to the MTurk survey done in March. This suggests that we may have more noncompliers, or fewer compliers – implying that it might be necessary to examine the responses from compliers and non-compliers separately, and see whether the overall treatment effect sizes are understated because of noncompliers. To see whether these "compliers" and "noncompliers" have different response patterns, we will examine these two groups separately.



# Figure 1. Mean Likelihood that Name is of a Black Student by Experimental Condition Manipulation Check (All Respondents)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Appendix: treatment worked better for Black participants than white participants. Black name cues (Jamal and Keisha) were clearer to Black respondents (i.e., Black respondents were more likely to "correctly" identify that Jamal and Keisha are names of Black students than white respondents).

We define compliers and noncompliers as follows:

- Compliers: those who thought Keisha and Jamal are names of Black students, and those who thought Jake and Emily are names of white students
- Noncompliers: those who thought Keisha and Jamal are names of white students, and those who thought Jake and Emily are names of Black students

Table 3 shows the summary statistics of compliers and noncompliers in our sample. It seems that noncompliers tend to be more educated, earn higher income, and Republican. We also see higher percentage of male and White among noncompliers.

	Compliers	Noncompliers
Total n	1048	508
Age (mean)	41.46	40.94
Female	62.5%	53.9%
Male	37.5%	45.7%
Transgender/Gender non-	0.2%	0.4%
conforming		
Education		
Less than high school diploma	2.6%	1.2%
High school diploma	17.9%	14.8%
Some college	28.0%	22.4%
College graduate	28.1%	28.9%
Graduate or professional school	23.4%	32.7%
Annual Household Income		
Less than \$10,000 (up til 1)	7.8%	6.3%
\$10,000-\$39,999 (2+3+4)	29.6%	24.8%
\$40,000-\$69,999 (5+6+7)	21.0%	17.5%
\$70,000-\$99,999 (8+9+10)	14.3%	13.6%
\$100,000 and above (11+12_	27.0%	37.6%
Race and ethnicity		
White (7)	57.4%	69.5%
Black (3)	35.5%	23.4%
Hispanic/Latinx (4)	3.1%	4.3%
Asian (2)	1.3%	1.2%
Other race or ethnicity	1.9%	1.4%
(1+5+10+6+8)		
% Living with kids having online	50.2%	58.7%
classes		
Partisanship		
Democrat/Lean Democrat	50.5%	44.7%
Republican/Lean Republican	26.4%	36.6%

Table 3. Compliers vs. Noncompliers: Summary Statistics (unweighted)

Pure Independent	22.1%	18.1%
Ideology (1-7; 7=extremely conser		
Mean	3.73	3.76
Median	4.0	4.0
Mode	4.0	4.0

# Effects of Experimental Treatments Adultification

#### Figure 3. Mean Perception of Students' Acting Older than Age by Experimental Condition

As expected, we could see gendered adultification. For easier interpretation, we scaled the responses to range from 0 to 1. Higher values indicate that respondents thought the student in the given scenario acts older than their age. Even though all four students were thought to be about the same age, respondents thought girls (Emily and Keisha) are more likely to act older than their age.



An interesting pattern emerges if we look at only compliers and noncompliers separately. Among compliers, Keisha is perceived to be the most mature, followed by Emily and Jamal. Jake is perceived to be least likely to act older than his age.

On the other hand, noncompliers thought Emily and Jake are more likely to act older than their age. Note that we defined noncompliers as the respondents who think that Emily and Jake are the names of Black students, and those who think that Jamal and Keisha are names of white students. This means that noncompliers also think that Black students (in this case, Emily and Jake) act older than their age.

## Figure 4. Mean Perception of Experience with Sex

Again, as expected, people thought Keisha and Emily are more experienced with sex than Jake and Jamal in general.



We can see a similar pattern as in Figure 3. Overall, we can see gendered adultification: girls (Emily and Keisha) were thought to be more experienced with sex than boys (Jake and Jamal) – even though they were thought to be about the same age.

When examining the responses of compliers and noncompliers separately, we can see more racialized responses. Both compliers and noncompliers though that Black kids are more experienced with sex than white kids (note that noncompliers thought Emily and Jake are names of Black students). We also see that Black girls (Keisha for compliers and Emily for noncompliers) are thought to be slightly more likely to have more experience with sex than their peers.

#### Figure 5. Mean Perception of Danger of Students to Others by Experimental Condition



Adultification: How Dangerous is the Student to His/Her Peers? (Compliers)

We again see racialized responses. Compliers thought Black students are more dangerous to their peers than white students.

• Among compliers, Keisha was thought to be more mature and more experienced with sex than Jamal. Still, they think that Jamal is as dangerous to his peers as Keisha. (e.g., criminalization of Black boys)

# Figure 6-2. Culpability 2: Mean Perception of the Likelihood that Student will Continue His/Her Behavior



Among compliers, Keisha is thought to be the most likely to continue violating school dress code. In addition, we can see racialized responses among noncompliers as well: Emily and Jake (perceived to be Black students by noncompliers) are perceived to be more likely to continue their behaviors. However, Jake (i.e., Black male student) was thought to be more likely to continue violating the dress code than Emily (Black female student).

#### Figure 6-3. Culpability: Mean Perception of Student's Negative Intentions



• Gendered and racialized responses among compliers: Keisha is most likely to have intended negative consequences

Compliers thought that (1) Keisha was more likely to continue her action (i.e., continue wearing "inappropriate clothes," and that (2) Keisha intended negative consequences. Though a little more racialized than gendered, we can see a similar pattern among noncompliers as well – Black students were thought to be more responsible for their actions than white students.

#### Figure 7. Mean Deservingness of Punishment (by Type) – among compliers

#### Figure 7-2. Detention

In general, we can see that respondents think Keisha "deserves" to get detention. This response pattern is even clearer among compliers. Compliers agreed that Keisha should get detention as a punishment for violating school dress code. As with above, we can also see a racialized responses among noncompliers as well. In general, noncompliers were more supportive of punishing Black students with detention than white students. However, noncompliers were most likely to agree that a Black boy, Jake, should receive detention.



#### Figure 7-3. Suspension

We now look at how respondents think about the "deservingness" of suspension, a more severe form of punishment.

- In general, respondents agreed to punish Keisha with suspension more than other students. (Interpretation: "Figure 7-3 shows that suspension was thought to be the least harsh for Keisha than other students. In other words, suspension was seen as most appropriate when the student was Keisha.)
- The tendency is clearer among compliers and noncompliers.
  - Compliers: Keisha "deserves" to be suspended (followed by Jamal) EVEN THOUGH their perceived responsibility of the student was about the same.
  - Noncompliers: again racialized suspending a Black girl (Emily) was seen slightly less harsh than suspending a Black boy (Jake).
- Gendered response patterns: for both compliers and noncompliers -> suspending girls was seen (though slightly) less harsh than suspending boys of the same race.





Figure 7-4. Expulsion

Lastly, we also asked whether respondents agree with expelling students for violating school dress code as their punishment. In general, respondents thought that students should not be expelled because of their actions – in other words, expulsion was too harsh for the students compared with other forms of punishment. However, people thought Emily's expulsion to be least harsh compared with other students.



Zooming in the responses of compliers and noncompliers tells us that respondents are more likely to agree with Black students being expelled as a punishment (slightly more so for Black girls).

In sum, we saw from the replication experiment that...

- (1) While the respondents thought that the four students are about the same age, they thought girls acted older than boys of the same race. They also thought that Black students acted older than white students. In addition, respondents though that Black students are more experienced with sex than white students; compliers, in particular, thought that Keisha was the most experienced with sex as expected.
- (2) Compliers also thought that Keisha was most responsible for her action, and the most likely to continue violating the school dress code.
- (3) In a similar vein, more severe punishments (suspension and detention) were seen as being less harsh for Keisha than her peers even though they all committed the same action.

All these findings support our hypotheses.

#### **Stereotypes**

Are Black girls thought to be more sexual? Are Black women seen as more sexually open than their white peers?

	Black girls	Black women	White girls	White women
More sexual	4.113	4.145	4.594	4.434
More mature	4.455		4.067	
More independent	4.924	4.922	4.202	4.521
Less respectful	3.827	3.624	3.986	4.038

#### Table 1a. Stereotypes about Girls/Women (by Race)

Though slightly, Black girls are indeed seen as more independent and mature than white girls (adultification). This can lead to more punitive sentiments towards Black girls (Black girls are assumed to "know what they are doing," so they are more responsible than their "innocent" peers).

#### Table 1b. Stereotypes about Black and White Americans

	Black women	Black men	White women	White men
Sexually open	4.698	4.911	4.837	4.925
Violent	3.688	3.878	3.71	4.057

Contrary to the stereotype surrounding Black men (criminalization of Black men, violence of Black men), we can see that respondents rated white men to be more violent. Perhaps the racial uprisings in 2020 played a role – George Floyd and Breonna Taylor were killed by *white male* police officers. Daniel Holtzclaw, who raped multiple Black girls and women, was also half-white.

Table 2a and 2b show whether and how stereotypes surrounding Black girls (e.g., Black girls being more sexual or mature than their peers) affect people's punitive sentiments. We do see robust, significant, and positive coefficients for these stereotype variables – those who believe that Black girls are more sexual and mature than their peers were also more supportive of punishment, regardless of the experimental condition they were assigned. Note that *n* is around 550 – this is because we randomly assigned one of the four question sets (i.e., regarding Black women, Black girls, white women, and white girls) for survey length reasons.

			1		
-	severity	Change clothing	detention	suspension	expulsion
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Black girls are more sexual	0.059	0.061	0.090*	0.169***	0.141***
	(0.041)	(0.048)	(0.049)	(0.052)	(0.049)
age	-0.098*	-0.072	0.103	-0.184***	-0.193***
	(0.055)	(0.064)	(0.065)	(0.069)	(0.064)
income	0.023	-0.024	-0.007	0.031	-0.004
	(0.045)	(0.052)	(0.053)	(0.056)	(0.052)
education	0.148**	0.185**	0.218***	0.127	0.044
	(0.063)	(0.074)	(0.076)	(0.080)	(0.074)
Ideology (Lib-con)	$0.070^{*}$	0.050	$0.098^{**}$	$0.098^*$	0.121**
	(0.041)	(0.047)	(0.049)	(0.051)	(0.048)
Party ID (Dem- Rep)	-0.029	0.049	-0.025	-0.022	-0.021
	(0.033)	(0.039)	(0.040)	(0.042)	(0.039)
Attend religion	$0.087^{***}$	$0.062^{*}$	0.009	0.113***	0.164***
	(0.032)	(0.038)	(0.039)	(0.041)	(0.038)
homeowner	0.014	0.028	-0.009	-0.048	0.016
	(0.026)	(0.030)	(0.031)	(0.033)	(0.030)
Employed (full)	0.068**	0.039	0.028	0.047	$0.060^{*}$
	(0.027)	(0.031)	(0.032)	(0.034)	(0.031)
Disciplined at school	0.062***	0.026	0.056**	0.036	0.012
	(0.024)	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.030)	(0.028)
Constant	0.242***	0.403***	0.314***	0.176***	0.078
	(0.043)	(0.051)	(0.052)	(0.055)	(0.051)
Observations	532	531	530	531	530
<b>R</b> <sup>2</sup>	0.147	0.083	0.071	0.124	0.157
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.131	0.065	0.054	0.107	0.141
Residual Std. Error	0.243 (df = 521)	) $0.283 (df = 520)$	0.290 (df = 519)	0.307 (df = 520)	0.285 (df = 519)
F Statistic	8.992*** (df = 10; 521)	4.685 <sup>***</sup> (df = 10; 520)	3.993 <sup>***</sup> (df = 10; 519)	7.347 <sup>***</sup> (df = 10; 520)	9.672*** (df = 10; 519)
Matai				*	<0.05. *** <0.01

Dependent variable:

#### *Note:*

\*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Table 2b. Stereotypes Surrounding Black Girls and Punitive Sentiment

		2				
	severity	Change clothing	detention	suspension	expulsion	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	
Black girls are mature	0.112**	0.181***	0.190***	0.240***	0.193***	
	(0.043)	(0.050)	(0.052)	(0.055)	(0.051)	
age	-0.069	-0.042	0.142**	-0.126*	-0.140**	
	(0.054)	(0.063)	(0.064)	(0.068)	(0.063)	
income	0.028	-0.016	0.004	0.046	0.007	
	(0.044)	(0.051)	(0.053)	(0.056)	(0.052)	
education	0.132**	0.160**	0.190**	0.098	0.021	
	(0.063)	(0.073)	(0.076)	(0.080)	(0.074)	
Ideology (lib- con)	$0.076^{*}$	0.057	0.108**	0.115**	0.138***	
	(0.040)	(0.047)	(0.048)	(0.051)	(0.047)	
Party ID (Dem- Rep)	-0.011	$0.068^{*}$	-0.003	0.015	0.012	
	(0.033)	(0.038)	(0.039)	(0.042)	(0.039)	
Attend religion	$0.077^{**}$	0.041	-0.011	0.094**	0.151***	
-	(0.032)	(0.037)	(0.038)	(0.041)	(0.038)	
homeowner	0.014	0.032	-0.006	-0.042	0.018	
	(0.026)	(0.030)	(0.031)	(0.033)	(0.030)	
Employed (full))	0.071***	0.040	0.032	0.052	$0.066^{**}$	
	(0.027)	(0.031)	(0.032)	(0.034)	(0.031)	
Disciplined at school	0.061**	0.020	0.051*	0.033	0.012	
	(0.024)	(0.027)	(0.028)	(0.030)	(0.028)	
Constant	0.199***	0.332***	0.245***	$0.099^{*}$	0.012	
	(0.047)	(0.054)	(0.056)	(0.059)	(0.055)	
Observations	532	531	530	531	530	
R <sup>2</sup>	0.155	0.102	0.089	0.137	0.166	
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.139	0.085	0.072	0.120	0.150	
Residual Std. Error	0.241 (df = 521) 0.280 (df = 520) 0.287 (df = 519) 0.304 (df = 520) 0.282 (df = 519)					
F Statistic	9.579 <sup>***</sup> (df = 10; 521)	5.892 <sup>***</sup> (df = 10; 520)	5.077 <sup>***</sup> (df = 10; 519)	8.251 <sup>***</sup> (df = 10; 520)	10.349 <sup>***</sup> (df = 10; 519)	
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01					

Dependent variable: