

Public Abstract

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Exploring Protests, African American Attitudes, and Law Enforcement Behavior

Despite an ongoing conflict between criminal justice reform and law enforcement partisans, the literature is limited on public opinion, protests, and police response within political science. Generally, studies have broadly examined public attitudes toward law enforcement or found implications for instances of police brutality (i.e. police shootings) on public opinion. Though I spend some time discussing these attitudes, the crux of this dissertation is less interested in broad public opinion of the police. It is being conducted to examine how attitudes, specifically those of black Americans, are shaped by distinct types of police behavior during protest situations. Furthermore, I will conclude that the intersection of black identity, gender identity, and age, as it relates to feelings about the police, influences how black Americans view police behavior, especially regarding how they respond to public protests.