Punitive Attitudes and the Racial Typification of Crime

Kelly A. Welch
PUNITIVE ATTITUDES AND THE RACIAL TYPIFICATION OF CRIME

By

KELLY A. WELCH

A Dissertation submitted to the
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The members of the Committee approve the dissertation of Kelly A. Welch defended on May 14, 2004.

Ted Chiricos  
Professor Directing Dissertation

Irene Padavic  
Outside Committee Member

Gary Kleck  
Committee Member

Approved:

Thomas G. Blomberg, Dean, School of Criminology and Criminal Justice

The Office of Graduate Studies has verified and approved the above named committee members.
Dedicated to my parents, Karen and Dennis, for their support and encouragement.
This would not have been possible without them.
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ABSTRACT

The American criminal justice system is more punitive than any other industrialized country in the world. Various policies designed to “get tough” on criminals have been proliferating. While these punitive policies and practices have been used, the American public has also seemed to be more supportive of these harsh measures for dealing with suspected and convicted criminals. The public has often perceived that crime is a problem largely attributable to blacks. The idea for this research originated from the fact that many have conjectured a relationship between public punitiveness and the racial typification of crime. No one had yet produced empirical support for this claim.

Using national survey data I collected in the spring of 2002, I explore the possibility that perceptions of crime as a predominantly black phenomenon are related to more punitive attitudes about criminal justice, while controlling for other potential influences on punitiveness. Further, I assess whether viewing television crime news and crime dramas increase the likelihood of stereotyping blacks as criminals. Finally, I test for the presence of an indirect relationship between media consumption and punitive attitudes through the racial typification of crime.

Findings support the initial hypothesis of this research. Those who typify blacks as criminals are significantly more punitive in their criminal justice policy preferences than those who do not share similar racial perceptions. The relationship appears to be especially relevant for whites, and particularly for whites who are non-Southerners, less racially prejudiced, less concerned about crime, perceive crime to be less violent, and conservative. Results indicate that watching more local television news increases the black typification of crime for minorities, while whites typify crime as a black
phenomenon more when they pay closer attention to television crime news. In addition, the present analyses show that media consumption is not indirectly associated with punitive attitudes through the racial typification of crime.

Overall, this research shows how the relationship between the racial typification of crime and punitiveness both augments and possibly expands aspects of the social threat and social control relationship postulated by Blalock (1967), Liska (1992), and others.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION AND CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

The Unitted States has been and continues to be more punitive toward its criminals than any other industrialized country in the world. While our criminal justice policies and practices continue to be punitive, many Americans express strong support for the harsh treatment of suspected and convicted criminals (Anderson, 1995; Austin and Irwin, 2001; Currie, 1998; Mauer, 1999; Miller, 1996; Tonry, 1996; Warr, 1995). The suggested reasons for this expression of conservative criminal justice ideology are many. These include the loss of confidence in rehabilitating criminals, expanding economic insecurities, and the increased salience of crime (Garland, 2001). A number of empirical studies address this justice-oriented conservatism, resulting in a variety of more specific explanations for Americans’ enthusiasm for “getting tough on crime.” With stagnant and declining crime rates, it is not possible that changes in levels and intensity of crime alone can explain this punitive ideology and support for formal sanctioning.

Punitive Policies

Punitive measures taken by the United States criminal justice system continue to expand and intensify (Austin and Irwin, 2001; Currie, 1998; Maguire and Pastore, 1996; Mauer, 1999; Miller, 1996). This is probably most notable when examining trends of institutionalizing criminals. In 1971, state and federal prisons housed fewer than 200,000 inmates. By the beginning of 1990 the nation was incarcerating an unprecedented one million Americans in state prisons, federal penitentiaries, and local jails. More recently,
the institutionalized inmate population has surpassed two million, which translates to 476 of every 100,000 Americans who were serving a prison or jail sentence in 2002 (U.S. Department of Justice, 2003). The escalating level of prison populations has necessitated a "prison-building boom" that has persisted since 1985 (Mauer, 1999). As a result of not having sufficient resources to maintain and operate many of these growing facilities, state and federal governments have increasingly elicited help from private prisons over the last decade (Austin and Irwin, 2001).

Naturally, the American population has grown quite significantly in this three decade time-frame during which we have seen correctional control develop at an alarming rate. It seems reasonable to expect that the number of prisoners would grow as the population increases. However, the expansion of the prison population has nearly quadrupled the rate of growth of the general populace. The overall population has grown only about 28 percent since 1972, compared to the 500 percent increase of the prison population (Mauer, 1999). In twenty-five years the prison population has multiplied six times to become the largest in the world (Currie, 1998). Thus, it is clear that the increasing number of U.S. residents simply cannot account for the substantial growth of our correctional populations.

Other criminal justice policies have also become more punitive recently, and have resulted in the increased incarceration of criminal offenders. A major factor in the growth of prison populations was the well publicized “war on drugs” (Blomberg and Lucken, 2000; Miller, 1996; Tonry, 1995). Not only were more drug arrests being made over the last couple of decades despite evidence that the number of people using drugs had been consistently decreasing since 1979, but the sanctions for those offenses increasingly included institutionalization (Mauer, 1999). Michael Tonry (1995) has argued that the drug war was the single most important cause of the increasing prison population since the 1980s. In the year 2000, drug offenders accounted for the largest percentage of newly institutionalized inmates, yet few believed the war on drugs was

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1 While rates of incarceration as a primary indicator of punitiveness have steadily increased over the last couple of decades, it should be noted that actual felony sentences of convicted criminals in state courts have more or less been getting shorter over time (U.S. Department of Justice, 1998).
even close to being won (Katz, 2000). Some even speculate that it was designed to fail (Beckett and Sasson, 2000; Reiman, 1998).

The increase in the number of policies designed to intensify criminal punishments was also a result of what some have called a “war on crime.” Irwin and Austin (1994:146) have argued that the war on crime has resulted in elected officials who have harangued on the street crime issue and passed laws resulting in more punitive sentencing policies, judges who deliver more and longer prison terms, and government criminal justice functionaries who have supported the punitive trend in criminal justice policies.

Some of these policy initiatives include the implementation of well-known “truth-in-sentencing” mandatory minimum sentences, like California's "Three-Strikes and You're Out" law and Florida's "10-20-Life" statute. In fact, most states have incorporated, and are currently using, some sort of mandatory minimum sentencing structure. Although measures like this may sound reasonable at some level, these sentences along with other habitual offender sanctions are especially sensitive to waves of punitive sentiment. It is these widespread punitive sentiments that encourage further intensification of the current imprisonment binge (Austin and Irwin, 2001; Crawford, Chiricos, and Kleck, 1998; Tonry, 1996).

The use of non-institutionalizing sanctions within the criminal justice system has expanded as well. The most recent statistics available at the U.S. Department of Justice (2003) indicate that probation, the most dominant form of correctional supervision, grew 357 percent from 1980 to 2002. The use of parole has also increased 342 percent during this same time. Other alternatives to incarceration, like electronic monitoring and diversion programs, have also seen great expansion in recent years (Currie, 1998). Overall, in 2002 more than 6.7 million people were under some form of correctional control: either on probation, in jail or prison, or on parole. This accounts for 3.1 percent of all U.S. adult residents, or 1 in every 32 adults (U.S. Department of Justice, 2003).

Other recent developments in our criminal justice system reflect an evolving response to crime that is increasingly punitive. Changes like the abolition of parole in certain jurisdictions, longer terms of probation, harsher sentences for crimes that involve the presence or use of firearms, the prosecution of juveniles as adults, and the restriction
of prison inmates' leisure activities, as well as the labeling of repeat offenders as lifetime "gang members," "sexual predators," and "three-strikes felons," are among the many objective indicators that punitiveness within America's justice system is proliferating (Crawford et al., 1998; Currie, 1998; Katz, 2000).

The death penalty, arguably the most punitive measure permitted in our nation, has seen a substantial increase in popularity since it was reinstated in 1976 (Asseo, 1999; Bedau, 1997; Bohm, 1987; Durham, Elrod, and Kinkade, 1996). Various studies indicate that capital punishment is increasingly viewed as a reasonable response of the criminal justice system to particular crimes (Bedau, 1997; Bowers, 1993; Durham et al., 1996). Although research shows that support for the death penalty has increased dramatically in the last three decades, public support for this sanction may be even stronger than surveys indicate (Durham et al., 1996). The 1990s saw the highest relative level of support for this punitive policy, recorded as 80 percent by the 1994 Gallup poll. The popularity of the death penalty suggests that the American public is as punishment oriented as ever (Warr, 1995).

Not only has capital punishment become more popular among the public recently, but it has also been used more frequently since its reinstatement as a punishment option (Bedau, 1997). Statistics provided by the U.S. Department of Justice (2004a) indicate that between 1976 and 2003 there were 885 convicted offenders executed. The last six years have been especially punitive, with nearly half of these executions (385) taking place between 1998 and 2003. In fact, 1999 alone was the deadliest year on America's death row in nearly half a century, with 98 offenders executed. In short, by a variety of indicators, it appears that the past couple of decades have experienced an unparalleled expansion of every form of criminal sanction, not the least of which is execution.

Crime in America

Although some may argue that rising crime rates are to blame for the punitive policies and criminal justice sanctions within the United States, changes in crime do not correspond to the official response to it. According to the FBI’s Uniform Crime Reports, the crime rate has decreased over the last twenty years. From 1983 to 2002, the crime
rate in the U.S. decreased from approximately 5,179 to 4,119 per 100,000 population. Although the UCR indicates that property crime peaked in 1991 (with 12,961,116 offenses) and violent crime peaked in 1992 (with 1,932,274 offenses), the index crime rate decreased by 16 percent from 1993 to 2002. During this same time, reporting to the police actually increased, which means that the crime rate has probably decreased even more than what the official statistics suggest. Only 43 percent of all violent crimes were reported in 1993, while 49 percent were reported in 2002. Similarly, property crime reporting rates increased from 34 to 40 percent during this same time (U.S. Department of Justice, 2004b).

The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) indicates an analogous trend. These data show that violent crime peaked in 1981 with 52.3 violent victimizations per 1,000 households and again in 1994 with a violent victimization rate of 51.2. However, in 2002 the violent crime rate was much lower, at 22.8 per 1,000 households. NCVS data show that property crime has consistently decreased since peaking in 1976. The property crime rate decreased from 544.2 in 1976 to 159 in 2002 (U.S. Department of Justice, 2004c). It is clear that while criminal punishments were getting harsher, incarceration rates were increasing, and sentences were getting longer, the amount and severity of crime was actually decreasing. Crime simply cannot account for the changes the American criminal justice system has witnessed.

**Racial Typification of Crime**

Another phenomenon that has continued to be especially salient within American society is the apparent perception that crime is a violation predominantly committed by African Americans. The racial typification of crime has been an enduring feature of our culture (Hawkins, 1995). Racial typification of crime may be defined as the degree to which individuals perceive members of a particular race to be responsible for committing crime.² Following the civil rights movement and other social changes in the 1960s, the

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² It is important to note that typifying race in a criminal manner does not presume that the associations made between race and crime are incorrect. One need not necessarily misperceive the percentage of crime committed by members of a racial group for the racial typification to be relevant.
linkage between race and crime maintained its strength (Barlow, 1998; Chiricos and Eschholz, 2002). The perception that criminals are black is now so pervasive throughout society that it is seems “today’s prevailing criminal predator has become a euphemism for young black male” (Barak, 1994:137). The idea that race is a hidden subtext of discussions about crime has been explained as something of a “code” (Miller, 1994). Corroborating this notion, Barlow (1998:151) explained that when referencing crime, “it is unnecessary to speak directly of race, because talking about crime is talking about race.”

One reason for the strong public support for punitive discourse and policies could be the popular belief that young black men are generally the perpetrators of crime, especially violent crime. Jerome Miller (1994:11), the former executive director and founder of the National Center on Institutions and Alternatives (NCIA), has characterized the racial typification of crime as follows:

There are certain code words that allow you never to have to say race, but everybody knows that's what you mean -- and crime is one of those rhetorical winks. So when we talk about locking up more and more people, what we're really talking about is locking up more and more black men.

Miller (1994:12) goes on to argue that

when we talk about building more prisons, when we talk about longer sentences, when we talk about throwing away the keys, when we talk about cracking down on violent offenders, everyone knows that we're talking about blacks. And so the sky is the limit now.


---

3 The racial typification of crime refers specifically to the stereotyping of criminals as black. However, since most crime is committed overwhelmingly by males, references to race are often conflated with their gendered counterpart.
The Present Research

The primary objective of this research is to test for a possible relationship between the public’s punitive values and the typification of crime as a social problem largely perpetrated by blacks. More specifically, I test the hypothesis that individuals who conceptualize the typical criminal as an African American favor more severe criminal justice policies than other members of the public. In addition, this dissertation will explore the factors that are associated with typifying criminals as black, including the potential influence of media exposure, perceptions about criminal violence, and concern about crime. Further, I will assess whether television crime news exposure increases punitive attitudes of the public indirectly through the black typification of criminals. Finally, I will show how the relationship between the racial typification of crime and punitiveness both augments and possibly expands aspects of the social threat and social control relationship postulated by Blalock (1967), Liska, (1992) and others. The dynamics of these predicted relationships will be explored using data from a 2002 nationwide survey.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF PUNITIVE ATTITUDES RESEARCH

In this chapter I review the findings of previous empirical studies on the predictors of harsh attitudes about criminal punishment. There is a substantial amount of research that explores various dimensions of punitive policy preferences of the American public. The literature reviewed here, however, will attempt to narrow this broad collection of studies by assessing the factors that appear to influence punitive attitudes of individuals. In the following sections I will discuss the variables that have been shown to influence individual levels of support for punitive criminal justice measures.

Although punitive sentiments of the public have been a central focus of sociologists, political scientists, and criminologists for the past several decades, there is a slight deficiency in the research exploring the exact nature of this phenomenon. Several studies reviewed here are quite methodologically and statistically sophisticated, but many exclude variables shown to predict punitiveness in prior research. In addition, many include variables with surprisingly weak theoretical justifications for their presence in the analyses. Overall, it appears that the choice of independent measures included in equations predicting punitiveness is the most influential source of variability and inconsistency in findings. We know from polls and surveys that the public is punitive to some extent, and may be growing more punitive over time, but the findings produced by research on what it is exactly that makes individuals more or less punitive seem disappointingly inconclusive.

The range of studies to be discussed here will be limited to those that analyze punishment and harsh crime control preferences of the public, thereby excluding studies
that examine issues like assessments of crime seriousness and congruence between public policy preferences and actual policies. In addition, studies that did not explore the role of respondent characteristics, either demographic or attitudinal, as predictors of punitiveness in their analyses are not included. An example of this type of study would include research on how often people who would assign a ten year prison sentence for robbery would assign probation for possession of drugs. This may be interesting and suggest certain policy implications. However, this type of analysis tells us nothing about what influences an individual's value structure regarding criminal punishment. Though these types of studies are plentiful and do, in fact, examine some dimensions of our increasingly punitive culture, they are not appropriate material for this assessment of punitive attitudes research.

Other criteria of eligibility for inclusion in this discussion include the language of publication (only studies written in English are analyzed), my knowledge of the existence of the research, and accessibility of the studies. Failing to learn about the existence of a study is probably the most powerful limitation of any review. Thus, a small portion of the literature on this topic is likely to have unknowingly been omitted from this discussion, which could ultimately weaken any conclusions. Overall, 69 studies of punitive attitudes, listed in Table 1, have been reviewed and evaluated. Within each, however, several statistical models were frequently developed in order to test for differing effects of variables. Inconsistent or contradictory findings were often produced within studies, precluding much confidence about conclusions or generalizations about the sources of punitive attitudes.

Although all of the studies reviewed here use individual-level, non-experimental survey research, they differ markedly with regard to sampling size and technique, location and dates of data collection, statistical methods used to produce estimates, and so forth. Perhaps more importantly, the measures of punitive attitudes used in the research vary quite a bit. Some researchers use several different measures of punitive attitudes in the same study (Cullen, Clark, Cullen, and Mathers, 1985; Rossi and Berk, 1997). Others create an index of punitiveness based on responses to several questions (Applegate, Cullen, and Fisher, 2002; Cullen, Golden, and Cullen, 1983; Rossi and Berk, 1997). And, there is yet another body of research that uses only a single survey question to
Table 1. Previous Research on Punitive Attitudes

<table>
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<tr>
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assess respondent attitudes about criminal punishment (Barkan and Cohn, 1994; Borg, 1998; Britt, 1998; Combs and Comer, 1982; Harris, 1986; Langworthy and Whitehead, 1986). Some researchers use vignettes to assess judgments of appropriate sentences for specific crimes (Applegate, Cullen, Link, Richards, and Lanza-Kaduce, 1996; Applegate et al., 2002; Feiler and Sheley, 1999; Miller, et al., 1986; 1991; Rossi and Berk, 1997), while others ask questions eliciting a dichotomous response such as "Do you favor or oppose the death penalty for persons convicted of murder?" (Barkan and Cohn, 1994; Borg, 1998; Britt, 1998; Combs and Comer, 1982; Harris, 1986). Still other research asks several questions to gauge support for a single concept, like how respondents feel about capital punishment (Ellsworth and Ross, 1983; Gelles and Straus, 1975; Hamm, 1989) or the insanity defense (Hans, 1986).

In general, it seems that research on punitive attitudes has resulted in few certain generalizations about the characteristics associated with higher levels of punitiveness. One punitive attitude researcher has acknowledged this conclusion by remarking that past research on the demographic and attitudinal correlates of punitive attitudes have produced largely “weak” and “inconsistent” findings (McCorkle, 1993). Schwartz, Guo, and Kerbs (1993) have similarly noted that although some studies found that certain individual characteristics have direct or indirect effects on punitiveness, others were inconclusive and even contradictory. Without even so much as a loose consensus on which and in what way various factors may contribute to punitive attitudes, I will nevertheless explore what prior research has found regarding the demographic, background, and attitudinal predictors of punitiveness. Since the black typification of crime has never been assessed as a possible predictor of punitive attitudes, the following review will briefly address the effects of other characteristics and attitudes on harsh policy preferences. Additionally, I will more extensively discuss what has been found concerning the relevance of race and racial attitudes for punitiveness, since these variables are the most closely related to the racial typification of crime that is the primary focus of my research.
Demographic Predictors of Punitiveness

Sex and Punitiveness

The potential for the effect of gender on punitive attitudes has been so compelling that nearly all studies include some measure of sex or gender in at least one of the estimates. However, the findings regarding this variable have not been entirely consistent, even within a given study. For example, in Harris’s (1986) nationwide analysis, men are more supportive of the death penalty for all murder, murders for hire, murdering the police, murdering a prison guard, and miscellaneous types of murder, but women are more supportive of the death penalty for “brutal murder,” murdering children, and committing multiple murders. Similarly, in a statewide survey of Ohio residents Applegate et al. (2000) found that men are more supportive of capital punishment than women, but not significantly more punitive about other criminal sanctions. Miller et al. (1991; 1986), examined sex in the context of race. When analyzed in this manner, both black and white women were consistently more punitive about violent crime, theft, public disorder, and corporate crime than men.

When results of significance tests were reported by studies assessing this relationship, sex is most often not a statistically significant predictor of punitive attitudes. Not surprisingly, it was more often significant when less sophisticated measures were used, such as differences between means or bivariate correlations, as opposed to multivariate analyses, like regression (Barkan and Cohn, 1994). It is possible that in multivariate analyses, the sex of respondent was indirectly related to punitiveness, and the inclusion of other variables controlled for the mediated relationship. None of the studies reviewed acknowledged this possibility however, or tested for an indirect effect of sex on punitive values.

Overall, the majority of research has indicated that women tend to be slightly less punitive than men (Applegate et al., 2002; Barkan and Cohn, 1994; Blumstein and Cohen, 1980; Borg, 1998; 1997; Cullen et al., 1985; Grasmick and McGill, 1994; Grasmick et al., 1993; Rossi and Berk, 1997; Schwartz et al, 1993; Skovron et al., 1989; Sprott, 1999; Young and Thompson, 1995). However, this pattern of greater male punitiveness is sometimes reversed within these same studies depending on what other
control measures are included in the estimates and what analytical techniques are employed (Cullen et al., 1985; Harris, 1986; Rossi and Berk, 1997; Sprott, 1999). The variability of control variables included also appears to have affected significance levels (Blumstein and Cohen, 1980; Cullen et al., 1985; Thomas et al., 1976).

In reference to significant findings, it seems that men are more supportive of the death penalty (Barkan and Cohn, 1994; Borg, 1998; 1997; Cullen et al., 1985; Rossi and Berk, 1997; Young and Thompson, 1995), juvenile death penalty (Grasmick et al., 1993; Skovron et al., 1989), juvenile offenders being waived to adult court (Schwartz et al., 1993), juvenile property and drug offenders being punished in prison (Schwartz et al., 1993), as well as punishment and prison versus a community sanction or treatment (Applegate et al., 2002; Sprott, 1999). Previous research also suggests that men are also more punitive than women toward street crime (Rossi and Berk, 1997), marijuana possession (Thomas et al., 1976), prostitution (Thomas et al., 1976) violent crime (Blumstein and Cohen, 1980), assault and battery both with and without a weapon (Thomas et al., 1976), and criminal offenses committed by juveniles (Grasmick and McGill, 1994).

When women were significantly more supportive of punitive measures, it was in response to molestation (McCorkle, 1993), drug possession (McCorkle, 1993), court harshness (Cohn et al., 1991), homicide (Samuel and Moulds, 1986), and how long sentences should be (Skovron et al., 1988). As noted, the majority of all statistically significant estimates concluded that men were more punitive than women, although estimates finding women more punitive were only slightly less numerous. Regarding the effect of sex on punitive attitudes, we can only tentatively conclude that men may be slightly more punitive than women.

**Age and Punitiveness**

When studying attitudes, age differences are often expected (Applegate et al., 2000; Rossi and Berk, 1997; Stinchcombe, Adams, Heimer, Schepple, Smith, and Taylor, 1980). There are several suggested reasons why this may be true. An individual's age is an indicator of developmental maturity, physical strength, and possibly confidence. Age is also an indicator of what life-course stage a person is in. Risky behavior, working, parenting, and victimization experience typically vary with age. For
these reasons, it is expected that there will be age differences in punitiveness toward criminals, especially when other confounding variables are not controlled. Of the studies reviewed, more than half included some measure of respondents’ age.

As with research on respondents’ sex and punitiveness, the direction of the relationship involving age is not consistent throughout the literature. In fact, there appears to be no pattern to the findings in relation to age and punitive attitudes. Additionally, in the majority of analyses age is not a statistically significant predictor of punitiveness. Of the studies reporting significant results, several find that younger individuals are more punitive about punishment in general (Langworthy and Whitehead, 1986), and more specifically, the death penalty (Borg, 1997), sentence length (Myers, 1988; Skovron et al., 1988), rape (McCorkle, 1993), molestation (McCorkle, 1993), burglary (Myers, 1988; Thomas et al., 1976), car theft (Thomas et al., 1976), juvenile crime (Grasmick and McGill, 1994), and waiving violent juvenile offenders to adult court (Schwartz et al., 1993).

A few studies find that older respondents are significantly more punitive than those who are younger. Older individuals appear to be more punitive about the use of deadly force (Grasmick et al., 1993), court harshness (Cohn et al., 1991), drug possession (McCorkle, 1993), and punishing acts of “sin” (Young and Thompson, 1995). Contrary to the finding of Langworthy and Whitehead (1986), Cullen et al. (1985) found that older respondents are more punitive about punishment in general. Reconciling this discrepancy is troubling, as both studies used multivariate analytical techniques based on data collected from a random sampling of adults. However, Langworthy and Whitehead (1986) use a national sample of 1,476 individuals, while Cullen et al. (1985) only survey 156 Illinois residents.

The possibility exists that neither older nor younger people are punitive, but rather that a curvilinear relationship exists between age and punitive attitudes. In a national survey, Schwartz et al. (1993) tested for the presence of a curvilinear relationship between age of the respondent and punitiveness. Specifically, they hypothesized that as people grow older they become more punitive and that this increase would continue until reaching a tipping point, whereupon punitiveness would decline with increasing age. Their data were consistent with this expectation in relation to support for waiving
juvenile property offenders to adult courts and punishing juvenile property offenders in adult prisons. Similarly, Rossi and Berk (1997) found in their national survey that those aged 35-64 were the most punitive toward crime in general, as well as street crimes, drug trafficking, drug possession, and a variety of “miscellaneous” offenses. Those under 35 and over 64 years old were the least punitive. The possibility that a curvilinear relationship exists between age and punitiveness may be a reason so few consistent or significant results appear in the literature, although this measurement of age was most often not significant when assessed. If a tipping point does indeed affect the influence of age on punitive attitudes, it should be little surprise that studies not assessing this possibility would produce insignificant findings.

**Education and Punitiveness**

The relationship between education and punitiveness has been well-documented. Since education is such a common predictor of many attitudinal dispositions, it is not surprising that only a small minority of the multivariate studies on punitive attitudes do not include a measure of education in their analyses (Miller et al., 1991; 1986; and Taylor et al., 1979). The effect of an individual's educational attainment seems to be the most prevalent predictor of punitive attitudes assessed across studies. Additionally, the direction of the relationship between education and punitive attitudes is the most consistent of all potential predictors. However, as with most of the other independent variables assessed in punitiveness research, the effect of education is not consistently statistically significant. Different models produced within a given study sometimes produce both significant and non-significant effects of education (Blumstein and Cohen, 1980; Borg, 1997; Cohn et al., 1991; Grasmick et al., 1993; McCorkle, 1993; Schwartz et al., 1993; Sprott, 1999; Thomas et al., 1976; Young and Thompson, 1995). The reasons for this lack of consistent significance most likely involve the differential inclusion of other controls in given models.

With very rare exceptions, the relationship between education and punitive attitudes is negative, with more education associated with lower levels of punitiveness toward criminals (Barkan and Cohn, 1994; Baumer et al., 2000; Borg, 1997; Britt, 1998; Cohn et al., 1991; Grasmick et al., 1992; Grasmick et al., 1993; Grasmick and McGill, 1994; Hans, 1986; McCorkle, 1993; Rossi and Berk, 1997; Schwartz et al., 1993; Young
and Thompson, 1995). Those who have less education are more supportive of the death penalty (Borg, 1997; Rossi and Berk, 1997), corporal punishment (Ellison and Sherkat, 1993; harsher courts (Grasmick et al., 1993), stiffer laws (Grasmick et al., 1993), the use of deadly force by law enforcement (Grasmick et al., 1993), prison sentences versus community sanctions (Sprott, 1999), the punishment of “sin” (Ellison and Sherkat, 1993; Young and Thompson, 1995), decreased use of the insanity defense for offenders (Hans, 1986), and retribution as an objective of the criminal justice system (Grasmick et al., 1992). In reference to the treatment of minors by the criminal justice system, less education is associated with more support for juvenile offenders getting adult sentences, juvenile property, drug and violent offenders being waived to adult court, and juvenile property offenders being punished in prisons (Schwartz et al., 1993).

In addition, individuals with less education are more punitive toward all crimes in general (McCorkle, 1993; Rossi and Berk, 1997), and more specifically drug possession or sales (McCorkle, 1993; Rossi and Berk, 1997; Thomas et al., 1976), selling drugs to minors (Thomas et al., 1976), white collar offenses (Rossi and Berk, 1997), rape (Thomas et al., 1976), molestation (McCorkle, 1993), prostitution (Thomas et al., 1976), armed robbery (Thomas et al., 1976), the use of weapons in general (Thomas et al., 1976), bribery by a public official (Thomas et al., 1976), and gambling (Thomas et al., 1976), as well as sentences toward other miscellaneous crimes (Rossi and Berk, 1997). Those with more education are less likely to express harsh attitudes toward juvenile crimes (Grasmick et al., 1994).

One study (Baumer et al., 2000) found that those who have a Bachelor’s degree or more as well as those who had no high school degree were less punitive, which suggests the possibility of a curvilinear relation, although other research has not assessed this possibility. The reasons why better educated persons appear to be less supportive of punitive policies has not been explored empirically. It is possible that more educated individuals are more aware of the current criminal sanctions employed and their effects on those convicted of committing crimes. In addition, better educated individuals may know about what kinds of situations offenders are in, and that other solutions, like rehabilitation or victim compensation, may be more effective tools to deal with crime. It is also possible that those with less education feel more threatened by crime because they
may more often live in high crime neighborhoods than those who are better educated. Despite the lack of an empirically supported theory explaining the apparent relationship between education and punitiveness, and some inconsistency in maintaining meaningful significance levels, it seems that, overall, those who are less educated consistently prefer more punitive criminal justice responses to law violation than those who are more educated.

**Income and Punitiveness**

As with other demographic variables predicted to influence punitiveness, research on the effects of income has unfortunately shown the association to be neither strong, nor consistent (Hawkins, 1981; Rossi and Berk, 1997). In the overwhelming majority of studies, when income was assessed as a possible predictor of punitiveness, it was not significant. Most of the studies reporting that income is not associated with punitive attitudes in certain estimates include those using higher level analyses and multivariate data (Applegate et al., 2000; Britt, 1998; Cullen et al., 1985; Grasmick et al., 1993; Hawkins, 1981; Langworthy and Whitehead, 1986; McCorkle, 1993; Rossi and Berk, 1997; Samuel and Moulds, 1986; Skovron et al., 1989; Skovron et al., 1988; Sprott, 1999; Tyler and Weber, 1982).

There is no apparent pattern to the significant findings regarding the relationship between income and punitive attitudes. As expected, the specific measure of punitiveness may have had some effect on this association. Some studies found that higher incomes are associated with more punitiveness in the use of the death penalty (Borg, 1997; Harris, 1986), hit and run offenders (Hawkins, 1981), armed robbery (Samuel and Moulds, 1986), and use of the insanity defense (Hans, 1986). Nevertheless, some studies reported lower income respondents to be more punitive in reference to those who commit violent crimes (Blumstein and Cohen, 1980), white collar criminals (Blumstein and Cohen, 1980; Rossi and Berk, 1997), those who write bad checks (Hawkins, 1981), drug possession (Rossi and Berk, 1997), prostitution (Thomas et al., 1976), gambling (Thomas et al., 1976), and certain “miscellaneous crimes” (Rossi and Berk, 1997). In addition, studies have found that those with lower incomes are more supportive of the capital punishment for the murder of a child and for committing multiple murders (Harris, 1986).
In some instances, moderate incomes were associated with the most punitive attitudes, while those who make the most and least money were less punitive, indicating the presence of a possible non-linear relationship (Blumstein and Cohen, 1980; Rossi and Berk, 1997). For example, in a national survey Rossi and Berk (1997) found that those with moderate incomes were the most punitive about crime in general, and street crime specifically. No other studies found that a curvilinear relationship exists between income and punitive attitudes, however. One factor that likely influenced the findings with regard to income would be the other controlled variables in the analyses. If it may be assumed, for example, that incomes generally increase with age and education, their inclusion or exclusion in statistical models of punitiveness could readily influence the apparent effects of income. Regardless, it seems that the most reasonable conclusion to make about punitive attitudes and an individual’s income is that there is no relationship between these two characteristics.

**Location of Residence and Punitiveness**

Because where one lives can presumably influence his or her beliefs regarding a great number of social and cultural phenomena, a number of studies have incorporated some measure of geography or living environment in their analyses. These have included measures of geographic region–like living in the North, South, East, or West or some combination of these, like the Northeast or South-Atlantic regions (Barkan and Cohn, 1994; Baumer et al., 2000; Borg, 1997; Britt, 1998; Ellison, 1991; Ellison and Sherkat, 1993; Harris, 1986; Rossi and Berk, 1997; Taylor et al., 1979; Young and Thompson, 1995). In addition, some studies assess population size of an individual’s city or county (Baumer et al., 2000; Borg, 1997; Britt, 1998; Rossi and Berk, 1997; Taylor et al., 1979), and whether one resides in an urban, suburban, or rural location (Ellison, 1991; Ellison and Sherkat, 1993; Hamm, 1989; Taylor et al., 1979; Young and Thompson, 1995). A few studies have involved international comparisons in preferences for punitiveness (Alston, 1976; Costelloe et al., 2002; Midgley, 1974; Sanders et al., 1998), although most consider location variables in the United States (Barkan and Cohn, 1994; Baumer et al., 2000; Borg, 1997; Ellison, 1991; Rossi and Berk, 1997).

Research on how location of residence influences attitudes about crime and punishment has been somewhat consistent, however findings produced are not significant
in most estimates. Perhaps this failure to achieve statistical significance in the estimates containing a measure of type of residence is due to the frequent presence of a region of residence measure in the same estimates. In other words, those estimates containing region as well as residence variables failed to show statistical significance for both. Of course, the presence or absence of any number of other control variables may influence the direction and significance levels of the results.

It has been variously reported that Southerners (Barkan and Cohn, 1994; Baumer et al., 2000; Borg, 1997; Ellison, 1991), and both Northerners, and Westerners (Baumer et al., 2000; Harris, 1986) are more punitive when compared to the rest of the United States. Specifically, Southerners (Barkan and Cohn, 1994; Baumer et al., 2000), as well as southern conservatives and fundamentalists are more supportive of the death penalty (Borg, 1997). Those living in southern states are also more likely to approve of retaliation for violence (Ellison, 1991). Westerners are apparently more supportive of the death penalty for brutal murder, murder for hire, murdering police, murdering prison guards, multiple murders (Harris, 1986), and retribution (Ellison, 1991). Northerners are more supportive of the death penalty for all murders (Harris, 1986).

West/South Central residents (i.e. those living in Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Louisiana) are the most punitive in relation to punishing the commission of all crimes in general, as well as street crime, drug trafficking, drug possession, and white collar crime (Rossi and Berk, 1997). All of this would suggest that perhaps Easterners, and especially New Englanders, are simply the least punitive population (Rossi and Berk, 1997; Taylor et al., 1979). Overall, it seems that Easterners are least punitive toward all crime, as well as street crime, drug trafficking and possession, and white collar crime, and also prefer the use of the death penalty less than those living in other regions of the United States (Rossi and Berk, 1997).

Some research has shown that those from larger cities are less punitive than those from smaller cities or towns (Baumer et al., 2000; Hamm, 1989; Rossi and Berk, 1997). This research suggests that residents of places with smaller populations are more punitive toward all crimes in general, as well as toward street crime, drug trafficking, drug possession, and white collar crime (Rossi and Berk, 1997). They also appear to be more supportive of the death penalty (Baumer et al., 2000; Hamm, 1989), juvenile death
penalty (Hamm, 1989), corporal punishment and punishing “sinners” (Ellison and Sherkat, 1993). In contrast, other research found city-dwellers to be more punitive than those living in less populated areas. More specifically, these studies found that individuals from larger cities are more supportive of the death penalty (Britt, 1998; Taylor et al., 1979) and harsher courts (Taylor et al., 1979).

Many of the studies assessing the effects of region or type of residence on punitive attitudes may not be providing enough information to allow generalizability of findings. This possible weakness may exist because the research does not take into account specific characteristics of each place or area. For example, with questions like “In general, do you think the courts in this area deal too harshly or not harshly enough with criminals?” we do not know if the sentences in that specific area are genuinely lenient or if respondents only perceive that they are too lenient. In either case, variation across areas in responses to this type of question may not reflect variation in respondents’ punitiveness. Thus, city-dwellers may be less punitive than others, yet accurately perceive urban courts to be more lenient than average. Without this kind of information, significant findings regarding the relationship between location or type of residence and punitiveness may not be very meaningful.

**Race and Punitiveness**

It has been widely argued that blacks and whites have distinctly different views about criminal justice in America (Kennedy, 1997; Mauer, 1999; Tonry, 1995; Young, 1992). Among the hypothesized reasons for divergent attitudes is the disparate involvement of members of different races in crime and the criminal justice system. For example, for violent crimes there have been times when blacks were arrested in absolute numbers that surpassed those of whites (Tonry, 1995). In more recent years, however, although blacks do not surpass the actual number of whites in nationwide arrests, their arrest totals have been far greater than their representation in the total population (Department of Justice, 2004d).

Studies on race and sentencing show that blacks are sentenced more severely than members of any other racial or ethnic group (Miller, 1996; Steffensmeier, Ulmer, and Kramer, 1998). It is widely recognized that a disproportionate number of African Americans are under some sort of correctional supervision (Austin and Irwin, 2001;
Currie, 1998; Katz, 2000; Mauer, 1999; Miller, 1996; 1994; 1992; Tonry, 1995; Wilson, 1987). In fact, blacks are almost seven times more likely to be incarcerated than whites (Katz, 2000). It seems that facing some sort of sanction from the justice system has become something of an expectation for many young, urban, black men (Bridges, Crutchfield, and Simpson, 1987; Hagan and Albonetti, 1982; Miller, 1996; 1992). It has therefore been suggested that, on one hand, blacks may be more punitive than members of other racial groups because their communities have been disproportionately harmed by crime. On the other hand, blacks might be expected to be less punitive than others because of the high percentage of black family members and friends who may have been exposed to our criminal justice system (Young, 1991).

Because my research is concerned with race and punitiveness, albeit the racial typification of crime and punitiveness, a moderately detailed analysis of the effects of respondent race on punitiveness is offered here. Findings regarding race of respondent and punitiveness are not consistent throughout the literature. And, these findings are most frequently not significant. Whites have often been found to be more punitive than blacks and other minorities (Baumer et al., 2000; Blumstein and Cohen, 1980; Bohm, 1992; Bohm and Vogel, 1994; Borg, 1998; Cohn et al., 1991; Grasmick et al., 1993; Howells et al., 1995; Miller et al., 1991; Miller et al., 1986; Rossi and Berk, 1997; Secret and Johnson, 1989; Skovron et al., 1988). Research suggests that whites are more punitive toward all crime in general (Blumstein and Cohen, 1980; Rossi and Berk, 1997), street crime (Rossi and Berk, 1997), drug trafficking (Rossi and Berk, 1997), and violent crime (Miller et al., 1991; Miller et al., 1986). Whites also tend to be more supportive of the death penalty (Bohm and Vogel, 1994; Borg, 1998; Grasmick et al., 1993; Harris, 1986; Howells et al., 1995), the death penalty for juveniles (Grasmick et al., 1993), the retributive value of the death penalty (Bohm, 1992), court harshness (Cohn et al., 1991; Secret and Johnson, 1989), increased sentence lengths (Skovron et al., 1988), and the use of deadly force on offenders (Grasmick et al., 1993).

Though less common, several studies have reported that blacks are more punitive than whites (Ellison and Sherkat, 1993; Hawkins, 1981; Miller et al., 1991; 1986; Secret and Johnson, 1989; Thomas, 1976). Blacks appear to be more punitive toward murder (Thomas et al., 1976), rape (Thomas et al., 1976), property crime in general (Miller et al.,
1991), theft (Miller et al., 1986), burglary (Thomas et al., 1976), public disorder crime (Miller et al., 1991; Miller et al., 1986), selling drugs to minors (Thomas et al., 1976), marijuana possession (Thomas et al., 1976), gambling (Thomas et al., 1976), and corporate crime (Miller et al., 1991; Miller et al., 1986). In addition, blacks are more supportive of the death penalty (Combs and Comer, 1982), corporal punishment (Ellison and Sherkat, 1993), spending on crime control and spending money to control drugs (Secret and Johnson, 1989), and punishing “sin” (Ellison and Sherkat, 1993).

Establishing a pattern in the findings on the relationship between race and punitive attitudes is somewhat difficult. In general, it seems that greater differences in punitiveness for whites and blacks appear when interactions were assessed by the research. For example, Cohn et al. (1991) found that although whites and blacks were similarly punitive, racial prejudice was an important correlate for whites, while fear of criminal victimization was an important correlate for blacks. It also seems that blacks who are more fearful of criminal victimization are more punitive than whites (Combs and Comer, 1982). Whites who belong to a fundamentalist church, interpret the Bible literally, and believe in punishing “sin” are more supportive of the death penalty than blacks with the same characteristics (Young and Thompson, 1995). One study found that the greatest differences in punitiveness between blacks and whites, with blacks being significantly more punitive, involved assessments of the appropriate punishment for the killing of a young man by a highway patrolman (Hawkins, 1981).

Studies with larger samples that assessed the effects of race on punitiveness typically produced more dependable and statistically significant results. Consistent with this line of reasoning, only a small number of the findings involving race and punitive attitudes produced significant results in either direction using sample sizes lower than 500. A slightly larger number of the findings had sample sizes over 500 and were significant in either direction. However, as noted above, the majority of all the estimates involving race and punitiveness produced statistically insignificant results.

Because generalizability is an important achievement to be able to claim in research findings, it is relevant to examine the population to which the research results may be applied. Nearly half of the studies that included a measure of race were based on national data, which is arguably a preferable population to which generalizations may be
made. Conversely, the remaining findings used data collected at the local or regional level. Using this type of data may be more problematic, because spatial variations in sample characteristics or confounding variables may affect findings. For example, Tyler and Weber (1982) noted that at the time of their survey, the town of Evanston, Illinois was experiencing a crime wave which may have affected relative degrees of punitiveness. Although this type of problem is not exclusive to local or regional studies, it is more sensitive to spatial differences in respondent characteristics and issues. This means that the perceived threat of growing crime could obscure any effects race may have had on punishment ideology.

Sampling procedures may also be responsible for variations in findings of racial influences. About half of the studies used a simple random procedure for selecting a sample, whereas most of those remaining used a variety of probability-type techniques. Although it is not likely that there would have been any significant differences between random and other probability sampling, purely random sampling might allow slightly greater generalizability of findings by strengthening external validity. However, in several of the samples, there would simply not have been enough respondents of a certain race, or the researchers wanted to ensure that the sample closely resembled the general public by choosing a probability or quota sample. For example, Secret and Johnson (1989) use a pooled black over-sample to be certain there would be at least 310 blacks in each sample to allow meaningful data analysis. While this sampling technique may slightly weaken any conclusions derived from the research if the researchers did not properly weight the cases by the inverse of their probability of selection, the authors allow the readers to interpret the findings themselves by informing them of the sampling procedures employed. Although there is variation in sampling techniques, no apparent patterns seem to exist between the nature of research findings and the sampling procedures used.

The time period during which data were collected may have had an effect on research findings regarding race due to changing attitudes over time and improving analytic methods, for example. It is possible that changing crime trends could influence the association between race and punitive attitudes, or that over time a maturity in analytic techniques may reveal important outcome differences. However, contrary to this
idea, few of the findings on race and punitiveness before 1985 found that whites were significantly more punitive than blacks, whereas an even smaller amount of the findings from 1985 or later indicate that whites were significantly more punitive. As time progressed, it seems that growing punitiveness among blacks approached that of whites, minimizing the gap between the two groups.

One of the issues that can affect the direction and magnitude of this relationship is the number of confounding variables for which a study controls. Most studies did not use race as a variable of primary interest. As one might expect, it appears that greater likelihood of significance for relationships involving race and punitive attitudes is achieved with fewer control variables. This may indicate that in the studies incorporating more control variables, race has no direct effects on punitiveness, but may be indirectly related through other characteristics. In general, few claims can be made with confidence about the influence of one's race on punitive attitudes, because patterns in the findings seem to be minimal.

Other Respondent Characteristics and Attitudinal Predictors of Punitiveness

Aside from the demographic and background variables just considered, there are a variety of other respondent characteristics and attitudinal factors that may affect the way people feel about and react to crime, criminals, and punishment. Some of these may be quite a challenge to operationalize, however. For example, personal values about sanctioning criminals, especially in cross-national comparisons, may reflect cultural differences in conceptions of the individual, governmental agencies and organizations, and possibly even the rule of law, even though these conditions appear to be difficult to measure (Bohm and Vogel, 1994; Sanders et al., 1998). Other studies have assessed the effects of rare or very specific experiences, like having taken a college corrections course (Lane, 1997) having viewed an execution (Howells et al., 1995), or living in a county with recent extraordinary state Supreme Court rulings (Ellsworth and Ross, 1983). Gelles and Straus (1975) found that family experience, and family violence more specifically, can account for more support for capital punishment.
Among the many characteristics that have been used in statistical models of punitiveness are religious beliefs, political party identification, victimization experience, occupation, occupational prestige, marital status, and parental status. Some hypothesized attitudinal predictors of punitiveness included in previous research are political ideology, fear of crime and victimization, perceived crime levels, beliefs about civil liberties, stereotyping by race, and racial prejudice and racial antipathy. However, it is possible that assessing relationships between punitiveness and various attitudes is not appropriate, because the attitude representing the independent measure may not emanate from a single set of reasoned beliefs, but may be an undifferentiated, emotional reflection of personal ideological perceptions (Ellsworth and Ross, 1983). Research has shown that when personal attitudes are measured in relation to punitiveness, respondents tend to endorse all responses that align with their attitudes (Ellsworth and Ross, 1983). What this suggests is that all attitudes, including punitive attitudes, originate from the same place, so all attitudes may represent one another rather than some being causes of others. For example, one who is both punitive and racially prejudiced may develop both of these attitudes because of the same underlying reason. This means it would be incorrect to assume that a significant correlation implied a causal relationship. This suggests that attitudinal predictors of punitiveness may not be as useful as desired, as they may both represent different measures of the same concept.

On the basis of the trait-related and attitudinal variables reviewed here, there are even fewer conclusive findings regarding the effects of these factors on punitive attitudes than were found when sex, age, education, income, place of residence, and race were examined. Langworthy and Whitehead (1986) argue that although demographic characteristics are ambiguously related to punitiveness, when they are analyzed in conjunction with attitudinal associations—fear and liberalism in their instance—the relationships become clearer. Though this may be true, part of the trouble in drawing conclusions about relationships with punitiveness may be attributable to the sheer number of variables used as controls or primary predictors of punitiveness across studies. In addition, the chosen combination of controls could affect the relationships between the other independent measures and punitive attitudes. Since there are over 100 attitudinal variables included in the studies on punitiveness, I will only discuss those that appear in
this research most frequently. Additionally, I will assess the influence of racial attitudes on punitive attitudes because of their presumed relevance to the present research.

**Religion and Punitiveness**


Findings on the relationship between religious attributes and punitive attitudes are actually somewhat consistent. Additionally, studies often indicate that religious traits are significant predictors of punitiveness, unlike many of the other variables assessed in previous research. In general, it appears that Protestants are more punitive than Catholics, Jews, or adherents of other religions, preferring harsher criminal justice
treatment of criminals (Finamore and Carlson, 1987), the death penalty (Britt, 1998; Howells et al., 1995), harsh discipline for acts of “sin” (Ellison and Sherkat, 1993), and retribution as a goal of the criminal justice system (Grasmick et al., 1992). However, depending on how those with different religions are grouped together in a study, sometimes both Catholics and Protestants are found to be more supportive than members of other religions of severe criminal sentences (Blumstein and Cohen, 1980) and the death penalty (Grasmick et al., 1993; Harris, 1986).

Religious fundamentalism and evangelism consistently predict punitive attitudes. Research suggests that religious fundamentalists are more supportive of the death penalty (Borg, 1998; Britt, 1998; Young, 1992) and retributive (Grasmick et al., 1992) than those belonging to non-fundamentalist religious groups. However, it seems that black fundamentalists are substantially less punitive than their white counterparts (Britt, 1998). In assessing another interaction, using national survey data Borg (1997) found that southern fundamentalists were more supportive of the death penalty, but non-southern fundamentalists were not. Southern Baptist fundamentalist judges are more punitive toward blacks, less serious offenders, robbers, andburglars (Myers, 1988). But, they are significantly less punitive toward younger offenders and drug users, as well as less likely to assign them long prison sentences (Myers, 1988). Evangelists are significantly more supportive of capital punishment than those of non-Evangelical religions (Borg, 1998; Young), as well as more supportive of punishing “sin” (Young and Thompson, 1995).

Those who interpret the Bible literally are more punitive in general than those who do not (Applegate et al., 2000), as well as more supportive of punishing juvenile offenders harshly (Grasmick and McGill, 1994), punishing criminals in pursuit of retribution (Grasmick et al., 1992), corporal punishment (Ellison and Sherkat, 1993), and capital punishment (Leiber and Woodrick, 1997; Young and Thompson). Those who believe in a punitive God are more punitive than those who do not (Applegate et al., 2000). Interestingly, those who are “less religious” are more punitive than those who are “more religious” (Grasmick and McGill, 1994). Along these same lines, Baumer et al. (2000) found that less frequent church attendance was associated with greater punitiveness. Surprisingly, Grasmick et al. (1993) and Grasmick et al. (1992) found that
those who are religiously affiliated, as opposed to those who are not, are more punitive and supportive of retributive criminal justice goals.

Overall, various religious attributes seem to significantly influence the public’s willingness to punish criminals harshly. More punitive individuals are protestant, fundamentalist, or evangelical. In addition, those who interpret the Bible literally and believe in a punitive God are more willing to punish criminals harshly. It also seems that, in most instances, less religious individuals are the most punitive.

**Political Party Identification and Punitiveness**

Some have theorized that those belonging to different political parties may have differences in a variety of attitudes, including those about crime and punishment (Page and Shapiro, 1992; Stinchcombe et al, 1980). Despite the fact that statistical significance was most often not obtained in the models incorporating political party as an independent variable, the findings pertaining to political party affiliation and punitiveness are consistent across the studies that examine this potential influence. Republicans appear to be more supportive than Democrats of the death penalty (Applegate et al., 2000; Britt, 1998; Hamm, 1989; Harris, 1986; Howells et al., 1995), juvenile death penalty (Hamm, 1989), stiffer laws (Grasmick et al., 1993), and the use of deadly force against criminals (Grasmick et al., 1993).

Although these findings relating to party affiliation are generally consistent, one Oklahoma City study involving 395 adults that found Republicans and political independents to be more supportive of the death penalty for adults also found that there were no significant differences between political parties with regard to support for juvenile death penalty (Grasmick et al., 1993). Perhaps this lack of statistical difference between coefficients is attributable to the regional nature of this study. However, since researchers did not test for differences in slopes with regard to political parties and punitive attitudes, it is possible that members of different political groups are really no different from one another.

Research assessing the effects of being a self-described political independent as opposed to identifying with any other political party is also consistent. Studies assessing the separate effects of political independence find that it does not predict punitiveness
(Applegate et al., 2000; Grasmick et al., 1993; Grasmick and McGill, 1994). Therefore, we may tentatively conclude that Democrats are less punitive about crime and criminal punishment than Republicans and the politically independent.

**Political Ideology and Punitiveness**

For reasons similar to those noted in relation to political party affiliation, political ideology may be associated with punitive attitudes (Scheingold, 1984). Therefore, several studies have explored whether being politically conservative, liberal, or moderate relates to punitiveness. As with the research assessing the effects of political party identification, the findings regarding the effect of political ideology on punitive attitudes are relatively straightforward and consistent. In about half of the studies looking at the effects of political ideology on punitiveness the relationship was statistically insignificant.

Not surprisingly, an individual who is supportive of punitive policies is more likely to consider him or herself conservative, whereas a politically liberal respondent is more likely to oppose specific punitive measures. Conservatives are more supportive of the death penalty (Barkan and Cohn, 1994; Baumer et al., 2000; Borg, 1997; Whitehead, 1998), stiff sentences, reducing amenities in prison, chain gangs, long sentences (Whitehead, 1998), and believe that juvenile courts are too lenient (Baron and Hartnagel, 1996). Political conservatives also appear to be more punitive toward all crime in general, as well as street crime, drug trafficking, drug possession, and white collar crime (Rossi and Berk, 1997).

In their Winnipeg, Manitoba study, Baron and Hartnagel (1996) found that political conservatism significantly predicts punitiveness. However, they also found that the inclusion of variables representing demographic characteristics or certain social values (e.g. support for rehabilitation, desire for deterrence, support for those who wish to overthrow the government) in statistical equations showed that political variables play a more consequential role. Similarly, several equations were referenced in Whitehead’s (1998) survey of Tennessee policymakers, but only when measures of political ideology were paired with respondents’ job titles did the relationship with punitiveness become

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4 Many studies grouped political independents with democrats or republicans in the reference category, but these studies looked at independence separately.
statistically significant. Overall, then, it seems that political conservatives are more punitive. In addition, when political ideology is included in models in which other specific relevant variables are involved, the relationship between ideology and punitiveness was more often significant.

**Victimization Experience and Punitiveness**

It has been suggested that those who have been victims of crime or who have friends or family members that have been victimized will be more punitive, possibly because of crime's salience for them on a personal level (Applegate et al., 2000; Blumstein and Cohen, 1980; Borg, 1998; Sprott and Doob, 1997; Stinchcombe et al., 1980; Taylor et al., 1979; Tyler and Weber, 1982). Some research has corroborated this expectation. However, a review of the literature assessing this relationship produces no consistent conclusions. The number of estimates finding victimization experience to significantly increase punitiveness is nearly matched in quantity by those finding the opposite to be true.

Most studies assessing this potential relationship found no significant association between victimization experience and punitive attitudes whatsoever. It seems most likely that victimization experience is unrelated to punitiveness (Baron and Hartnagel, 1996; Blumstein and Cohen, 1980; Bohm and Vogel, 1994; Cullen, 1985; Lane, 1997; Langworthy and Whitehead, 1986; McCorkle, 1993; Rossi and Berk, 1997; Tyler and Weber, 1982). However, Sprott and Doob (1997) suggest that the reason so many studies find victimization experience not significantly related to punitiveness is because victims of various crimes should not be treated as a homogenous group. Results of their Canadian survey data indicate that victims of various types of crimes react differently to criminal justice policies. They found that victims of sexual assault were more supportive of harsher sentences than non-victims, while victims of robbery were equally supportive of more severe sentencing practices as non-victims. Therefore, by assessing punitive attitudes of specific types of victims in separate estimates, statistically significant associations may emerge.

Some research suggests that victimization or vicarious victimization is a significant predictor of punitive attitudes only when other interactions are assessed. Testing the interaction between vicarious homicide victimization experience and race
using national survey data, Borg (1998) found that for whites, vicarious homicide victimization (when someone close to the respondent was murdered) did significantly predict support for the death penalty. Langworthy and Whitehead’s (1986) national survey research suggests that the relationship between victimization experience and punitiveness is indirect through fear.

Surprisingly, there is limited evidence that those with victimization experience tend to be less punitive (Borg, 1998; Taylor et al., 1979). In a national study, Taylor et al. (1979) found that those who had never been burglarized were more supportive of the death penalty and harsher courts than those who had been victims of burglary. Borg (1998) found in other data that blacks who had experienced vicarious victimization are less supportive of capital punishment than those who were not vicariously victimized.

**Crime Salience and Punitiveness**

Several studies have analyzed the possibility that there is a relationship between punitive attitudes and fear of crime, fear of victimization, concern about crime, or perception of crime seriousness. The expectation is that factors such as these will raise the salience of crime and thus promote punitiveness. It is likely that this is the reason such factors are often included in punitive attitudes research as a primary variable of interest, or at least as a control (Barkan and Cohn, 1994; Baron and Hartnagel, 1996; Baumer et al., 2000; Bohm and Vogel, 1994; Cohn et al., 1991; Combs and Comer, 1982; Cullen et al., 1985; Lane, 1997; Langworthy and Whitehead, 1986; McCorkle, 1993; Rossi and Berk, 1997; Schwartz et al., 1993; Secret and Johnson, 1989; Sprott, 1999; Sprott and Doob, 1997; Taylor et al., 1979; Tyler and Weber, 1982; Young and Thompson, 1995). Most research assessing this relationship shows that when crime salience and punitiveness are significantly associated, those for whom crime is more salient are more supportive of harsh criminal justice policies. However, most estimates of this relationship indicate that there is no statistically significant effect of crime salience on punitive attitudes.

Generally, when fear of crime or victimization is statistically significant in equations predicting punitiveness, those more fearful of crime are more supportive of punishment overall (Langworthy and Whitehead, 1986), the death penalty (Barkan and Cohn, 1994; Tyler and Weber, 1982), harsher courts (Cohn et al., 1991), less lenient
sentences (Sprott and Doob, 1997), juvenile offenders getting adult sentences, juvenile property, violent, and drug offenders being waived to adult court, and juvenile property and drug offenders being punished in adult prisons (Schwartz et al., 1993). More fearful individuals are also more punitive toward rape (McCorkle, 1993).

Data somewhat consistently indicate that fear of crime and victimization increases punitiveness. However, the statistical significance of estimates is not predictable, even within the same study. For example, using national survey data, Schwartz et al. (1993) find in six of seven estimates that those who are more fearful are also more punitive. It is not clear why there is one estimate in their research that produces no significant association, nor do they offer an explanation. There is evidence of inconsistent effects of fear when different measures of punitiveness are considered. In McCorkle’s (1993) Las Vegas survey data, fearful individuals are more punitive about rape, but not about other types of crime like molestation or drug sales. Using Ohio data, Applegate et al. (2000) found that those who are fearful of victimization support harsher courts, but not the death penalty or greater punitiveness in general. Secret and Johnson (1989) examined the effects of fear of crime, fear of burglary, and fear of robbery in a national survey, but none of these variables were significant in relation to punitiveness. It is apparent that drawing conclusions regarding fear and punitive attitudes must only be done tentatively.

Similarly, studies assessing the potential effects of concern about crime have not produced consistently significant findings (Cullen et al., 1985; Rossi and Berk, 1997; Tyler and Boeckmann, 1997; Tyler and Weber, 1982). One study of punitiveness shows that concern about crime is a significant predictor of punitive policies in general (Tyler and Boeckmann, 1997). Tyler and Weber (1982) include concern as a predictor in eight multivariate models that produce no significant results. When Rossi and Berk (1997) examined crime salience measures, including concern about crime in contextualized analyses, difference of means tests showed there were no significant differences in the impact of concern on seven different measures of punitive attitudes. Despite this finding, concern was generally statistically significant and positively related to punitiveness for the entire sample. Surprisingly, when these researchers used multiple regression to assess possible effects of concern on punitiveness toward different crimes, respondents who were concerned about crime were significantly supportive of harsher sentences for all
crime in general, as well as criminal sentencing for street crimes (Rossi and Berk, 1997). Since so few studies have specifically assessed the effects of concern about crime on punitiveness, it would be difficult to draw conclusions based on the mixed findings reported in the research.

**Racial Attitudes and Punitiveness**

As described earlier in this review of research, it is expected that an individual’s race will influence attitudes about crime and punishment. Similarly, racial attitudes may also be of particular interest as they relate to punitiveness. This is because racial attitudes may tell us what it is about race that predicts preferences for harsh punishment for criminals. Although harboring negative stereotypes and prejudicial feelings about blacks have been hypothesized to influence punitiveness (Miller, 1996; Russell, 1998), there have been relatively few studies that have directly addressed this possibility. I review them here.

There have been a limited number of studies assessing the relevance of racial attitudes for punitiveness. The results of these studies are relatively consistent, with negative attitudes toward blacks leading to more support for punitive criminal justice measures toward adult criminals (Barkan and Cohn, 1994; Borg, 1997; Cohn et al., 1991; Rossi and Berk, 1997) and juvenile offenders (Feiler and Sheley, 1999; Leiber and Woodrick, 1997). Statistical significance is obtained frequently when assessing this relationship. One study found that racial antipathy and racial stereotyping are associated with increased support for the death penalty by whites (Barkan and Cohn, 1994). Those who believe racial minorities are granted too many rights in society are more supportive of the death penalty as well as harsh sentences for all crimes in general, street crimes, drug trafficking, and white collar crimes (Rossi and Berk, 1997).

Research shows that those with negative racial attitudes are also more punitive about juvenile crimes. One study providing respondents with criminal vignettes found that individuals are more likely to desire juvenile transfers to adult court if the offenders

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5 Racial antipathy was operationalized by two items asking respondents to indicate the degree to which they favored or opposed “living in a neighborhood where half your neighbors were Blacks” and “having a close relative or family member marry a Black person.” Racial stereotyping was operationalized by six items asking respondents to indicate on a seven-point scale the degree to which they thought blacks were lazy, unintelligent, desirous of living off welfare, unpatriotic, violent, and poor. The authors used factor analysis to distinguish the prejudice measures from the antipathy measures.
in question are black (Feiler and Sheley, 1999). Leiber and Woodrick (1997) found that negative attitudes about race can increase the willingness to punish harshly. These researchers interviewed juvenile court authorities concerning their perception of whether black families are more distrustful than other families, whether black youths are less apt to acknowledge guilt, and whether black youth have poorer attitudes than white kids. These responses were aggregated into an index of beliefs in racial differences. These beliefs predicted support for the death penalty, although not for other punishments directed at juvenile offenders.

It appears, however, that studies examining racial attitudes in the context of other factors found significant relationships with punitiveness more frequently. For example, in one study whites who are racially prejudiced are more likely to be supportive of harsh courts in their responses to crime than racial minorities who are prejudiced. However, the association between prejudice toward blacks and punitive attitudes was not statistically significant when looking at the entire sample (Cohn et al., 1991). Similarly, Borg (1997) found that antipathy toward blacks (operationalized by how respondents felt about having neighbors who were black and having a close friend or relative marry a black person) and stereotyping blacks (operationalized by an index of beliefs about blacks being lazy, unintelligent, and likely to be on welfare) significantly predicts support for the death penalty for non-southerners, but not for native southerners. This finding suggests that the effects of negative racial attitudes are more consequential for punitiveness in contexts in which policy preferences concerning crime have generally been found to be less harsh. If it is possible that negative feelings about blacks can increase punitiveness, then it seems plausible that perceiving blacks to be disproportionately criminal will also increase punitiveness among members of the public. To date, however, this possibility has yet to be tested empirically.

**Punitive Attitude Research Summary**

By all accounts, the criminal justice system is growing progressively more punitive. The public is also supportive of this punitive tendency. In fact, the public may prefer even more punitive treatment of criminals than the actual penal sanctions
administered by the criminal justice system, as demonstrated by the widespread perception that our increasingly punitive justice system is still too lenient with criminals (Warr, 1995). Unfortunately, clear and consistent conclusions about the specific predictors of individual punitiveness are difficult to come by. Given the inconsistency of findings in the punitiveness literature, it may not be entirely prudent to conclude that any particular demographic trait, characteristic, or attitude will lead to certain increase in punitiveness. However, while not always achieving statistical significance, it does seem that in general, men, white, less educated, older and middle aged, politically conservative and Republican, the religious, Protestant, fundamentalist, evangelical, those fearful of crime, and those with negative perceptions about minorities are more punitive.

As noted, the lack of consistent findings may be attributable to methodological differences or weaknesses inherent to the studies evaluated. Variations of sample size, location, modes of data gathering, variable measurement, and statistical testing, may at least partially explain the lack of consistency in the reported findings. To improve upon research that is currently available, future research should ensure that larger samples are drawn from a greater range of geographic locations, using a variety of data sources, and use more sophisticated statistical techniques to analyze the associations between variables. Most importantly, however, punitive attitudes research would probably be much more useful if future studies sought to use more consistent methodologies and especially operational definitions of punitiveness so that findings could be meaningfully compared across studies.

Some studies operationalize punitive attitudes more effectively than others. This may affect the quality of the results. Research that uses a variety of dependent measures, or that includes indexes of punitive attitudes pertaining to a range of crimes, by a range of different kinds of offenders, seems to have a stronger methodological foundation for making claims about punitiveness. Also, the use of several measures allows the interpretation of the nuances involved in attitudes about punishment. For example, in Miller's et al. (1991) study, attitudes toward different types of crime can be distinguished. It is possible that the public will have distinctly divergent ideas about punishment for violent offenders and disorder offenders. The point, however, is that not all of the studies use equally sophisticated measures of punitive attitudes, and few studies replicate the
measures used by other research. These issues make some comparisons extremely difficult.

Although an impressively wide variety of independent variables have been included in previous studies of punitive attitudes, a relevant omission has been made by not having included an operationalized version of the racial typification of crime, and more specifically the black typification of crime, as a predictor of punitiveness. There are substantial theoretical reasons to believe that perceptions about criminality and race will be associated with higher levels of punitiveness.
CHAPTER 3
RACIAL TYPIFICATION OF CRIME

For several reasons it may more important to understand the images of crime conveyed by a culture than the dynamics of crime itself (Scheingold, 1984). A prevalent representation of crime conveyed by various components of our culture is that it is committed overwhelmingly by young black men. The resulting familiarity many Americans have with the image of a young black man as a violent and menacing street thug is fueled and perpetuated by typifications portrayed widely. In fact, perceptions about crime and the presumed racial identity of criminals may be so ingrained in the public consciousness that race does not even need to be spoken about directly in order for a connection to be made between the two, because “talking about crime is talking about race” (Barlow, 1998:151).

This conception of crime as a problem disproportionately attributable to African Americans is not a new phenomenon (Hawkins, 1995). In describing evolving perceptions of blacks throughout our nation’s history, Marc Mauer (1999) explains that whites have long viewed criminal behavior as an inherent characteristic of blacks. Randall Kennedy (1997) explains that the reputation of blacks has been “besieged” by beliefs about predispositions toward criminality that can be traced back to the enslavement of Africans in this country.

Blacks have almost always been stereotyped as criminals by much of American society (Drummond, 1990; Russell, 2002). Although the association of crime with blackness may have existed for some time, Mauer (1999) explains that it was not until the late 1970s and early 1980s that the popular perception of the young black man evolved in
the eyes of many from a petty thief or rapist into that of an ominous criminal predator, or what Katheryn Russell (2002) has argued is the widely recognized “criminal blackman.”

Blacks have often been portrayed and conceptualized as physically threatening criminals (Chiricos and Eschholz, 2002). However, the current black typification of criminals may be a relatively amplified phenomenon, especially in light of the seemingly more frequent associations made of it (Mauer, 1999; Russell, 2002). The evolving criminal image of blacks appears to be of a more threatening nature than what Mauer (1999) says had been previously considered a general criminal tendency, taken for granted as a “biological flaw” of African Americans. While certainly plausible, conclusive evidence of this supposed evolution in the black typification of crime has not been systematically documented at this time.

If Scheingold’s assertion about the importance of understanding the images of crime conveyed by a culture is indeed true, it follows that an analysis of the representation of American crime as an overwhelmingly black phenomenon is of great importance. Although a “general white stereotype of African Americans as less controlled, and so more violent or more prone to crime than whites” may be adding to the public’s conception of criminality (Higginbotham, 1996:147), several more specific factors may have had an influence on this hypothesized condition, as well. What follows is a brief discussion of several elements that have contributed to the black typification of crime.

**Blacks and Crime**

It is likely that the foremost contributor to the formation of the public’s association between blacks and criminality is the sheer number of blacks represented in crime statistics and the criminal justice system. We would expect that if blacks were disproportionately involved in criminal activity and consequently overrepresented as convicted criminals by the criminal justice system relative to their presence in the general population, they would be perceived as being more involved in crime and criminal justice measures than others. Indeed, the public’s perceptions about black crime are fairly accurate. Awareness of the racial composition of crime may then be a sufficient
explanation for the racial typification of crime. Of course, we know that whites comprise the greatest percentage of criminals and convicts (U.S. Department of Justice, 2004d; 2003a). Although most crime is committed by whites, the common perception is that the majority of it is perpetrated by blacks (Gilens, 1996). In this section I will look at both the public’s perceptions about crime and race as well as the actual involvement of blacks in crime statistics.

**Perceptions of Black Crime**

The public association of criminality with blackness has been referenced in a limited amount of research. One study shows that blacks are more likely than other racial or ethnic group to be characterized by whites as violent, more likely to abuse drugs, and more likely to engage in crime than whites (Sigelman and Tuch, 1997). A General Social Survey (GSS) question in 1990 showed that 54 percent of whites believe that blacks are prone to violence. In 1991, the National Race Survey showed that a clear majority of both whites and blacks agreed with the statement "blacks are aggressive or violent" (Sniderman and Piazza, 1993). In support of these findings, other research indicates that the public generally associates violent street crime with blacks (Hawkins, 1987). Moreover, the results of a more recent study corroborate the prevalence of this belief, because it found that a majority of whites characterize blacks as aggressive (Peffley and Hurwitz, 1998). Other nationwide research has shown that the public perceives that blacks are involved in a greater percentage of violent crime than official statistics indicate they actually are (Welch, Chiricos, and Gertz, 2002).

The United States does not appear to be alone in its receptiveness to the image of a young black man as a criminal threat. Research in Canada has suggested that the "racialization of crime" directly affects the quality of justice received by blacks in that country (Henry, 1996). In this study, a survey was administered to a random sample of Canadians that revealed a strong and widespread belief that blacks are crime prone. Nearly half of the respondents believed that a relationship exists between race and criminality, and of those, 65 percent thought that black people committed more crimes than other racial or ethnic groups. Another similar study of this hypothesized relationship has shown that race and crime stereotyping has been observed in other countries, and that
both foreign and domestic typifications may be grounded in beliefs about the causes of crime and who is likely to become criminal (Hawkins, 1987).

**Actual Black Involvement in Crime**

Blacks are indeed involved in a disproportional amount of crime in general, and violent crime in particular (Blumstein, 1982; Harer and Steffensmeier, 1993; Tonry, 1995; Wilson, 1987). In fact, for violent crimes like robbery and homicide, there have been times when blacks were arrested in absolute numbers that surpassed those of whites (Flanagan and Jamieson, 1988; Young, 1985). In more recent years, however, although blacks did not surpass the actual number of whites in nationwide arrests, their presence in these statistics has been greater than their representation in the general public. For example, although blacks comprise approximately 13 percent of the United States population, in 2002 they accounted for 38 percent of arrests for violent crimes and nearly 30 percent of arrests for property crimes. Juvenile arrest statistics indicate that during the same year, black youth accounted for approximately 43 percent of arrests for violent crimes and 27 percent of arrests for property crimes (U.S. Department of Justice, 2004e). Researchers have suggested that crime committed by African Americans may be especially salient not only because it exceeds what would be expected based on the racial composition of the country, but also perhaps because the violent crimes that tend to be most fearsome are the ones that are most disproportionately perpetrated by black men (Kennedy, 1997; Stinchcombe et al., 1980). Though the actual involvement of blacks in crime may be a sufficient basis for perceptions that exist, a number of observers have raised the possibility that other factors may contribute to the black typification of crime. These factors are discussed in the following sections.

**The War on Drugs**

The well-known war on drugs of the 1980s was a powerful contributor to the typification of criminals as black. This well researched war on drugs, initially waged in the early 1980s by the Reagan administration, had a significant impact on the black population by funneling much of it through the criminal justice system as a result of the passage of strict crack cocaine laws (Austin and Irwin, 2001; Currie, 1998; Mauer, 1999; Miller, 1996; Reiman, 1998; Tonry, 1995; Wilson, 1987). Crack was generally recognized as a relatively inexpensive drug that was predominantly used by impoverished
racial minorities. The pervasive dialog regarding this war conveyed the message to the public that the problem of crack cocaine, thought previously to be common only to minority communities, was suddenly spreading to a very anxious white America (Chiricos, 1996).

Americans were already familiar with cocaine before the war on drugs, however. Prior to the so-called "crack epidemic," powder cocaine was prevalent in white communities, with little acknowledgement from law enforcement (Reeves and Campbell, 1994). It is only when this drug was transformed into a relatively affordable and accessible variety that began to be used predominantly by blacks that it became a prioritized target of policymakers and the criminal justice system. This helped to promote punitive policies that have hit the black population especially hard as Tonry (1995:105), among others, has noted:

Urban black Americans have borne the brunt of the War on Drugs. They have been arrested, prosecuted, convicted, and imprisoned at increasing rates since the early 1980s, and grossly out of proportion to their numbers in the general population or among drug users. By every standard, the war has been harder on blacks than on whites.

National crime surveys indicate that most racial and ethnic groups consume illegal drugs at approximately similar rates (Katz, 2000). Specifically, whites account for almost 75 percent of the nation's illegal drug users and blacks account for about 13 percent, which is consistent with their representations in the greater U.S. population. Blacks, however, account for about 75 percent of the nation's drug prisoners, which reveals the extreme disparity manifest in the national crackdown on the drug problem (Katz, 2000). The sale and use of crack cocaine, which is typically used by racial minorities, carried with it heavier criminal penalties than those associated with other illegal drugs like powder cocaine, which has been used more often by whites. This has resulted in a highly disproportionate number of blacks that have been criminalized because of their drug use (Austin and Irwin, 2001; Mauer, 1999; Miller, 1996; Reiman, 1998; Tonry, 1995).

The suggestion has been made that the war on drugs may have been more appropriately referenced as a war on blacks or a war on black drug use (Tonry, 1995). Because of the overrepresentation of African Americans who are processed through the
criminal justice system directly resulting from the war on drugs, they have been depicted as the primary source of this country’s drug problem. The consequence is that many may have come to associate blacks with drug use and drug use with blacks. The consumption of illicit drugs, therefore, may be a very specific racially typified phenomenon. In addition to being illegal themselves, drugs are frequently related to other types of crime, like robbery and assault. This fact reinforces the association of blacks with crime and crime with blacks.

**Blacks and Punishment**

As previously noted, it is commonly known that the criminal justice system encounters and processes a number of minority offenders that far surpasses their representation in the general population (Mauer, 1999; Miller, 1996; Myers and Talerico, 1986; Sniderman and Carmines, 1997). For some, this may corroborate the common notion that being black equates with criminality. One possible source of the racial typification of crime may be the prolific presence of blacks in the American court system. Studies on race and sentencing have shown that young black men are sentenced more severely than members of other racial or ethnic groups (Crawford et al., 1998; Mauer, 1999; Miller, 1996; Steffensmeier et al., 1998). Research on the racial treatment of defendants in court proceedings has shown that prosecutors sometimes take advantage of and perpetuate racial stereotypes by characterizing African Americans as particularly prone to violent criminality, which result in higher conviction rates (Higginbotham, 1996). It is reasonable to expect that prosecutors will persist with this kind of practice if it produces more successful outcomes for the state and themselves. When the public sees such a large proportion of those being convicted and sentenced to punishment by the criminal court system to be black, the message communicated may very well be that blackness and criminality are inextricably related.

It would appear that whatever racial differences may exist at the level of behavior may be somewhat amplified by differences at the level of incarceration, as well as other
forms of criminal sanctions.\textsuperscript{6} It is widely recognized that a disproportionate number of African Americans are under some sort of correctional supervision (Currie, 1998; Katz, 2000; Mauer, 1999; Miller, 1996; 1994; 1992; Tonry, 1995; Wilson, 1987). Almost 25 percent of black men ages 20-29 are under some form of correctional authority (Austin and Irwin, 2001). African Americans are almost seven times more likely to be incarcerated than whites, which means that the odds that a black man will do time at some point in his life are one in three, and for whites, it is one in 25 (Katz, 2000).

Encountering some sort of criminal punishment from the justice system has become something of an expectation for many young, urban, black men (Bridges et al., 1987; Hagan and Albonetti, 1982; Miller, 1992). The threat of being incarcerated has become an almost expected part of life for blacks, because, statistically, many minority boys and men will be punished by the criminal justice system at some point during their lives (Austin and Irwin, 2001). It is clear that “the confluence of issues of race and class with the prison system have become a fundamental feature of the national landscape” (Mauer, 1999:3). Not surprisingly, awareness of this statistical fact has been a catalyst for recent dialogue and policy concerning racial profiling by law enforcement officers (Kennedy, 1997; Miller, 1996).

Jerome Miller has conducted several studies of the criminal justice system in various cities over the past decade. One in particular showed that 56 percent of young black men were under correctional supervision in Baltimore on any given day, and 42 percent in Washington D.C. were in a similar situation (Miller, 1992). He explains that the "get tough" policies are taking an exceptionally heavy toll on black men, their families, and their communities. Extracting such a substantial percentage of individuals from already struggling minority communities, is certain to have a disrupting impact on many who remain non-institutionalized (Rose and Clear, 1998). When the criminal justice system processes more blacks than colleges do, the implications for the black population are profound.

\textsuperscript{6} This issue has been met with much controversy since Blumstein (1982) argued that the disproportional incarceration rates for blacks are directly attributable to their greater involvement in crime as measured by arrest rates, and presumably criminal activity. Tonry (1995) agrees that the primary reason that rates of incarceration are substantially higher for blacks is that blacks commit more imprisonable crimes than whites. However, Tonry argues that this is not the case for sanctions for certain drug crimes, as these punishments target black users rather than whites who use the same drugs in different forms. Therefore, black drug users are likelier to be incarcerated than white drug users simply because of the specific form of drug consumed.
community and the nation as a whole have been described as quite troubling (Austin and Irwin, 2001; Miller, 1996).

**Black Crime and Justice in the Media**

Aside from the actual involvement of blacks in crime and the criminal justice system, other potential contributors to the typification of criminals as young black men may be various media sources. The media provide readily accessible depictions of criminality, which may help to shape perceptions about crime. Research aimed at examining the racial content of televised newscasts in Chicago found that they commonly portray accused black criminals in scowling mug shots or in video clips being led in handcuffs by white police officers (Entman, 1990). In fact, it is well established that there is a disproportionate amount of the media coverage devoted to violent crimes for which black men are more likely than others to be arrested (Chiricos and Eschholz, 2002; Surrêtte, 1992; Young, 1985). Thus, “the image of violent criminals as young black males is routinely reinforced” (Young, 1985:475).

In recognition of this, one study argues that African Americans are “demonized” by the faces chosen to depict criminality in crime news stories (Gerbner, 2003). The presumption of this connection has been corroborated by Anderson (1995:52) who observed:

> Crime news in America's cities portrayed an apparently endless parade of young black men under arrest, on trial, or headed for prison; it did not take too long for the automatic, barely conscious association of blacks with crime to become an assumption of urban life.

These images are so ubiquitous that it would not be surprising if much of American society has subconsciously come to accept the visual portrayal of blacks as criminals in contemporary society. A recent analysis of *Time* and *Newsweek* cover stories over several decades has supported this contention (Barlow, 1998).

The media and those that are captured on film, such as politicians and government leaders, frequently link race and crime, which reinforces a criminal image for the public's consumption (St. John and Heald-Moore, 1995). This development has seemingly
increased in recent years, and is apparently well-received by American voters. The “racial politics” conveyed by media is not a new phenomenon, and has been employed in order to gain constituent support at various points in this country’s history, including the 1960s, pursuant to the concern about blacks and the strengthening civil rights movement (Barlow, 1998).

The "get tough" advertising rhetoric of politicians, conservative and liberal alike, who seek to elevate partisan popularity, frequently manipulates the fear and indignation of citizens by conjuring fright-inducing images. Among the most iconic of those images were photographs of Willie Horton, the African American prison inmate who committed rape while out of prison on work furlough. Images of Willie Horton were included on political advertisements sponsored by George Bush's campaign in order to disparage candidate Michael Dukakis for his purported permissive and “liberal” stance on crime and punishment. The message sent to the public was that this young black man, and presumably any young black offender like him, was responsible for the violent crime in the United States (Chiricos and Eschholz, 2002; Jamieson, 1992; Mendelberg, 1997). This image was intended to serve as the visual representation of a criminal predator for fearful Americans (Tonry, 1995).

More recently, images of John Allen Muhammad, the convicted Washington D.C. area sniper killer, and his young companion, John Lee Malvo, have received a great deal of media coverage and consumed substantial political energy, stirring public demands for governmental action. To the initial surprise of law enforcement, these serial killers turned out to be young black men. Their photographs ubiquitously appeared in nearly every news medium available. And, with one of them having a name like Muhammad, avoiding the association of race with their criminality would likely be difficult for even the least racially prejudiced members of society. It was unnecessary for politicians, in this circumstance, to make any comments about the race of these perpetrators in reference to these sniper shootings, because it is a connection that will be made by the public simply because the photographs of these two offenders were available everywhere. One result of this situation is the possible generalization about black men as fearsome violent criminals, despite the reality that this type of serial predatory violence is actually relatively rare among African Americans in the United States (Katz, 1988).
Researchers commonly acknowledge that the impact of media images can be extremely powerful (Mauer, 1999). Media studies have found

Amongst other kinds of ideological labour, the media construct for us a definition of what race is, what meaning the imagery of race carries, and what the “problem of race” is understood to be. They help to classify out the world in terms of the categories of race. The media are not only a powerful source of ideas about race. They are also one place where these ideas are articulated, worked on, transformed, and elaborated. (Hall, 1981:90)

Since media presumably have the power to help construct the meaning of race in our society, it is apparent that they play an important role in defining blacks as criminals because of the way they are often presented to readers and viewers. For many, this “visual representation can be assimilated to a larger, undifferentiated group, in this case the stereotype of a dangerous black male” (Entman, 1992:350).

Research on media influence has concluded that blacks are indeed more likely to appear as criminally threatening on local television news, suggesting that this may encourage the social construction of threat in relation to blacks (Chiricos and Eschholz, 2002). Two empirical studies on blacks and crime in the media, which encompassed 55 days of observing local television news in Chicago, found that many news stories feature blacks in a negative light. The research discovered that blacks are often portrayed as threatening, and were frequently depicted without using a name, which would serve to denote personal identity (Entman, 1992; 1990). In defining this practice as a component of “modern racism,” Entman (1992:350) asserts that

Prejudice is fed by a tendency to homogenize, to assume there are no significant differences among individual members of the outgroup. When blacks are not given a name in a picture, it suggests the visual representation can be assimilated to a larger, undifferentiated group, in this case the stereotype of a dangerous black male.

This aspect of modern racism, then, can be understood as a crime-specific form of racial prejudice and discrimination.

The manner in which black suspects appear may be more influential in terms of how the public perceives black criminals than how often blacks appear as criminals.

Chiricos and Eschholz (2002) reviewed eight studies assessing the representation of
blacks in local television news coverage and found that, for the most part, blacks and whites were depicted as criminals at nearly similar rates. Their own analysis of Orlando television news showed that although African Americans were not over represented among alleged criminals on local crime news, blacks who appeared on television in any role were more than twice as likely to appear as criminal suspects than whites. That is, when blacks and whites were shown in local television news stories, blacks were much more likely than their white counterparts to be portrayed as criminals, as opposed to police officers, role models, news commentators, or other positive figures. Chiricos and Eschholz (2002) termed this the “criminal typification of race.” Additionally, they found that the criminal typification of blacks in television newscasts occurs 2.4 times more often than the criminal typification of whites (Chiricos and Eschholz, 2002). A qualitative analysis of the Orlando newscasts indicated that blacks are often represented in more threatening contexts than whites (Chiricos and Eschholz, 2002). Specifically, blacks were more often shown in mug shots, or having victimized a stranger, or someone of a different race. Thus, the qualitative aspects of race and crime in a news story may be as consequential as the frequency with which blacks appear as criminals in helping to shape public perceptions about race and criminal threat.

The equation of race and crime has also been developed at the level of celebrity. It has been hypothesized that the recent media focus on black athletes accused of committing crimes, like Kobe Bryant, Mike Tyson, Ray Lewis, Jason Williams, and Allen Iverson, is serving to reinforce the perception that blacks are more menacing than criminals of other races (Greek, 2001). Apparently, the “demonization” of Black men by the media as violent rapists and murderers is well documented by scholars interested in film and rap music as well (Dines, 1998). Black men in the entertainment industry that have recently encountered criminal allegations, like Sean “Puff Daddy” Combs, 50 Cent, R. Kelly, and “Snoop Doggy Dogg” may have also strengthened the association that many make between blacks and crime.

Although several media-inspired “moral panics” have stirred public fear about race and crime, few have been more prominent and long-lasting than media reports and depictions pertaining to violence and the war on drugs. Among the features of these portrayals are included a dramatic increase in the sheer number of media reports and the
depiction of urban minority problems spreading to white suburbia (Chiricos, 1996). In referencing crime media coverage concerning the nationwide crackdown on drugs, Tonry (1995:105) has stated that

Newspapers, television, and movies regularly portray trafficking in cocaine and crack as characteristic of inner-city minority neighborhoods. Any mildly informed person in the late 1980s knew that the major fronts in the drug wars were located in minority neighborhoods.

Along these lines, media also communicated that these same communities were the prime targets of the drug war.

In order to assess the hypothesized black typification of crime among the public, one study in particular sought to learn about public perceptions of different types of criminals (Mauer, 1999). At UCLA, researchers conducted an experiment in which subjects viewed all crime stories broadcast on television newscasts. In some of these stories offenders were identified, and in others they were not. The research found that even in the instances in which references were not made to criminal suspects, 42 percent of the viewers recalled that they saw one. In two-thirds of these cases the viewers recalled that the suspects were black (Mauer, 1999). These findings underscore the ease with which crime is racially typified.

**The Racial Hoax**

The mere existence of the racial hoax, which is a false allegation of involvement in criminal activity that is based on the race of a fabricated perpetrator, offers support to the notion that blacks have been typified in criminally coded ways. Racial hoaxes are usually employed in order to deflect attention away from the individual making the accusation, who is typically the actual criminal in any of these circumstances. Not surprisingly, the use of this decoy has had the most direct and consequential impact on the black community, since the racial hoax has most frequently referenced a nameless black offender (Russell, 1998; 2002).

The supposed purpose of specifying the race of an invented offender is to exploit pre-existing notions about racial proclivities for committing crime in order to add a
component of believability to the false accusation. This highlights the unfortunate state of much of “the public’s prevailing view of crime—that Blacks run amok committing depraved, unprovoked acts of violence against Whites” (Russell, 2002:354). A practice called “inferential racism” has been identified as one source that sustains the persistence of the racial hoax by depicting

apparently naturalized representations of events and situations relating to race, whether ‘factual’ or ‘fictional,’ which have racist premises and propositions inscribed in them as a set of unquestioned assumptions. These enable racist statements to be formulated without ever bringing into awareness the racist predicates on which the statements are grounded. (Hall, 2003:91)

Therefore, the phenomenon of black typification of crime must exist at some level in order for the racial hoax to be at all compelling.

Several recent examples of individuals using racial hoaxes to provoke a misdirected search for a falsified black predator have elicited a fair amount of media coverage. Sixty-seven incidents of racial hoaxes between 1987 and 1996 were identified by Russell (1998), though not all received equal media coverage. The incident that has probably received the greatest amount of attention is the situation involving Susan Smith’s 1994 killing of her two children. In order to misdirect the investigation, Smith told emergency operators as well as both state and federal law enforcement official that she had been carjacked by a young black man while her sons were in the car. This elicited widespread concern and offers of assistance to this supposed white victim of a ruthless black crime. It was a couple of weeks after the event that Smith admitted to having murdered her own children by drowning them in her vehicle.

There were several other memorable racial hoaxes involving white accusers and fictional black criminals in the 1990s. These include Robert Harris who hired a hit-man to shoot and kill his fiancée, but claimed that the perpetrator was an armed black man in camouflage (Russell, 1998). In another instance, Jesse Anderson told the police that two black men had stabbed him and his wife, resulting in her death, only to have investigators discover later that Anderson had killed her (Russell, 2002). In addition, Miriam Kashani, a woman claiming to have been raped on a college campus by two young black men later admitted that she had made up the story in order to heighten rape-awareness among the
student body (Russell, 2002). In all of these instances of individuals using a racial hoax, there is no apparent reason to have identified the suspect as black except to capitalize on society’s fears and anxieties about a racialized criminal type.

The use of the racial hoax exploits pre-existing ideas about young black men’s involvement with crime, but it also serves to propagate it by further providing violent and threatening examples of unknown threatening black criminals. This point is well expressed by Katheryn Russell (2002:354), who notes “Not only does the hoax perpetuate the existing lore regarding the Black male as criminal, it also helps to create it.” The more the racial hoax is used, by accusing fictitious blacks of committing falsified crimes, the more the racial typification of crime is solidified in the public psyche.

**Summarizing the Racial Typification of Crime**

The recognizability of the image of a young black male criminal has been the result of various representations of crime. Contributions to this relationship that many identify between African Americans and criminality include actual involvement in crime, especially crack cocaine violations and violent offenses. Blacks do account for a disproportionate amount of crime arrests and are disproportionately convicted and incarcerated. But public estimates of black criminality may surpass the reality. The media perpetuate ideas linking race with criminality, which have also been reinforced by political agendas. The temporary efficacy of using a racial hoax to mislead the public has capitalized on and strengthened views about race and crime. All of these phenomena have served to solidify the iconography of the young black man as a criminal threat in contemporary American society.
CHAPTER 4
LINKING PUNITIVE ATTITUDES AND
THE RACIAL TYPIFICATION OF CRIME

Some have suggested that one reason for the intense public support for punitive discourse and criminal justice policies is the popular belief that crime, and more specifically violent crime, is generally perpetrated by young black men (Beckett and Sasson, 2000; Crawford et al., 1998; Dines, 1998; Gilens, 1996; Hawkins, 1987; Higginbotham, 1996; Mauer, 1999; Miller, 1996; 1994; 1992; Russell, 1998; Sidel, 1996; Sniderman and Carmines, 1997; Tonry, 1995; Young, 1985). As noted in the introduction, among those who have conjectured that there is a link between the black typification of crime and punitive attitudes of the public is Jerome Miller (1994) who has argued that the equation of race with crime represents a “rhetorical wink”.

There are certain code words that allow you never to have to say race, but everybody knows that's what you mean -- and crime is one of those rhetorical winks. So when we talk about locking up more and more people, what we're really talking about is locking up more and more black men.

Essentially, he suggests that crime is a code for a black problem and that punitiveness is really a code for punishing blacks, since that is who this country is processing through the criminal justice system at unprecedented rates. This argument has also been made by Robert Young (1985:476), who argued that

if the idea of ‘criminal’ brings to mind a black male, the likelihood of an aggressive response to crime should be increased by feelings of antipathy toward blacks. Such aggressiveness could manifest itself in the form of increased support for harsher treatment of criminals.
According to several researchers, crime control is apparently race-coded, which means that supporters of punitive policies may exploit whites’ negative views of blacks without explicitly raising the issue of race (Edsall and Edsall, 1991; Gilens, 1996; Katz, 2000; Miller, 1996; 1994; 1992; Peffley and Hurwitz, 1998; Sidel, 2000). Pervasive punitive discourse may capitalize on negative perceptions about blacks without even mentioning race in discussions about crime and punishment, because it is assumed to be already closely linked by many. In the case of many young black men in the throes of the criminal justice system, an individual’s race is often a primary subtext or an unspoken code that helps create the perception of criminals as “The Other,” an abnormal and distinct group (Katz, 2000). It is possible that this portrayal of black men as “other” has led to what Gail Dines (1998:451) has said is the legitimization of the “mass incarceration of Black men, police brutality, and right-wing government policy.” Perceptions about blacks being punished by the criminal justice system may intensify notions of minority criminality, which may further encourage the punishment of black criminals.

Arguments like this have been supported by research. One study shows that those who believe that welfare is primarily a black phenomenon are more unsupportive, and indeed, punitive about granting it (Gilens, 1996). The race-neutral language pertaining to welfare allows whites’ thinking to be molded by negative perceptions of blacks without having to acknowledge the racial stereotypes that are implicit. Gilens (1996) concluded that political matters, like crime and welfare, are now coded issues that exploit whites’ negative opinions about blacks without having to play the “race card.” Since this research found that the racial representation of blacks as welfare recipients has caused an increase in punitive attitudes toward welfare, the author hypothesized that punitive attitudes toward criminals will likewise increase as a direct result of the typification of criminals as black men (Gilens, 1996).

This racially implicit “coded subtext of discourse” about crime and punishment is worth further exploration. On several occasions, Dario Melossi has called attention to what he calls “vocabularies of punitive motive.” This refers to the discourse or rhetoric of politicians and others that may be instrumental in the mobilization of support for enacting punitive criminal justice policies. In our current cultural climate it would
probably be quite politically unpopular to garner support for harsh criminal penalties by bluntly equating crime with race, but it is possible that this has happened in more discreet or indirect ways. An examination of race-coded issues has called attention to the possibility that issues involving racial perceptions, crime, and punitiveness can be attractive to some individuals because they allow the exploitation of racial antipathy while shielding themselves from accusations of “race-baiting” (Martin Gilens, 1996). As a result of this, these individuals may be more successful in stimulating demands for harsher criminal penalties. The stability of these codes linking race, crime, and punishment has seemed to only intensify much of society’s perceptions about crime and black men.

Sampson and Laub (1993) observe that American society in the 1990s has intertwined race, class, and drugs in a new way. They suggest that the racial typification of blacks as poor criminal drug users has prompted the implementation of more numerous and harsher justice policies. This recent trend of increasing punitiveness toward drug offenders suggests that especially powerful code words, such as “gang member” and “underclass,” may also contribute to the race, crime, punishment association (Sampson and Laub, 1993). Since it is generally thought that gang members and members of the underclass are comprised predominantly of minorities, the words "gang" and "underclass" are also coded language used to promote punitive policies that will disproportionately target blacks. Typifying blacks as gang members, drug users, or part of the underclass ensures that juveniles also will contribute to society’s "rhetorical wink," since many are members of street gangs and the underclass. They may, therefore, also be a targeted by public punitiveness. In fact, several researchers have examined the association between offenses committed by juveniles that are racially coded and purported predictors of public punitiveness, the results of which produced highly inconsistent findings regarding which characteristics predict more punitiveness toward juveniles (Grasmick and McGill, 1994; Grasmick et al., 1993; Schwartz et al., 1993; Skovron et al., 1989; Sprott, 1999).

One explanation for the connection between the black typification of crime and preference for punitive policies in the last several decades may in fact be the growing availability of criminal images through the television media. The two principal elements
of crime news are that crime is violent and that criminals are racial or ethnic minorities
(Gilliam et al., 1996; Entman, 1992; 1990). Some argue that the media's portrayal of
blacks has been used as a rationale for the demands for harsh criminal policies by our
television crime news and the new reality crime programs associate
Blackness and crime and do so in emotionally charged ways that
courage punitiveness among the viewing public

A quasi-experimental study discovered that exposure to television news led white
subjects to similarly support negative beliefs about blacks and punitive crime policies,
like mandatory minimum sentencing laws and the death penalty (Gilliam and Iyengar,
2000). Although not directly assessing the possibility that media effects might contribute
to higher levels of support for punitiveness among the public, one study conjectured that
punitiveness may be a result of both the “racial typification of crime” and the “criminal
typification of race” (Chiricos and Eschholz, 2002). Specifically, Chiricos and Eschholz
(2002:400) observe that “local TV news may contribute to the social construction of
threat in relation to Blacks…, a condition that is associated with fear of crime, ‘modern
racism,’ and the mobilization of various social controls and exclusions.”

In addition to the direct influences of the media and “coded” discourse on the
formation of the link between race and crime and punitive attitudes, it is possible that
these indirectly strengthen the link by capitalizing on pre-existing racial prejudice. Some
research has identified racial prejudice as a contributor to the identification of young
black men as criminals. Ruth Sidel (1998:68), in referencing society's varied punitive
responses to blacks as well as others perceived as being ineluctably “bad,” has asserted

The willingness (some would say eagerness) to execute selected convicted
criminals (most of whom are poor and the vast majority of whom are
African-American), the emphasis on building jails rather than focusing on
prevention, the imposition of severe mandatory sentences for a variety of
crimes, not necessarily only for the most heinous, is the result of the belief
among policy makers and a substantial percentage of the populace that
"these people" are beyond redemption, that they are, perhaps, a species
apart and must be controlled by virtually any means.

The supposed relationship between crime-related racial prejudice and punitiveness was
similarly hypothesized by Stinchcombe et al. (1980:3), who contend that
We can find out, for example, whether people who live nearer ghettos are more punitive. (They are not). We can also find out whether people who are more prejudiced against blacks are more punitive. (They are).

Though they did not have supporting empirical evidence, they conjectured that people who are racially prejudiced are more punitive. Whatever the merits of this hypothesis, in the present study I examine the relationship between racial typification of crime and punitiveness, controlling for racial prejudice.

Others have suggested that it possible that fear of crime and victimization may be contributing to this association. James Q. Wilson (1992:A16) said that “it is not racism that makes whites uneasy about blacks…it is fear. Fear of crime, of drugs, of gangs, of violence.” A racialized fear of crime and victimization may actually be a principal source of white racism. Other research corroborates the contention that fear could be an important factor in constructing a criminal threat posed by blacks by conjecturing that fear of crime makes people punitive (Stinchcombe et al., 1980). This study argues that when feelings of apprehension about crime are associated with blacks, there is a possibility that punitiveness is intensified. Though numerous studies on the predictors of punitiveness include measures of fear of crime, findings have largely lacked statistical significance. It seems that the relationship between fear of crime and punitiveness may not be so clear. Though blacks are over-represented in the criminal justice system, this cannot totally explain negative racial attitudes. Fear is not generated simply by being in dangerous situations, but from recognizing those situations as being dangerous (Stinchcombe et al., 1980). This recognition of high-risk situations may very well be a racial code if individuals become fearful upon recognizing that they are in a precarious situation caused by an association among race and crime. But it is possible that there is something other than the creation of racial codes, media portrayals of blacks, racial prejudice, and fear of crime that is operating to strengthen the relationship between the black typification of crime and punitive attitudes.

Social Threat
A study of the relationship between punitive attitudes and the racial typification of crime can be seen in the larger theoretical context of what has been called social threat and social control. This perspective originated from Hubert M. Blalock Jr.'s (1967) power-threat model, which originally linked aggregate measures of racial composition of place with various indicators of discrimination. The theory behind social threat and social control specifically suggests that what Blalock (1967) called the likelihood of “discrimination” is exacerbated by a political and economic threat to whites posed by a growing number of blacks. The “social threat” hypothesis (Liska, 1992) expands the power threat model by linking the racial composition of place, usually operationalized as the percent black in a specific community or neighborhood, to more frequent and intense pursuits for social control, typically represented by aggregate measures such as rates of arrest (Liska, Chamlin, and Reed, 1985; Harer and Steffensmeier, 1993; Liska, 1992), resources available to law enforcement (Chamlin, 1989; Chamlin and Liska, 1992; Greenberg, Kessler, and Loftin, 1985), and incarceration rates (Bridges, Crutchfield, and Simpson, 1987; Chamlin, 1989; Liska, 1992; Liska and Chamlin, 1984; Padgett, 2002).

Recently, Chiricos et al., (2001) have suggested that at the core of these macro-level processes are a variety of “micro processes” that make the aggregate relationships between threat and punitiveness possible. Essentially, they argue that implicit micro-processes at the individual level are needed in order for the macro-level processes to exist. In testing this idea, research has frequently explored the extent to which fear of crime and victimization, which could help to mobilize social control, is associated with the actual or perceived racial composition of place (Chiricos et al., 2001; Covington and Taylor, 1991; Liska et al., 1982; Taylor and Covington, 1993; Skogan, 1995).

It is argued that micro processes like the perceived threat of crime in relation to the presence of blacks could lead individuals to pursue increased social control. This has, in fact, been documented by Warner (1992) in relation to calls to the police for assistance. Macro-level measures of social control may coincide with macro-level measures of the racial composition of place because the proximity of racial minorities, particularly African-Americans, increases individual level fear of criminal victimization (Chiricos et al., 2001). This, then, could serve to mobilize certain control oriented micro-processes, including punitive reactions among the public (Chiricos et al., 2001).
The possibility clearly exists that the image of blacks as one that is criminal could be contributing to social threat in a new way (Crawford et al., 1998). Racial threat, a somewhat specific sub-classification of the power-threat and social threat hypotheses, appears to closely entwine race with personal apprehension about criminal victimization. Further, some hypothesize that these elements are manifested in the support for a variety of punitive criminal justice policies and practices.

While the racial composition of communities has typically been used as a quantifiable indicator of the level of social threat present, it is reasonable to argue that the racial typification of crime could serve as an alternative and possibly more direct measure of racialized threat. In short, while racial composition of place is one possible indicator of social threat presented by blacks, the black typification of crime may be yet another. In fact, if racial composition of place is consequential for social control, it is probably because people equate crime with blacks and seek control. Any link discovered between the racial typification of crime and support for punitiveness would additionally demonstrate an individual level micro process that is necessary for the macro relationships described by the social threat hypothesis to obtain. If this connection between punitive attitudes and the black typification of crime exists, race and the putative threat that it may present for certain segments of our society are matters that need to be better understood. That is what the present research now explores.
CHAPTER 5
DATA AND METHODS

Research Hypothesis

The primary hypothesis of this research is that individuals who perceive that crime is committed more often by African-Americans are more likely to support severe criminal justice sanctions than those who do not share a similarly racialized conceptualization of criminality. Furthermore, in this dissertation I will assess the individual characteristics that predict both support for punitive policies and the racial typification of crime. With regard to the latter, there has been no previous research laying empirical groundwork for what these predictors may be, so this part of my research is necessarily exploratory. In addition, I look at whether consumption of television news may indirectly affect punitive preferences by increasing the perception that crime is disproportionately committed by blacks. These relationships are examined in the context of several attitudinal and respondent characteristics in order to assess whether the relationship between the black typification of crime and punitiveness is manifested in a qualitatively different manner for those in different contexts.

Sample

Data for this research were obtained from a survey of a national sample conducted between January and April of 2002. I supervised the administration of the survey at The Research Network, a public opinion polling firm in Tallahassee, Florida. A two-stage Mitofsky-Waksberg sampling design was utilized, ensuring that the telephone numbers
randomly generated by computer were stratified to most accurately reflect the geographic
distribution of the population.\footnote{A Mitofsky-Waksberg sampling technique first selects phone numbers according to populations and area
codes and then narrows the selection to minimize the selection of non-residential phone numbers.} A sample of 885 completed surveys by respondents (18 years and older) was achieved. A 40 percent cooperation rate was reached, which means that interviews were completed for 40 percent of all contacts with eligible respondents.\footnote{This cooperation rate is based on the definition recommended by the American Association for Public
Opinion Research (1998).} Of all surveys initiated, 93 percent were completed.

The final sample was 56 percent female, 81 percent white, 8.7 percent black, 7.5
percent Hispanic, and 50 percent age 46 or older. The over-representation of white,
female, and older respondents is not uncommon for telephone surveys (Lavrakas, 1987).
It is possible that some degree of discrepancy is attributable to the fact that the survey
sample comprises only adult respondents, whereas population statistics include those
younger than 18. Although this is probably not a relevant factor for the differences in
gender, it would certainly affect the median age of respondents. It might also partially
explain the divergence in racial distributions.

\textbf{Survey Procedures}

I constructed the survey instrument specifically for use in this research. Most of
the questions, especially pertaining to the racial typification of crime, are original. The
survey includes 43 substantive and 11 demographic and background questions (see
Appendix A), and took an average of approximately 15 minutes to administer. The
Florida State University Human Subjects Committee approved the survey instrument and
plan for administering it on January 17, 2002 (see Appendix B). A detailed prompt sheet
was provided to interviewers in order for interviewers to provide consistent responses to
a variety of respondents’ questions that may have arisen during survey interviews (see
Appendix C).

Interviewers attended three training sessions that I conducted prior to
administering the survey pre-tests and the survey. Forty undergraduate criminology and
criminal justice majors at Florida State University enrolled in the Practical Survey Research course that I instructed during the Spring, 2002 semester. In this class, I taught students how to interview respondents over the telephone using this survey instrument, focusing on proper procedures and techniques. The students had all previously completed a basic university level research methods course. I did not establish a minimum number of surveys that students were required to complete, and they were not given incentives to increase the number of surveys that were finished by respondents. This was done in order to ensure there would be no undue pressure on students to perform or violate ethical principals. Course grades were recorded as either “pass” or “fail,” with all students in attendance at class meetings and calling shifts receiving passing grades. Callers worked five hour shifts, and during each shift I monitored student interviewer contacts with respondents and potential respondents to assure consistency and quality. A pre-test was done in order to ensure the clarity of questions and to give callers some practice administering the instrument before the surveys were included in this research. I implemented an eight call-back rule in an attempt to have callers contact as many individuals at eligible telephone numbers as possible. Over ten percent of the sample received verification telephone calls to ensure interviewer ethicality and respondent reliability. On average, each student caller completed 22 surveys with eligible respondents.

**Analytic Strategy**

Bivariate correlations are first examined before the data are analyzed using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression. Multiple regression is used to examine the effects of the independent variable on the dependent variable for the full sample, while controlling for other potential influences. Then I subdivide the sample by various contextual categories to examine the possible presence of important interactions. When samples are split in order to assess interactions, I use the method recommended by

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9 Students called phone numbers at which no one answered up to eight different times on various occasions in order to reach as many households as possible.
Paternoster, Brame, Mazerolle, and Piquero (1998) to test for whether there are statistically significant differences in slopes for the primary independent variables of interest across the separate sub-samples. The statistical models are tested for possible violations of regression assumptions, and corrected when necessary. There are no apparent problems of multicollinearity, with tolerance levels consistently above .70 and no bivariate correlations that are greater than .34. In addition, VIF values do not exceed 1.48. Results of Modified Glesjer tests indicate that the assumption of homoskedasticity is not violated.

**Primary Variables of Interest**

**Punitive Attitudes**

Punitiveness has been measured in a variety of ways in previous research, ranging from levels of support for the death penalty to judgements about the severity of juvenile sanctions to the assignment of criminal penalties for an assortment of crimes through the use of vignettes. In this research, eight questions gauging punitiveness of respondents were employed. Each uses a 0-10 scale to assess support for five adult criminal sanctions and three juvenile delinquency sanctions. Respondents were asked to tell interviewers how much they supported each of the following proposals: Making sentences more severe for all crimes; Executing more murderers; Making prisoners work on chain gangs; Taking away television and recreation privileges from prisoners; Using more mandatory minimum sentencing statutes, like “3 Strikes” for repeat offenders; Locking up more juvenile offenders; Using the death penalty for juveniles who murder; Sending repeat juvenile offenders to adult courts. The highest mean score of the eight items was for mandatory minimum sentencing (7.2), and the lowest mean score was for incarcerating more juvenile offenders (4.2). Factor analysis was used to create an index

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10 Because previous research suggests the possibility that a substantial number of characteristics can predict punitiveness under certain circumstances, it is not possible to include all relevant variables. This exclusion of relevant variables may violate the regression assumption regarding specification.

11 Although the survey asked respondents five additional questions in an attempt to gauge support for punitive policies, these are excluded because of their simplistic nature, their nominal measurement, and the lack of information provided by them. In addition, unlike the eight items used in this research, these are not significantly correlated with each other.
of punitive attitudes (PUNATT), because this method of creating indexes allows each measure to be weighted appropriately (see Appendix D for factor analysis data). Weighting of variables would not have been possible using an additive index. The alpha reliability coefficient for this punitive attitude index is .88, which is relatively high. Descriptive statistics for this variable, along with all others included in the present analyses, are provided in Table 2.

**Racial Typification of Crime**

Another variable of primary importance to the current research is the racial typification of crime. It is used as both a dependent and independent variable in separate analyses. The three questions assessing the degree to which respondents may or may not perceive crime to be a racial phenomenon are original questions. These questions, which also inquired about the perceived criminal involvement of whites and Hispanics, asked respondents: What percent of people who commit violent crimes in this country would you say are black?; When you think about people who break into homes and businesses when nobody is there, approximately what percent would you say are black?; When you think about people who rob other people at gunpoint, approximately what percent would you say are black?

Respondents overestimated black involvement in violent crimes, slightly overestimated black involvement in burglary, and underestimated black involvement in robbery. Specifically, respondents indicated that their perception of black involvement in violent crime is 40 percent, however victim surveys put that level at 29 percent (U.S. Department of Justice, 2004c) and arrest statistics indicate it is 38 percent (U.S. Department of Justice, 2004d). The median respondent perception of black involvement in burglary is just over 38 percent, when arrest statistics\(^\text{12}\) show that blacks make up less than 32 percent of burglaries (U.S. Department of Justice, 2004d). Respondents estimated that robberies are committed by blacks 42 percent of the time, but victim survey data put that level at 49 percent (U.S. Department of Justice, 2004c) and arrest statistics indicate it is 54 percent (U.S. Department of Justice, 2004d). Overall, the public’s perceptions about crime committed by blacks are more or less accurate. An

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\(^{12}\) Reliable victim identified characteristics of burglars are not available.
index was created (BLKCRIME) from these items using factor analysis, which has an alpha of .83.

**Media Consumption**

Media consumption is predicted to increase the black typification of crime among respondents, because of the way criminals may be portrayed. Since prior research suggests that viewing television news can heighten negative perceptions about African Americans (Entman 1990; 1992), variables pertaining to news consumption are the primary interests in this regard. Two separate measures of local television news consumption are used in these analyses. The first asked how many hours in a typical week respondents watch local television news (TVNEWS). The second asked respondents to rate how closely they pay attention to crime news on the television (ATTNCRIM). Both independent measures will be used in regression models predicting the black typification of crime as well as to test for a possible indirect influence on punitive attitudes through the black typification of crime.

As there is no previous research suggesting the relevance of viewing television dramas on racial attitudes, I include a measure of this only to explore the possibility that it might predict the racial typification of crime. Ten questions regarding the regularity with which respondents watch specific crime dramas, in which crime is often portrayed as more threatening and violent, were asked. Interviewers asked respondents if they watched the following shows regularly, sometimes, or not at all: Law and Order, Law and Order: Special Victims Unit, Law and Order: Criminal Intent, Third Watch, NYPD Blue, Alias, 24, The Practice, Crossing Jordan, and CSI. No racial content analysis of these programs has been prepared, however it is hypothesized that the mere threat of crime presented in them will conjoin with racial perceptions of crime, increasing the preference for severe criminal penalties. These particular programs were arbitrarily chosen based on their status as crime dramas televised during the duration of the survey. An index of these crime dramas was created using factor analysis (TVDRAMA). Although several of these shows were new when the data were collected, resulting in limited respondent exposure to them, an index of these programs is still somewhat reliable (alpha = .79).
Additional Variables

Demographic and Background Variables

Previous research has suggested the potential relevance of a great number of personal characteristics to predicting punitive attitudes. As discussed in Chapter 2, these have included demographic factors such as race, ethnicity, sex, and age, as well as background characteristics like education, income, political party and ideology, religious affiliation, and place of residence. Most of the measures included as controls in the analyses predicting punitiveness were suggested by prior research. However, since no previous studies have looked at what might predict the black typification of crime, the control measures for these models are the same variables that are included as control measures in the analyses using punitiveness as the dependent variable.

There are seven demographic or background measures that are employed in order to isolate the effects of the primary independent variables of interest. Sex of the respondent (FEMALE) is a dichotomous variable (= 1), and is expected to have a negative influence on punitiveness. Another variable often associated with punitive attitudes as well as racial attitudes is age (AGE). In several previous studies that control for age while testing predictors of punitiveness, age has had a curvilinear relationship with it. To test for this kind of association in the present research, the natural log of AGE (LNAGE) was entered into the regression equations in place of AGE. The results indicated that the nonlinear term did not provide a significantly better specification of the relationships between AGE and PUNATT or AGE and BLKCRIME. I also tested for the possibility that a curvilinear relationship might exist between age and the two dependent variables in the analyses. Again, the inclusion of the squared-AGE variable (SQAGE) did not indicate that a curvilinear relationship was present, since it was not statistically significant when paired with AGE in the analyses. Therefore, neither transformed AGE variables are retained in the regression equations. AGE is included in the analyses as a continuous variable, and is expected to have a negative association with punitiveness.

Race (WHITE) is included as a dichotomous variable (= 1), with all minorities comprising the reference group. Based on the findings of previous research, I predict that white respondents will be more punitive than racial minorities. I also include a measure
of whether respondents were Hispanic (HISPANIC). This is also coded dichotomously (= 1), and is expected to have a positive association with punitiveness.

In previous studies education has consistently had a significantly negative relationship with nearly all measures of punitive attitudes, so this variable (EDUCATION) is included as a control. Since the seven categories of education level are monotonic, education is treated as an interval variable in this analysis. Political conservatism (POLCONS) is included as a dichotomous variable (= 1), with self-described liberals and moderates representing the reference category. Political conservatism is hypothesized to have a positive association with punitiveness. Pursuant to the findings of previous research testing for the “southern subculture of punitiveness,” I include southern residence (SOUTHERN) as a dichotomous variable (= 1) in my analyses. The states included in this region are Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia. All other states represent the reference category. Based on the findings of previous literature, I suspect that southern residence will have a positive association with punitive attitudes. In addition, I predict that southern residence may influence racial attitudes, so it is expected to have a positive relationship with the black typification of crime.

**Attitudinal Variables**

Many attitudinal variables have had a statistically significant influence on punitiveness in prior research. There are still others that have not been suggested as possible predictors of punitiveness in previous studies, but are included in the present analysis because of a theoretical suspicion that they may influence the dependent variables. Research has found that racial prejudice may increase an individual’s willingness to punish criminals harshly, and so a measure of racial prejudice (RACEPREJ) is included in the analysis. The inclusion of racial prejudice as a control variable in the present research is especially important, in order to show that the effects of the black typification of crime are distinct from general preferences to discriminate against blacks. The two variables are positively and significantly correlated, but the relationship is modest (.23). Racial prejudice was measured by responses of strongly agree, agree, feel neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following five
statements: It would be okay if a member of my family wanted to bring a friend of a
different race home for dinner; It would be okay if a person of a different race joined a
social club or organization of which I was a member; It would bother me if I had a job in
which my supervisor was a different race than me; It would be okay if a family of a
different race with an income similar to mine were to live nearby; It would be okay if a
person of a different race were to marry into my family. An index for racial prejudice
was generated using factor analysis. This racial prejudice index has an alpha reliability
coefficient of .77.

Crime salience has generally been found to increase punitiveness. As discussed,
fear of criminal victimization is one element that has frequently been used as a proxy for
crime salience and a predictor of punitive attitudes. Fear of victimization (FEARVIC) is
included in the present analysis as a control measure for these reasons. It is represented
by an index of six questions, generated using factor analysis, gauging fear of criminal
victimization. Respondents were asked to rate on an 11-point scale, from 0 to 10, how
much they fear: Having your car stolen; Having someone break into your home; Being
robbed or mugged on the street; Being raped or sexually assaulted; Being beaten up or
assaulted by strangers; Being murdered? The alpha reliability coefficient for this index is
.92. The mean level of fear is 3.26, with the highest level being reported for having
someone break into homes (4.2) and the lowest level being reported for the fear of
murder (2.8). Prior research does not provide justification for using fear as a control
measure in estimates of the black typification of crime, but it is included as a control
because I conjecture that fear may influence how people perceive the interactions
between race and crime. I hypothesize that there is a positive relationship between fear
of criminal victimization and the black typification of crime.

Concern about crime, another measure of crime salience, is included in the
present research as a control variable (CONCERN). Like the fear of victimization, I
anticipate that there will be a positive relationship between concern about crime and both
punitiveness and the racial typification of crime. Concern about crime is measured by
respondents’ answers to the single question: On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being
unconcerned and 10 being very concerned, how concerned are you about crime? The
mean level of concern about crime among respondents is 7.6. This question is more
general and less personal than the questions asking about fear of victimization. They are both included in the analysis as control measures because it is quite possible that someone who is not fearful of being victimized, believes that crime is a worrisome social problem.

Perceived prevalence of violence is another measure of crime salience included in this analysis. The perceived percent of crime that is violent (PCTVIO) is represented by the question: What percent of crimes in the United States would you say involve violence? On average, respondents estimated that 54 percent of all crime is violent, vastly exaggerating its prevalence. This particular kind of control measure has not been used in punitive attitudes research, however I hypothesize that there is a positive relationship between the perception that crime is disproportionately violent and punitiveness. In addition, I anticipate that exaggerated perceptions of criminal violence are positively correlated with the black typification of crime, as well. The variables included in this analysis are described in Table 2, which also shows their mean values, standardized deviations, and bivariate correlations with both punitive attitudes and the racial typification of crime.
CHAPTER 6
RESEARCH FINDINGS

To begin the analysis I examine the bivariate correlations between the independent variables and both PUNATT and BLKCRIME. As shown in Table 2, PUNATT is significantly correlated with BLKCRIME, which is the primary relationship of interest. In addition, all other variables are significantly correlated with PUNATT, with the exception of TVNEWS, TVDRAMA, FEMALE, and WHITE. The coefficient for HISPANIC is statistically significant at the .05 level, while the other significant correlations with punitiveness are at the .01 level. It is notable that the two strongest correlates of punitive attitudes are crime salience measures, the perception that crime is violent and concern about crime. All of the correlations with the exception of AGE and EDUCATION are positive in direction.

The other variable used as dependent in certain analyses included in this research is BLKCRIME. The bivariate correlations with the other predictors are all statistically significant at the .01 level, except for TVDRAMA and FEMALE. The correlations between BLKCRIME and WHITE, HISPANIC, and EDUCATION are negative, while all others are positive. The finding that all but one of the variables included in the equations predicting the racial typification of crime are significantly related to black typifications initially suggests that the models may be reasonably well-specified.
Table 2. Variables Used in the Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Name</th>
<th>Description and Coding</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>rPUNATT</th>
<th>rBLKCRIME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary Variables of Interest</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUNATT</td>
<td>Factor score—R’s overall attitude toward punishing adult and juvenile offenders. Scale 0-10 (most punitive)</td>
<td>6.32</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>.219**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLKCRIME</td>
<td>Factor score—R’s perception of the percent of crime committed by blacks</td>
<td>43.36</td>
<td>13.99</td>
<td>.219**</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVNEWS</td>
<td>Hours of local news watched by R in one week</td>
<td>6.47</td>
<td>8.69</td>
<td>.063</td>
<td>.098**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTNCRIM</td>
<td>How closely R pays attention to crime news on the television Scale 0-10 (most closely)</td>
<td>6.51</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>.276**</td>
<td>.158**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVDRAMA</td>
<td>Factor score—How often R watches television crime dramas</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>.053</td>
<td>.033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| FEMALE | Sex of respondent
1 = Female
0 = Male | .56 | .50 | .022 | -.020 |
| AGE | Age of respondent | 46.80 | 16.03 | -.024 | .116** |
| WHITE | Race of respondent—White
1 = White
0 = All others | .81 | .39 | .000 | -.015** |
| HISPANIC | Ethnicity of R—Hispanic
1 = Hispanic/Latino
0 = All others | .08 | .26 | .071* | -.009** |
Table 2. continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Name</th>
<th>Description and Coding</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>rPUNATT</th>
<th>rBLKCRIME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| EDUCATION     | R’s highest level of schooling  
0 = No high school  
1 = Some high school  
2 = High school graduate  
3 = Vocational or trade school graduate  
4 = Some college  
5 = College graduate  
6 = Post graduate work or degree | 4.14 | 1.43  | -.292** | -.150** |
| POLCONS       | Political ideology of R  
0 = Moderate/Liberal  
1 = Conservative | .36  | .48   | .247**  | .157**   |
| CONCERN       | R’s concern about crime  
Scale 0-10 (most concerned) | 7.64 | 2.50  | .314**  | .159**   |
| PCTVIO        | Perceived percent of crimes with violence | 53.82| 24.73 | .340**  | .170**   |
| FEARVIC       | Factor score—R’s overall fear of victimization  
Scale 0-10 (most fearful) | 3.35 | 2.49  | .214**  | .093**   |
| RACEPREJ      | Factor score—R’s level of racial prejudice Scale 5-25 (most prejudiced) | 8.45 | 3.07  | .276**  | .228**   |
| SOUTHERN      | R’s region of residence  
1 = Southern  
0 = All others | .37  | .48   | .136**  | .126**   |

* p<.05  
** p<.01
Racial Typification of Crime and Punitive Attitudes

Full Sample
I use ordinary least squares regression to estimate the independent effects of the black typification of crime on the public’s punitive attitudes. Table 3 reports the results of regressing punitive attitudes on the set of independent variables previously described for the full sample. The $R^2$ of .287 is relatively strong for research on punitive attitudes. Of the 12 independent variables included in this model, all coefficients, with the exception of FEARVIC, are statistically significant. When each of the included variables is controlled, the racial typification of crime has a significant effect on punitiveness ($p<.05$). Individuals who perceive that more criminals are black are more likely to be punitive than those who do not share these racial perceptions about criminals. A comparison of Beta coefficients indicates that this influence is apparently stronger than the effects of sex, race, and southern residence. The strongest predictor of punitiveness appears to be the perception that crime is disproportionately violent, with a Beta of .215. In reference to the control measures, those with more punitive value orientations are men, younger, white, Hispanic, less educated, politically conservative, concerned about crime, racially prejudiced, southern, and perceive a greater percent of crime to be violent.

Contextualization by Race
Racial threat has been hypothesized to affect whites but not minorities, so it is reasonable to suppose that the effects of the black typification of crime on punitive attitudes would manifest differently for whites and minorities. I anticipated that the racial typification of crime would significantly predict punitiveness for whites only, so I split the sample according to the variable WHITE in order to assess interactions in the analysis, as displayed in Table 4.13

As expected, the black typification of crime significantly predicts punitive policy preferences for the white sub-sample (N = 587), but has no significant influence on the

13 Ethnicity is not included as a control variable in this model, since the small numbers of Hispanic respondents involved makes it unreliable to use this categorization when the sample is contextualized by race. Hispanic respondents are included in the analysis according to how they classified their race. If they classified their race as “Hispanic,” they are included in the minority sub-sample.
Table 3. Regression of Punitive Attitudes on Racial Typification of Crime

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>PUNATT b (Beta)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>-.124 * (-.061)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>-.005 ** (-.084)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHITE</td>
<td>.177 * (.070)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HISPANIC</td>
<td>.303 ** (.081)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATION</td>
<td>-.088 ** (-.125)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLCONS</td>
<td>.314 ** (.152)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCERN</td>
<td>.065 ** (.160)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCTVIO</td>
<td>.009 ** (.215)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEARVIC</td>
<td>.057 (.056)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RACEPREJ</td>
<td>.143 ** (.147)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTHERN</td>
<td>.138 * (.067)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLKCRIME</td>
<td>.077 * (.076)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 726
Constant = -.580
R-squared = .287
Adjusted R-squared = .275

* p<.05
** p<.01
Table 4. Regression of Punitive Attitudes of Whites and Minorities on Racial Typification of Crime

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>PUNATT b (Beta)</th>
<th>Minorities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whites</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>-.181** (.092)</td>
<td>.152 (.069)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>-.008** (-.133)</td>
<td>.004 (.051)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATION</td>
<td>-.090** (-.128)</td>
<td>-.065 (-.091)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLCONS</td>
<td>.343** (.170)</td>
<td>.301* (.133)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCERN</td>
<td>.053** (.131)</td>
<td>.099** (.237)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCTVIO</td>
<td>.009** (.212)</td>
<td>.009** (.201)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEARVIC</td>
<td>.100** (.093)</td>
<td>-.015 (-.016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RACEPREJ</td>
<td>.133** (.142)</td>
<td>.171* (.140)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTHERN</td>
<td>.234** (.115)</td>
<td>-.329* (-.153)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLKCRIME a</td>
<td>.091** (.090)</td>
<td>.076 (.078)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|            |                |            |
| N          | 587            | 140        |
| Constant   | -.145          | -1.158     |
| R-squared  | .313           | .278       |
| Adjusted R-squared | .301 | .222 |

* p<.05
** p<.01
a. p-value for BLKCRIME slope difference is .433
sub-sample of minorities (N = 140). Interestingly, for the white sub-sample, every independent variable is statistically significant (p<.01). Fear of victimization becomes a statistically significant predictor of punitive attitudes, with whites who are fearful being more punitive than those who are not as fearful of victimization. The remaining coefficients predict punitiveness in the same direction as displayed in Table 3. The $R^2$ for this model is .313.

For the minority sub-sample, only POLCONS, CONCERN, PCTVIO, RACEPREJ, and SOUTHERN are statistically significant predictors of punitive attitudes. Minority respondents who are more punitive also tend to be politically conservative, concerned about crime, racially prejudiced, believe a greater percentage of crime is violent, and not live in a southern state. The $R^2$ for this model is .278. Although the coefficient for BLKCRIME is not significant for minorities, but is significant for whites, the test for slope differences shows that the effects of the racial typification of crime are not significantly different for whites and minorities (p = .433). Because the effect of the racial typification of crime on punitiveness is statistically significant for whites only, the remaining conditioned analyses of the predictors of punitiveness only involve the white sub-sample.

**Contextualization by Concern about Crime**

It is possible that crime salience could have the capacity to exacerbate the effects of the racial typification of crime on punitiveness. To assess this possibility, I next disaggregated the sample according to the level of respondents’ concern about crime. In the first two columns of Table 5, the sample was split at the median level of CONCERN. I expected that black typification would have an especially strong and significant effect on punitiveness for those most concerned about crime. The research findings do not support this contention, however. Racial typification of crime was a significant predictor (p<.01) only for those in the Low CONCERN sub-sample (N = 348), but not the High CONCERN group (N = 239). When I tested for slope differences for the regression of PUNATT on BLKCRIME, the p-value (p = .029) indicates the two samples are significantly different on this factor. The model for Low CONCERN sub-sample has an $R^2$ of .292, and that for the High CONCERN group has an $R^2$ of .243.
Table 5. Regression of Punitive Attitudes of Whites on Racial Typification of Crime by Measures of Crime Salience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>PUNATT b (Beta)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low CONCERN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>-.107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.054)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>-.008**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(-.118)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATION</td>
<td>-.101**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(-.136)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLCONS</td>
<td>.452**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.214)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEARVIC</td>
<td>.237**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.191)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RACEPREJ</td>
<td>.173**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.169)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTHERN</td>
<td>.214*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.103)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCTVIO</td>
<td>.006**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.143)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCERN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLKCRIME a</td>
<td>.169**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.154)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>.264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-squared</td>
<td>.292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R-squared</td>
<td>.274</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<.05
** p<.01
a. p-value for slope difference is .029 for CONCERN, and .134 for PCTVIO
For both CONCERN sub-samples, being younger, less educated, politically conservative, racially prejudiced, southern, and one who perceives a greater proportion of crime as violent are significantly associated with being more punitive. When comparing the sub-samples, FEMALE was the only non-significant independent variable for the Low CONCERN group, although it was a significant predictor of punitiveness for those with High CONCERN sub-sample, for whom men are more punitive (p < .01). Also, FEARVIC was significantly and positively associated with punitiveness for those who were less concerned about crime, but not for those more concerned.

**Contextualization by Perceived Percent of Crime as Violent**

In the third and fourth models of Table 5, I disaggregate the white sample by the perceived percent of crime as violent. The sample was split at the median into Low PCTVIO (N = 308) and High PCTVIO (N = 279). Since the perceived percent of crime as violent represents crime salience, as with the Low and High CONCERN sub-samples, I expected that the racial typification of crime would be especially germane for those who perceive a greater amount of violence. Similar to the findings for CONCERN, those in the Low PCTVIO group showed a significant relationship between racial typification and punitiveness (p<.01), but this is not true for those in the High PCTVIO sub-sample. It seems that it is only among those for whom crime salience is low that stereotyping criminals as black significantly predicts support for harsh criminal justice measures.

This interaction, like the interaction between concern about crime and the black typification of crime, suggest that when crime salience is particularly high, there may be somewhat of a “ceiling effect” created in relation to the influence on punitive attitudes. There may be such a strong influence of crime salience on punitiveness that for those who are more concerned and perceive a greater amount of violence (i.e. those in the “High” categories), there is not as great of an opportunity for the effects of the racial typification of crime on punitive attitudes to be expressed. The conclusiveness of this result, however, is moderated by the fact that the slope difference between the two PCTVIO sub-groups is not statistically significant.

The model for the group that perceives a lower percentage of crime to be violent appears to do a better job of explaining punitiveness with an R$^2$ of .311, while the R$^2$ for the High PCTVIO group is only .176. In the Low PCTVIO sub-sample, all independent
variables except for FEMALE significantly predict punitive attitudes. In this group, the more punitive respondents were younger, less educated, politically conservative, fearful of victimization, racially prejudiced, southern, more concerned about crime, and of course, more likely to typify crime as something committed by blacks. Fewer variables were significantly related to punitive attitudes in the High PCTVIO group, with political conservatism, fear of victimization, southern residence, and the black typification of crime losing statistical significance. The relationships are in the same direction for both statistical models. Respondents’ sex remained non-significant in the High PCTVIO group.

**Contextualization by Racial Prejudice**

Table 6 examines the effects of the racial typification of crime in conditions that could be expected to influence attitudes about race. The first two models show the effects of black criminal typifications on punitiveness in the contexts of low (N = 303) and high racial prejudice (N = 284). The white racial prejudice sub-samples were created by splitting the sample at the median RACEPREJ value. I anticipated that the effects of racial typification on punitiveness would be more relevant for those who are more racially prejudiced. Contrary to my expectation, the significant effects of racial typification are limited to those individuals who are less prejudiced (p<.01). Again, it seems that a ceiling effect in terms of punitiveness may be operating for those who are racially prejudiced. Perhaps these prejudiced individuals are already so punitive that a potential association between the black typification of crime and punitive attitudes is diminished. The fact that the slope difference for the effect of racial typification on punitiveness is not statistically significant (p = .181) tempers these conclusions.

In the Low RACEPREJ sub-sample, every independent variable is statistically significant, while sex and the racial typification of crime are non-significant in the High RACEPREJ group. The direction of the associations between the independent measures and punitiveness remain similar to those indicated in previous analyses. The regression model for the sub-sample of less prejudiced respondents better explains punitive attitudes ($R^2 = .351$) than the sub-sample of those who are more racially prejudiced ($R^2 = .185$).
Table 6. Regression of Punitive Attitudes of Whites on Racial Typification of Crime by Racial Prejudice and Southern Residence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>PUNATT b (Beta)</th>
<th>Low RACEPREJ</th>
<th>High RACEPREJ</th>
<th>Non-SOUTHERN</th>
<th>SOUTHERN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.249* (-.117)</td>
<td>-.141 (-.084)</td>
<td>-.197* (-.098)</td>
<td>-.127 (-.071)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.010** (-.134)</td>
<td>-.007* (-.132)</td>
<td>-.007* (-.108)</td>
<td>-.013** (-.212)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.117** (-.146)</td>
<td>-.080* (-.131)</td>
<td>-.085** (-.117)</td>
<td>-.088* (-.139)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATION</td>
<td></td>
<td>.500** (.221)</td>
<td>.196* (.117)</td>
<td>.330** (.158)</td>
<td>.305** (.171)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLCONS</td>
<td></td>
<td>.073** (.165)</td>
<td>.041* (.118)</td>
<td>.055** (.137)</td>
<td>.053* (.137)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCERN</td>
<td></td>
<td>.010** (.235)</td>
<td>.006** (.164)</td>
<td>.009** (.235)</td>
<td>.006** (.168)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEARVIC</td>
<td></td>
<td>.108* (.088)</td>
<td>.094* (.109)</td>
<td>.098* (.087)</td>
<td>.095 (.101)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTHERN</td>
<td></td>
<td>.338** (.151)</td>
<td>.175* (.103)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RACEPREJ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.176** (.162)</td>
<td>.107* (.145)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLKCRIME a</td>
<td></td>
<td>.136** (.116)</td>
<td>.068 (.082)</td>
<td>.112* (.106)</td>
<td>.047 (.052)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>215</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-.314</td>
<td>.195</td>
<td>-.288</td>
<td>.388</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-squared</td>
<td>.351</td>
<td>.185</td>
<td>.310</td>
<td>.260</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R-squared</td>
<td>.331</td>
<td>.158</td>
<td>.293</td>
<td>.228</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*  p<.05
** p<.01

a. p-value for slope difference is .181 for RACEPREJ, and .194 for SOUTHERN

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**Contextualization by Southern Residence**

Based on the findings of research on the southern subculture of punitiveness, I expected that the influence of the racial typification of crime on punitive attitudes would be especially strong for southerners. Therefore, I disaggregated the white sample by southern (N = 215) and non-southern residence (N = 372) as shown in the last two columns in Table 6. The analyses revealed that racial typification of crime was only significant for those who do not live in a southern state (p<.05). Perhaps it is again a ceiling effect on punitiveness for southerners that is reducing the possible effects that the black typification of crime can have on punitive criminal justice preferences. Although this may be true, the slope difference for the effect of BLKCRIME on PUNATT is not statistically significant (p = .194).

The control variables included in the SOUTHERN, non-SOUTHERN analyses reveal expected associations with punitive attitudes. Across both sub-samples, the independent variables influence punitiveness in the same manner as evidenced in previous regression models. Additionally, each control variable is significantly related to punitiveness for non-southerners, and all but sex and fear of victimization are significantly related for southerners. The $R^2$ for the Non-SOUTHERN group is .310, while it is .260 for the SOUTHERN sub-sample.

**Contextualization by Political Conservatism**

In Table 7, I look at the interaction effects of racial typification and self-described political conservatism on punitive attitudes. I anticipated that the relationship between the racial typification of crime and punitive attitudes would be especially powerful for conservatives. This expectation was confirmed by the analysis. Among conservatives (N = 225), the black typification of crime significantly predicted more punitive policy preferences (p<.01), while it was not significant for liberals and moderates (N = 362), although it should be noted that the slope difference was not significant (p=.099).

In addition, for conservatives, only younger, racially prejudiced, and southern respondents were significantly more punitive. The effects of education, concern about crime, the perception that crime is disproportionately violent, and fear of victimization are reduced to non-significance. The conservative sub-sample, in which BLKCRIME is
Table 7. Regression of Punitive Attitudes of Whites on Racial Typification of Crime by Political Conservatism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Not Conservative</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PUNATT ( b )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>-.219* (-.102)</td>
<td>-.071 (-.047)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>-.007* (-.102)</td>
<td>-.011** (-.227)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATION</td>
<td>-.119** (-.157)</td>
<td>-.050 (-.091)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCERN</td>
<td>.066** (.153)</td>
<td>.034 (.103)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCTVIO</td>
<td>.011** (.273)</td>
<td>.002 (.050)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEARVIC</td>
<td>.120* (.104)</td>
<td>.064 (.078)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RACEPREJ</td>
<td>.162** (.156)</td>
<td>.093* (.130)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTHERN</td>
<td>.252** (.114)</td>
<td>.176* (.114)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLKCRIME</td>
<td>.052 (.044)</td>
<td>.144** (.196)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| N          | 362              | 225          |
| Constant   | -.307            | .665         |
| R-squared  | .332             | .191         |
| Adjusted R-squared | .314 | .157         |

*  p<.05  
** p<.01  
a. p-value for BLKCRIME slope difference is .099
statistically significant, has an $R^2$ (.191) that is less than that of the not conservative group ($R^2 = .332$), in which BLKCRIME is not significant. The racial typification of crime has no significant influence on punitive attitudes for non-conservatives, although all of the other control variables are significant in this circumstance.

**Television News Consumption and the Racial Typification of Crime**

**Full Sample**

Since there has been no prior research on the predictors of the racial typification of crime, the variables included in this set of analyses are largely exploratory. For reasons already addressed, it seems reasonable to expect that television news consumption would increase the likelihood that one would associate being criminal with blacks. As for control variables, the same independent measures that were included in the analyses predicting punitiveness are retained for the present set of regression models. To determine if it is true that media consumption increases punitiveness, I regressed the black typification of crime variable on local television news consumption and the attention paid to crime news stories for the full sample ($N = 718$).

As shown in Table 8, those more likely to typify crime as a black phenomenon were older, politically conservative, more likely to perceive greater violence, and be racially prejudiced. The media consumption measures, TVNEWS and ATTNCRIM, were both non-significant, as were the remaining variables in the analysis. Not surprisingly, according to the Beta coefficients it seems that racial prejudice is the strongest predictor of the black typification of crime (Beta = .126). The explanatory power of this model is relatively weak, as the $R^2$ is .108.

**Contextualization by Race**

Since the nature of the dependent variable in this analysis is obviously racial in nature, I wanted to see if the effects of viewing television news on the racial typification of crime are expressed differently for whites and minorities. Therefore, I disaggregated the sample into whites ($N = 580$) and minorities ($N = 139$) in Table 9. Interestingly, for
Table 8. Regression of Racial Typification of Crime on TV News Consumption

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>BLKCRIME b (Beta)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>-.111 (-.055)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>.004* (.070)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHITE</td>
<td>.001 (.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HISPANIC</td>
<td>.003 (.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATION</td>
<td>-.039 (-.055)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLCONS</td>
<td>.177* (.086)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCERN</td>
<td>.025 (.063)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCTVIO</td>
<td>.004* (.090)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEARVIC</td>
<td>-.000 (.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RACEPREJ</td>
<td>.122** (.126)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTHERN</td>
<td>.194** (.095)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVNEWS</td>
<td>.002 (.015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTNCRIM</td>
<td>.020 (.055)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N 718
Constant -.630
R-squared .108
Adjusted R-squared .092

*  p<.05
** p<.01
Table 9. Regression of Racial Typification of Crime of Whites and Minorities on TV News Consumption

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>BLKCRIME b (Beta)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>Minorities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>-.043</td>
<td>-.324</td>
<td>(-.022) (-.144)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>.005*</td>
<td>-.000</td>
<td>(.079) (-.002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATION</td>
<td>-.027</td>
<td>-.080</td>
<td>(-.039) (-.109)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLCONS</td>
<td>.206**</td>
<td>-.015</td>
<td>(.104) (-.007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCERN</td>
<td>.020</td>
<td>.037</td>
<td>(.050) (.086)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCTVIO</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.010**</td>
<td>(.067) (.220)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEARVIC</td>
<td>-.015</td>
<td>.030</td>
<td>(-.014) (.032)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RACEPREJ</td>
<td>.145**</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>(.157) (.017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTHERN</td>
<td>.114</td>
<td>.459**</td>
<td>(.057) (.209)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVNEWS a</td>
<td>-.008</td>
<td>.019*</td>
<td>(-.062) (.194)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTNCRIM b</td>
<td>.036*</td>
<td>-.027</td>
<td>(.104) (-.072)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>139</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-.680</td>
<td>-.462</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-squared</td>
<td>.112</td>
<td>.206</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R-squared</td>
<td>.095</td>
<td>.137</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05
**p < .01
a. p-value for slope difference is .448 for TVNEWS
b. p-value for slope difference is .047 for ATTNCRIM
whites only the attention paid to crime stories significantly predicts the racial typification of crime (p<.05), while for minorities only local television news consumption predicts racial typification (p<.05). For whites, paying close attention to crime stories increases racial typification, whereas for minorities, it is the sheer volume of watching local television news that is consequential. So it appears that television news consumption does have an effect on the black typification of crime, but it is expressed differently when it is contingent on race. The slope difference for ATTNCRIM is statistically significant (p = .047), although that for TVNEWS is not (p = .448).

For whites, those who are older, politically conservative, racially prejudiced, and pay close attention to television crime stories are more likely to perceive criminals as black. Interestingly, none of the predictors of racial typification for whites is a significant predictor of racial typification for minorities. Within the minority sub-sample, those who perceive more criminal violence, southerners, and those who watch more television news typify crime racially. Another interesting difference between these samples is the explanatory power of the estimates for each. The $R^2$ for the white sub-sample is lower (.112), than that for minorities (.206). Subsequent analyses assessing the predictors of the racial typification of crime will only use the larger white sub-sample.

**Contextualization by Black Composition of County**

With the respondents’ zip codes collected by the survey, I was able to establish the counties in which respondents reside. I used this information to split the white sub-sample based on proximity to blacks, splitting the sample in this manner should reveal its differential effects. I expected that the regression of black typification for whites on media consumption would be statistically significant for those comprising the higher black composition (BLKCOMP) sub-sample, but not for those in the Low BLKCOMP group.

As Table 10 shows, for those living in areas with more blacks, both the quantitative television news consumption measure of TVNEWS (p<.05) and the qualitative news consumption variable ATTNCRIM (p<.01) are significantly associated with the racial typification of crime. It is surprising, however, that they are not associated in the same direction. Those who perceive criminals as black watch fewer hours of local television news, but pay closer attention to the crime stories on the news. If people
Table 10. Regression of Racial Typification of Crime of Whites on TV News Consumption by Black Composition of County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Low BLKCOMP</th>
<th>High BLKCOMP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>.026 (.014)</td>
<td>-.116 (-.057)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>.001 (.009)</td>
<td>.010** (.148)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATION</td>
<td>-.034 (-.053)</td>
<td>-.027 (-.036)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLCONS</td>
<td>.109 (.058)</td>
<td>.313** (.151)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCERN</td>
<td>.014 (.040)</td>
<td>.039 (.086)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCTVIO</td>
<td>.002 (.063)</td>
<td>.004 (.098)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEARVIC</td>
<td>-.056 (-.049)</td>
<td>-.071 (-.068)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RACEPREJ</td>
<td>.169** (.193)</td>
<td>.141* (.147)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTHERN</td>
<td>-.063 (.028)</td>
<td>.163 (.080)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVNEWS a</td>
<td>-.001 (-.009)</td>
<td>-.013* (-.108)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTNCRIM b</td>
<td>.004 (.014)</td>
<td>.078** (.204)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N 312 267
Constant -.264 -1.314
R-squared .07 .197
Adjusted R-squared .039 .163

*  p<.05
**  p<.01
a. p-value for slope difference is .129 for TVNEWS
b. p-value for slope difference is .010 for ATTNCRIM
are only watching the crime news stories—and watching them particularly closely—they may be more sensitive to the images of race transmitted. This confounding result is tempered by the finding that the differences in slopes between the low black composition and high black composition sub-samples are significant for the attention paid to crime stories (p = .01), while it is not significantly different for how much local television news is viewed (p = .129).

It is worth mentioning that for the High BLKCOMP group, the amount of attention respondents pay to crime news is the strongest predictor of the variables included in this analysis (Beta = .204). This model also better predicts the racial typification of crime ($R^2 = .197$) than that for the sub-sample of those living in lower black composition areas ($R^2 = .070$). Perhaps this is due to the fact that only racial prejudice (p<.01) significantly predicts the black typification of crime among those living in less diverse counties.

**Contextualization by Southern Residence**

Since the black typification of crime significantly predicts punitiveness among Southerners, I next explored whether southern residence could have a contingent effect on the influence of television news consumption on racial typification. For this reason, I split the white sample according to southern residence as shown in Table 11. I expected that for whites living in the south, media consumption would significantly increase the likelihood of typifying criminals as black. For both news consumption variables, the slopes are not significantly different across sub-samples (p = .255 for TVNEWS and .164 for ATTNCRIM). Among southerners (N = 213), how closely respondents paid attention to crime news did significantly predict black typification (p<.05), however. In fact, the only other variable that significantly influences racially stereotyping criminals is racial prejudice (p<.01), although it also increases racial typification for non-southerners (N = 367). Neither model has substantial explanatory power however, as the $R^2$ values are both quite small (SOUTHERN $R^2 = .084$, non-SOUTHERN $R^2 = .139$).

**Contextualization by Education**

In Table 12, I explore whether the amount of local television news viewed and the attention paid to crime news stories predicts the racial typification of crime for less
Table 11. Regression of Racial Typification of Whites on TV News Consumption by Southern Residence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>BLKCRIME (Beta)</th>
<th>Non-SOUTHERN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SOUTHERN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>-.117 (-.059)</td>
<td>.026 (.014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>.001 (.016)</td>
<td>.006* (.099)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATION</td>
<td>.026 (.037)</td>
<td>-.057 (-.083)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLCONS</td>
<td>-.033 (-.017)</td>
<td>.346** (.174)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCERN</td>
<td>.030 (.071)</td>
<td>.018 (.048)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCTVIO</td>
<td>.002 (.037)</td>
<td>.002 (.061)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEARVIC</td>
<td>-.015 (-.014)</td>
<td>-.007 (-.007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RACEPREJ</td>
<td>.152** (.186)</td>
<td>.148** (.143)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVNEWS a</td>
<td>-.011 (-.112)</td>
<td>-.000 (-.029)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTNCRIM b</td>
<td>.060* (.157)</td>
<td>.026 (.077)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-.611</td>
<td>-.611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-squared</td>
<td>.084</td>
<td>.139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R-squared</td>
<td>.038</td>
<td>.115</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<.05  
** p<.01

a. p-value for slope difference is .255 for TVNEWS  
b. p-value for slope difference is .164 for ATTNCRIM
Table 12. Regression of Racial Typification of Whites on TV News Consumption by Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>BLKCRIME b (Beta)</th>
<th>BLKCRIME b (Beta)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low EDUCATION</td>
<td>High EDUCATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>-.029 (-.014)</td>
<td>-.059 (-.033)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>.005 (.078)</td>
<td>.006 (.093)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLCONS</td>
<td>.178 (.086)</td>
<td>.237* (.128)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCERN</td>
<td>.026 (.062)</td>
<td>.010 (.028)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCTVIO</td>
<td>-.000 (-.009)</td>
<td>.008** (.203)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEARVIC</td>
<td>-.035 (-.035)</td>
<td>.028 (.24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RACEPREJ</td>
<td>.183** (.197)</td>
<td>.067 (.066)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTHERN</td>
<td>-.050 (-.024)</td>
<td>.342** (.183)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVNEWS a</td>
<td>-.009 (-.067)</td>
<td>-.008 (-.067)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTNCRIM b</td>
<td>.064** (.170)</td>
<td>-.005 (-.016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-.756</td>
<td>-.869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-squared</td>
<td>.110</td>
<td>.133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R-squared</td>
<td>.081</td>
<td>.099</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05
**p < .01
a.  p-value for slope difference is .174 for TVNEWS
b.  p-value for slope difference is .015 for ATTNCRIM
educated individuals, and for those who are more educated. The white sample is split at the median level of education into Low EDUCATION (N = 314) and High EDUCATION (N = 266) sub-samples. As with the previous table that disaggregated the primary relationships by southern residence, only attention paid to crime news stories is significant for those with less education (p<.01). The difference in slopes is significantly different across the sub-samples (p = .015), and racial prejudice is the only other variable that significantly predicts racial typification. Local television news watching is not significantly related to black typification for either sub-sample. For more educated individuals, only political conservatism (p<.05), the perception that crime is disproportionately violent (p<.01), and southern residence (p<.01) significantly predicts racial typification of crime. It is interesting that racial prejudice is not a predictor of racial typification among more educated respondents. The R^2 values in each group are similar to those in previous models (Low EDUCATION R^2 = .110, High EDUCATION R^2 = .133).

Television Crime Drama Consumption and the Racial Typification of Crime

Full Sample

Next, I explore whether viewing television crime dramas increases perceptions that criminals are black. To determine if it is true that viewing crime dramas increase the black typification of crime, I regressed the latter on the measure of crime drama consumption for the full sample (N = 713). As shown in Table 13, those more likely to typify crime as a black phenomenon were older, politically conservative, more likely to perceive greater violence, more concerned about crime, racially prejudiced, and southern. The media consumption measure, TVDRAMA, was not statistically significant. As with previous analyses, Beta coefficients indicate that racial prejudice is the strongest predictor of the black typification of crime (Beta = .134). The explanatory power of this model is relatively weak, as the R^2 is .109.
Table 13. Regression of Racial Typification of Crime on TV Crime Drama Consumption

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>BLKCRIME b (Beta)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>-.088 (-.044)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>.005* (.078)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHITE</td>
<td>.005 (.002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HISPANIC</td>
<td>.004 (.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATION</td>
<td>-.046 (-.065)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLCONS</td>
<td>.182** (.088)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCERN</td>
<td>.032* (.079)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCTVIO</td>
<td>.004* (.091)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEARVIC</td>
<td>.001 (.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RACEPREJ</td>
<td>.131** (.134)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTHERN</td>
<td>.206** (.101)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVDRAMA</td>
<td>-.001 (-.001)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N 713
Constant -.547
R-squared .109
Adjusted R-squared .093

* p<.05
** p<.01
**Contextualization by Race**

Although viewing television crime dramas was not related to typifying criminals as black for the full sample, I tested whether contextualizing the analysis by race of respondent would show significant associations. I divided the sample into white (N = 576) and minority (N = 138) sub-samples in Table 14. Again, it is apparent that viewing television crime dramas is not a statistically significant predictor of the black typification of crime for either whites or minorities. Not surprisingly, there is no significant difference in slopes for TVDRAMA (p = .255). For whites, those more likely to perceive that criminals are black are older, politically conservative, and racially prejudiced (R² = .110). Racial minorities who are men, southern, and perceive a greater percentage of crime to be violent are more likely to typify criminals as black (R² = .171). Since TVDRAMA has no relationship with the racial typification for crime, I do not assess additional interactions.

**Indirect Effects of Media Consumption on Punitive Attitudes**

**Full Sample**

The possibility that media consumption has an indirect effect on punitive attitudes through the racial typification of crime is tested with the models shown in Table 15. First, an equation was run with BLKCRIME dropped from the analysis. This model looks at the effects of TVNEWS as well as ATTNCRIM on punitive attitudes, controlling for other possible influences (N = 762). The attention paid to crime news significantly predicts punitive attitudes (p<.01), but the quantity of local television news viewed does not. When BLKCRIME is added back in to the second model (N = 718), ATTNCRIM remains significant (p<.01) and TVNEWS remains non-significant. The fact that the directions of the coefficients’ signs stay the same and the significance of ATTNCRIM is sustained when the racial typification variable is included in the model indicates that an indirect relationship between media exposure and punitiveness through black typification does not exist, at least for the full sample. The coefficient slopes for both media
**Table 14. Regression of Racial Typification of Whites and Minorities on TV Crime Drama Viewing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>BLKCRIME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Beta)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>-.034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(-.018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>.005*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.074)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATION</td>
<td>-.033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(-.048)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLCONS</td>
<td>.235**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.118)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCERN</td>
<td>.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.071)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCTVIO</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.063)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEARVIC</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RACEPREJ</td>
<td>.151**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.163)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTHERN</td>
<td>.121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.060)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVDRAMA a</td>
<td>.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.016)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N 576 138
Constant -.509 - .428
R-squared .110 .171
Adjusted R-squared .094 .106

* p<.05
** p<.01
a. p-value for slope difference is .255
Table 15. Regression of Punitive Attitudes on TV News Viewing and Racial Typification of Crime

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>PUNATT b (Beta)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>-.100 (-.049)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>-.005* (.075)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHITE</td>
<td>.219** (.087)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HISPANIC</td>
<td>.294** (.079)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATION</td>
<td>-.086** (-.121)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLCONS</td>
<td>.295** (.143)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCERN</td>
<td>.061** (.150)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCTVIO</td>
<td>.008** (.204)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEARVIC</td>
<td>.033 (.033)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RACEPREJ</td>
<td>.164** (.167)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTHERN</td>
<td>.145* (.070)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLKCRIME</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVNEWS a</td>
<td>-.006 (-.049)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTNCRIM b</td>
<td>.048** (.134)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N 762 718
Constant -.873 -.806
R-squared .296 .305
Adjusted R-squared .284 .291

* p<.05
** p<.01
a. p-value for slope difference is .429 for TVNEWS
b. p-value for slope difference is .345 for ATTNCRIM
consumption measures are not significantly different from each other across regression models (p = .429 for TVNEWS, p = .345 for ATTNCRIM).

**Contextualization by Race**

Indirect effects of television news consumption on punitiveness were not present for the entire sample, but I wanted to explore whether disaggregating the sample by race would reveal their influence. In the first two equations shown in Table 16, I look for indirect effects for whites only. I ran the first equation without the racial typification of crime measure (N = 616), and then added it back in (N = 580). As for the full sample, ATTNCRIM significantly predicts punitiveness in the model with and without BLKCRIME (p<.01). This indicates that there are no indirect effects of media consumption through racial typification on punitive attitudes for whites. Additionally, the slope difference between the two coefficients is not statistically significant. The TVNEWS variable remains non-significant in both equations. In fact, all variables, with the exception of local television news viewing, significantly predict punitiveness in both white sub-samples.

Next, I tested the possibility that punitiveness is indirectly influenced by media through racial typification for racial minorities. As shown in the third and fourth models in Table 16, there appears to be no indirect relationship between paying close attention to television crime news and preferring punitive criminal justice measures, as ATTNCRIM remains significant (p<.01) in the models both with and without the racial typification of crime variable. While the significance of the relationship between TVNEWS and PUNATT (p<.05) deteriorates when BLKCRIME is added to the fourth model, it is not correct to assume that television news consumption has an indirect effect on punitiveness, since the relationship is negative and the slopes are not significantly different from one another (p = .425).

**Summarizing the Research Findings**

The findings of the present study suggest several things. The analyses have shown that the racial typification of crime is a significant predictor of punitive criminal
Table 16. Regression of Punitive Attitudes of Whites and Minorities on Racial Typification of Crime and TV News Consumption

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>PUNATT b (Beta)</th>
<th>Whites</th>
<th>Minorities</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>-0.166*</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(-0.085)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>-0.008**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(-0.122)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EDUCATION</td>
<td>-0.083**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(-0.118)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>POLCONS</td>
<td>0.315**</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.157)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CONCERN</td>
<td>0.056**</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.139)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PCTVIO</td>
<td>0.008**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.206)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FEARVIC</td>
<td>0.069*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.065)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>RACEPREJ</td>
<td>0.157**</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.168)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SOUTHERN</td>
<td>0.230**</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.113)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BLKCRIME</td>
<td>0.078*</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.077)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TVNEWS a</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(-0.020)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ATTNCRIM b</td>
<td>0.036**</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.101)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Constant</td>
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<td>R-squared</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Adjusted R-squared</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* p<.05
** p<.01

a. p-value for TVNEWS slope difference is .500 for whites and .425 for minorities
b. p-value for ATTNCRIM slope difference is .460 for whites and .295 for minorities
justice attitudes. This is true even when other potential demographic, background, and attitudinal characteristics are controlled. This relationship appears to only exist for whites, and more specifically, whites who are less concerned about crime, perceive less violence, are less racially prejudiced, do not live in the south, and are politically conservative. Though the analyses reveal that the association between racial typification of crime and punitiveness is significant only in certain conditions, no conclusive generalizations should be made since the slope differences were often not significantly different across contexts.

The findings produced by the research predicting the racial typification of crime are much less meaningful. Some have hypothesized that television news consumption increases the degree to which people typify crime in black terms. But, other than this, very little has been suggested regarding the predictors of racial typification of crime. As a result, the control variables included in this set of analyses were the same ones used in the equations predicting punitiveness. It appears that the independent measures used poorly specified the equations, as the $R^2$ values were consistently low. Despite these weak results, I did find that although television news consumption did not predict the black typification of crime for all respondents, the attention paid to crime news significantly predicted this typification for whites, while the quantity of local television news viewing increased typification among the minority respondents. For whites living in areas with more African Americans, watching local news surprisingly decreases racial typification, while paying closer attention to crime news increases it. Southerners and less educated whites who pay more attention to crime news are more likely to typify crime racially. Again, these contextualized conclusions are tempered by the fact that slope differences were significant for only three of the eight disaggregated measures. Viewing television crime dramas does not predict the black typification of crime, even when the full sample is split by race.

Finally, I tested for the presence of an indirect relationship between television news consumption and punitiveness through the racial typification of crime. The research findings indicate that this type of indirect association does not exist, except in the unexpected case of minorities who watch less local television news. This conclusion
is certainly not definitive, as the differences in slopes for this measure are not statistically significant.
CHAPTER 7
DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

In this chapter, I provide a brief summary and then a discussion of the present research, placing the key findings of this study in the context of previous research on the predictors of punitive criminal justice policy preferences and negative racial attitudes. I relate these findings to the theoretical arguments made in Chapter 1, and address the implications that arise from this analysis. In addition, I will identify some of the strengths and limitations of the present study, and make some recommendations for future research on these issues.

The idea for this research originated from the recognition that two concurrent and consequential phenomena were salient within American culture. The first phenomenon is the unprecedented punitiveness of our criminal justice system as well as accompanying punitiveness of the public. The second is that the image of criminals has been racial and threatening in nature. Essentially, high levels of punitiveness and the typification of criminals as black seem certain characteristics of American culture. Although previous research on the punitive preferences of the public has explored a variety of its predictors, no one had yet considered the possibility that it may be a partial consequence of the racial threat presented by the perception that much crime is perpetrated by blacks.

While the primary focus of this research—assessing whether typifying criminals as black increases preferences for punitive criminal justice policies—has never been previously studied, many of the results presented here corroborate what others have found to be associated with punitive attitudes in terms of racial attitudes. Negative racial attitudes increase support for harsh punishment for criminals. Similar to prior research
finding racial antipathy, stereotyping, prejudice, and other negative attitudes toward blacks positively associated with punitiveness, my research indicates that those who perceive crime to be committed predominantly by blacks prefer harsher sanctions for criminals. In short, my primary hypothesis is supported by these data.

Some of the previous research that is most comparable to this study found that the relationship between punitiveness and racial attitudes was significant most frequently when the effects on certain sub-samples were examined. As noted in Chapter 2, these studies often found that interactions with the race of the respondent, southern residence, or other characteristic suggested that a relevant association was sometimes present, but did not indicate a correlation for everyone in the study. For example, racial antipathy and racial stereotyping significantly predict punitiveness for whites and whites not living in the south (Borg, 1997). Racial prejudice also significantly predicts punitiveness when the interaction with race is examined (Cohn et al., 1991).

For this reason, I made a point of examining the contingent effects of the racial typification of crime on punitive attitudes. My finding differs in as much as the black typification of crime is positively and significantly associated with punitive attitudes for all respondents. However, when I assessed the effects of the racial typification of crime on punitiveness for different sub-samples, I found that the relationship was clearly contextual. Not surprisingly, when I examined this relationship in the context of race, stereotyping criminals as black was a significant predictor of punitiveness for whites, but not for racial minorities.

Other contextualized analyses in my research indicate that crime salience is a particularly relevant issue for the relationship between punitiveness and the black typification of crime. Punitiveness is increased in many estimates by being concerned about crime, being fearful of criminal victimization, and perceiving that crime is violent. But the relationship of punitiveness to racial typification of crime is found only among those for whom crime salience is lower. It is when perceptions that crimes are violent and concern about crime are lower that the relationship between racial typification of crime and punitiveness is significant and positive. Racial threat associated with crime may have more of an opportunity to influence attitudes about punishment in
circumstances in which a more general crime threat is not already driving punitiveness to very high levels.

Southern residence and racial prejudice were also found to affect the relationship between punitive attitudes and the black typification of crime. In subsequent contextualized analyses, it seems that for the other strong predictors of punitiveness there is apparently again a ceiling effect. Instead of finding that for those in the “high” sub-samples racial typification of crime increases punitiveness, I found that racial typification of criminals increases punitiveness only for those who are not southern and who are less prejudiced. This trend does not seem to apply when the effects of political conservatism on punitiveness are assessed contextually. In this case there is a significant relationship between the black typification of crime and punitive attitudes for conservatives, but not for liberal or moderate individuals.

Although it appears that viewing local television news, paying close attention to crime news, or watching television crime dramas does not increase the likelihood of typifying crime racially, significant relationships emerged when segments of the sample were analyzed contextually. Whites who pay closer attention to television crime news racially typified crime, whereas for minorities, simply watching more hours of local television news increased the likelihood of racially typifying crime. For white respondents, the racial composition of county, southern residence, and educational attainment affected the relationship between television news consumption and racial typification of crime. This was particularly true for how closely viewers were watching crime news, as the number of hours viewed did not increase the black typification of crime as predicted. Results suggest that watching crime dramas has no relationship with the racial typification of crime under any circumstance. In addition, this study refutes the hypothesis that media consumption indirectly increases punitiveness through the racial typification of crime. No such indirect relationship was found.

This research tells us something about the other characteristics that affect the perception that criminals are black. The results suggest that aside from the differential influences of media related factors, predictors of the black typification of crime include being older, politically conservative, racially prejudiced, southern, and perceiving that a greater amount of violence comprises criminal events, although $R^2$ values indicate that
there are clearly other relevant predictors not assessed in this research. The conclusions about what is associated with the black typification of crime vary slightly from estimate to estimate, depending on the context of the analysis. Despite the weak explanatory power of these models, the findings are somewhat informative, as there is no other research providing clues about what predicts this phenomenon.

Strengthen, Limitations, and Directions for Future Research

There are certainly a number of limitations to the present study, which could be corrected in future research assessing the causes of punitiveness and the racial typification of crime. I feel confident that the variables of primary interest have been well operationalized, however improvement is possible. Both PUNATT and BLKCRIME are indexes that were created using theoretically grounded reasoning and were strengthened by the use of factor weights. The measure of punitive attitudes I developed includes many important dimensions, which is superior to other studies that only use a single dimension or address attitudes toward only one kind of policy or crime. This index could be improved by including additional items. It might also be improved by assessing punitiveness about more broadly or narrowly defined concepts. For example, future research may want to focus primarily on punitiveness toward one particular crime, like murder or drug dealing, which may more commonly be associated with blacks. I believe implementing these changes might increase the alpha reliability coefficient of the scale, although I would not anticipate a substantial change in the explanatory power of the regression estimates.

Though there are no pre-existing measures of the black typification of crime, I feel confident that the one I created accurately gauges this perception. However, future research may endeavor to generate a different measure of racial typification of crime in order to assess which measure more accurately reflects this concept. For example, future research could include several items measuring the influence of a single, more specific criminal perception of blacks, like either the typification of murderers, rapists, or drug dealers as black. In this sense, the present operationalization of the black typification of crime is somewhat general, as it measures racial perceptions of violence, robbers, and
burglars. Additionally, future studies on these issues might want to increase the number of items in the indexes, but I would expect that there would be little change in this variable.

Another weakness to be improved by future research would be to better operationalize media consumption measures. The number of hours spent watching local television news seems like a straightforward issue. However, it is possible that many respondents answered the question based on the hours spent watching all television news programs. It is possible that many people do not carefully differentiate between whether they are watching local or national broadcasts. Therefore, in future research I might not specify that they only report on local news viewing, but on all television news broadcasts viewed. Additionally, people may not notice how much news they are watching, which means that responses to very objective questions may not be entirely accurate. Unless experimental measures are used in future research, such as actually showing participants news broadcasts, I probably would not change this measure.

The level of measurement of the media consumption variables could be improved by future research. Although the measure for TVNEWS was a continuous and ratio-level variable, the other media consumption measures, ATTNCRIM and TVDRAMA, were very subjective, presenting additional problems. One respondent may think that missing one episode of a television crime drama constitutes watching a show sometimes, while most others would consider that regular viewing. Similarly, some respondents may pay the same amount of attention to crime stories on television news, but score this attentiveness quite differently. The measurement of these media consumption variables is certainly a limitation of the current research, and possibly consequential to the results testing its association with the racial typification of crime and punitiveness. Therefore, in future research I would probably operationalize TVDRAMA as a ratio-level variable, asking respondents how many episodes since a specific date they had watched each specific televised drama. I would probably not change the measurement of ATTNCRIM, because it is necessarily a very subjective variable, and was monotonic in the present research. In addition, I might want to expand the operationalization of media consumption to include measures of how much and to what kind of written news (i.e. newspapers, news magazines, internet news) respondents are exposed.
Probably the most serious shortcoming of this study is that the number and range of possible independent influences on both punitive attitudes and racial typification of crime that are assessed is somewhat limited. There was no way to control for every possible influence on the dependent variables. This will likely be a dilemma for any researcher exploring the nature of these concepts, as analytic techniques, like ordinary least squares regression used in this study, cannot reasonably withstand the inclusion of an endless number of theoretically feasible empirically grounded influences. Nevertheless, there are a variety of elements that have been shown to increase support for punitive policies as well as negative racial attitudes that I was not able to include in this research, such as many of those discussed in Chapter 2.

Some of the predictors of punitive attitudes that I would like to assess in future research are various religious attributes, income, and economic insecurity. Less concrete characteristics I would like to include in future projects are the effects of having children, personal beliefs about and experiences with childhood discipline, negative views of immigration, faith in the rehabilitative qualitites of criminal corrections, and even the effects of certain personality traits and temperaments of individuals. I would collect data on these variables because either prior research has shown that they are important to punitive attitudes, or because I believe there is a theoretical justification for exploring the influence these characteristics. In addition, since no research has explored what causes the racial typification of crime, there are probably many other factors not included in my analyses that could be associated with it. In this research, I focused primarily on the possible influence of media consumption. But, future research may want to assess the possible association of the black typification of crime with any number of other characteristics or experiences. These would include involvement in the criminal justice system, personal interactions with African Americans, non-criminal related stereotypes of minorities, how individuals were raised by their parents, religious attributes, economic insecurity, and negative views of immigration. I think it would also be informative to assess whether various educational and occupational experiences influence the black typification of crime.

Most importantly, I would also like to explore the separate influences of the white and Hispanic typifications of certain crimes on punitiveness. It seems reasonable that if
robbery, burglary, and violent crime in general are typified as being committed by blacks, other types of crime may be typified as a white or Hispanic phenomenon. In addition, relationships between these racial and ethnic typifications and punitiveness may be contextual. I currently have plans to explore these possibilities.

Future research may also include a varied set of controls in equations estimating similar relationships. This could provide not only a deeper understanding of the dynamics involving racial typification of crime and punitive attitudes, but also explain more of the variation in these phenomena by generating higher $R^2$ values. As with all exploratory research, there is simply no way for one study to assess possible effects of every attitude or characteristic on the primary dependent variable, but each study that examines this issue will elucidate more about its origins.

**Conclusion**

The possibility that a racialized crime threat instigates social control mechanisms has been addressed by much pre-existing research. The majority of this research has focused on the effects of the racial composition of place on a presumed sense of social threat (Liska, 1992; Taylor, 1998). The findings suggest that racial composition does present a form of racial threat, and is associated with both fear of criminal victimization, as well as various measures of social control, like the resources allocated to law enforcement, arrest rates, and incarceration rates. The research presented in this dissertation employs an alternative operationalization of racial threat, namely the black typification of crime.

As in previous studies, I similarly assessed the effects of racial threat on support for social control, but in an entirely new way. The race-specific social threat hypothesis is supported by this research, because the black typification of crime consistently increases support for punitive criminal justice policies. It seems that social threat is the result of not only living near blacks, but also the close association that is made by many between race and crime, regardless of actual proximity to blacks. Perhaps the racial typification of crime is an even better proxy for racial threat, as racial composition only assumes that an association is made between proximity and threat. The racial typification
of crime, alternatively, depends on individuals actually articulating perceptions about the confluence of race and crime.

Implicit micro processes involved in the individual typification of crime as black make the aggregate relationship between a racialized crime threat and punitiveness possible. As discussed earlier, without this individual level reaction to threat, the macro-level processes of racial threat leading to punitive control simply could not occur. The present research supports the argument that micro processes like the perceived threat of crime in relation to blacks lead members of the public to prefer policies that seek to increase social control.

One consequence of the racial typification of crime is the possibility that racism, and more specifically “modern racism,” is specified in a new way. As discussed, modern racism is less overt than traditional forms, but is more insidious because of this fact. When James Q. Wilson (1992:A16) said, “it is not racism that makes whites uneasy about blacks moving into their neighborhoods…it is fear. Fear of crime, of drugs, of gangs, of violence,” he suggested that racism is not driving negative perceptions about blacks, but that a range of negative characteristics are equated with them. Macro-level support for social control may coincide with macro-level measures of the racial composition of place because the proximity of African-Americans, increases micro-level fear of criminal victimization. It seems likely that this mobilizes certain control oriented micro-processes, including punitive reactions among the public. The association of blacks with fear inducing crime, drugs, gangs, and violence is a destructive phenomenon, which may have an impact that even exceeds the desire for punitive policies and greater social control.

There is still a lot to learn about what specifically leads to the associations made between criminality and race, but it is clear that support for harsh criminal policies is one consequential outcome of making these associations. In essence, this research corroborates Miller’s (1994) conjecture that the racial typification of crime does, indeed, increase public preferences for punitive punishments for criminals, but does not support claims that media consumption contributes to the development of these negative perceptions of race and crime or punitiveness.
APPENDIX A

SURVEY INSTRUMENT
Hello, my name is _______ calling on behalf of Research Network. We are conducting a survey about issues facing citizens like you. I assure you that we are not selling anything. The purpose of this survey is to collect public opinion on social issues such as crime, race, and the media as well as demographic information like income, which will be used to fulfill the requirements for the degree of Ph.D. for Kelly Welch, a doctoral candidate in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Florida State University. The faculty adviser for the project is Dr. Ted Chiricos. Both Ms. Welch and Dr. Chiricos can be contacted at (850)-644-4050. May I please speak with someone over the age of eighteen? Do you have approximately ten minutes to complete a survey on important social issues? Your opinions are important to us. You may stop answering questions at any time. Your responses will be confidential, and we will destroy your phone number after survey verification.

I am going to begin by asking you some questions about crime.

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the least concerned and 10 being very concerned, how concerned are you about crime?
   1. 1-10 ___________
   2. Don’t know
   3. Refused

2. Compared to last year, would you say that crime overall in the United States is much higher, higher, about the same, lower, or much lower?
   1. Much higher
   2. Higher
   3. About the same
   4. Lower
   5. Much lower
   6. Don’t know
   7. Refused

3. What about violent crime? Compared to last year, would you say that it is much higher, higher, about the same, lower, or much lower?
   1. Much higher
   2. Higher
   3. About the same
   4. Lower
   5. Much lower
   6. Don’t know
   7. Refused
Next, I am going to read a list of things that have been suggested as ways of dealing with crime in the United States. On a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 is being not at all supportive and 10 is being very supportive, tell me how much you support each of these proposals.

Q04A. Making sentences more severe for all crimes?
   1. 0-10 ___________  (Interviewer--enter number)
   2. Refused

Q04B. Executing more murderers?
   1. 0-10 ___________  (Interviewer--enter number)
   2. Refused

Q04C. Making prisoners work on chain gangs?
   1. 0-10 ___________  (Interviewer--enter number)
   2. Refused

Q04D. Taking away television and recreation privileges from prisoners?
   1. 0-10 ___________  (Interviewer--enter number)
   2. Refused

Q04E. Using more mandatory minimum sentencing statutes, like “3 Strikes” for repeat offenders and "10-20-Life" for crimes using guns?
   1. 0-10 ___________  (Interviewer--enter number)
   2. Refused

Q04F. Locking up more juvenile offenders?
   1. 0-10 ___________  (Interviewer--enter number)
   2. Refused

Q04G. Using the death penalty for juveniles who murder?
   1. 0-10 ___________  (Interviewer--enter number)
   2. Refused

Q04H. Sending repeat juvenile offenders to adult courts?
   1. 0-10 ___________  (Interviewer--enter number)
   2. Refused

Now I have some other questions to ask you about how we should deal with adult crime.

Q05. Are we spending too much, too little, or about the right amount of money on decreasing the crime rate?
   1. Too much
   2. About right
   3. Too little
   4. Refused
Q06. In general, do you think the courts in this area deal too harshly or not harshly enough with criminals?
   1. Too harshly
   2. About right
   3. Not harsh enough
   4. Refused

Q07. Are you in favor of the death penalty for persons convicted of murder?
   1. Yes
   2. No
   3. Don't know
   4. Refused

Q08. Do you believe that sentences handed down in juvenile court are too severe, about right, or not severe enough?
   1. Too severe
   2. About right
   3. Not severe enough
   4. Refused

Q09. Some have suggested that juvenile offenders should be given the same punishment as adults who commit similar crimes, even if this means long prison sentences. Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree?
   1. Strongly agree
   2. Agree
   3. Unsure/don't know (Don't read)
   4. Disagree
   5. Strongly disagree
   6. Refused

Q10. What percent of crimes in the United States would you say involve violence?
    1. 0-100 ____________ (Interviewer--enter number)
    2. Refused

Q11. When you think about people in prison in the U.S., what percent would you say are Black, what percent are white, and what percent are Hispanic? Do not worry about being exact and making the percentages equal 100.
    1. Black: _______ (Interviewer--enter number)
    2. White: _______ (Interviewer--enter number)
    3. Hispanic: _______ (Interviewer--enter number)
    4. Refused
Q12. Recently, some have suggested that racial profiling by law enforcement has resulted in more Blacks being imprisoned in this country. Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree?
   1. Strongly agree
   2. Agree
   3. Unsure/don't know (Don't read)
   4. Disagree
   5. Strongly disagree
   6. Refused

Q13. Previously, I asked you about people in prison. Now I would like you to think about people who actually commit violent crimes in this country. What percent would you say are Black, what percent are white, and what percent are Hispanic? Again, don't worry about being exact.
   1. Black:_______ (Interviewer--enter number)
   2. White:_______ (Interviewer--enter number)
   3. Hispanic:_______ (Interviewer--enter number)
   4. Refused

Q14. When you think about people who break into homes and businesses when nobody is there, approximately what percent would you say are Black, what percent are white, and what percent are Hispanic?
   1. Black:_______ (Interviewer--enter number)
   2. White:_______ (Interviewer--enter number)
   3. Hispanic:_______ (Interviewer--enter number)
   4. Refused

Q15. When you think about people who rob other people at gunpoint, approximately what percent would you say are Black, what percent are white, and what percent are Hispanic?
   1. Black:_______ (Interviewer--enter number)
   2. White:_______ (Interviewer--enter number)
   3. Hispanic:_______ (Interviewer--enter number)
   4. Refused

Now I am going to ask some questions about television.

Q16. First, in a typical week, how much time do you spend watching local news on the television?
   1. _________ hours (Interviewer--enter number)
   2. Refused

Q17. On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being not closely at all and 10 being very closely, how closely do you pay attention to crime news on the television?
   1. 0-10 _________ (Interviewer--enter number)
   2. Refused
Q18. Would you say that local TV news exaggerates crime a lot, exaggerates it a little, gets it just about right, underestimates it a little, or underestimates it a lot?
   1. Exaggerates it a lot
   2. Exaggerates it a little
   3. About right
   4. Underestimates it a little
   5. Underestimates it a lot
   6. Refused

Q19. For all crimes combined, what percent of accused criminals on local TV news would you say are Black, what percent are white, and what percent are Hispanic?
   1. Black: ________  (Interviewer--enter number)
   2. White: ________  (Interviewer--enter number)
   3. Hispanic: ________  (Interviewer--enter number)
   4. Refused

Q20. Would you say that local TV news exaggerates the involvement of Blacks in crime a lot, exaggerates it a little, gets it just about right, underestimates it a little, or underestimates it a lot?
   1. Exaggerates it a lot
   2. Exaggerates it a little
   3. About right
   4. Underestimates it a little
   5. Underestimates it a lot
   6. Refused

Q21. On local TV news, what percent of violent criminals, as opposed to all criminals, would you say are Black, what percent are white, and what percent are Hispanic?
   1. Black: ________  (Interviewer--enter number)
   2. White: ________  (Interviewer--enter number)
   3. Hispanic: ________  (Interviewer--enter number)
   4. Refused

Q22. Would you say that local TV news exaggerates the involvement of blacks in violent crime a lot, exaggerates it a little, gets it just about right, underestimates it a little, or underestimates it a lot?
   1. Exaggerates it a lot
   2. Exaggerates it a little
   3. About right
   4. Underestimates it a little
   5. Underestimates it a lot
   6. Refused

Next, I am going to read a list of network television programs. I would like you to tell me if you watch them regularly, sometimes, or not at all.
Q23. Law and Order:
   1. Regularly
   2. Sometimes
   3. Not at all
   4. Refused

Q24. Law and Order: SVU (Special Victims Unit)
   1. Regularly
   2. Sometimes
   3. Not at all
   4. Refused

Q25. Law and Order: Criminal Intent
   1. Regularly
   2. Sometimes
   3. Not at all
   4. Refused

Q26. Third Watch:
   1. Regularly
   2. Sometimes
   3. Not at all
   4. Refused

Q27. NYPD Blue:
   1. Regularly
   2. Sometimes
   3. Not at all
   4. Refused

Q28. Alias:
   1. Regularly
   2. Sometimes
   3. Not at all
   4. Refused

Q29. 24:
   1. Regularly
   2. Sometimes
   3. Not at all
   4. Refused

Q30. The Practice:
   1. Regularly
   2. Sometimes
   3. Not at all
   4. Refused
Q31. Crossing Jordan:
   1. Regularly
   2. Sometimes
   3. Not at all
   4. Refused

Q32. Philly:
   1. Regularly
   2. Sometimes
   3. Not at all
   4. Refused

Q33. On a scale from 0-10, with 0 being not at all fearful and 10 being very fearful, how much would you say you fear having your car stolen?
   1. 0-10 ________ (Interviewer--enter number)
   2. Refused

Q34. How about having someone break into your home?
   1. 0-10 ________ (Interviewer--enter number)
   2. Refused

Q35. Being robbed or mugged on the street?
   1. 0-10 ________ (Interviewer--enter number)
   2. Refused

Q36. Being raped or sexually assaulted?
   1. 0-10 ________ (Interviewer--enter number)
   2. Refused

Q37. Being beaten up or assaulted by strangers?
   1. 0-10 ________ (Interviewer--enter number)
   2. Refused

Q38. Being murdered?
   1. 0-10 ________ (Interviewer--enter number)
   2. Refused

Now I am going to read you some statements about different types of people. I would like you to tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each statement.

Q39. It would be okay if a member of my family wanted to bring a friend of a different race home for dinner.
   1. Strongly agree
   2. Agree
   3. Unsure/don't know (Don't read)
   4. Disagree
   5. Strongly disagree
   6. Refused
Q40. It would be okay if a person of a different race joined a social club or organization of which I was a member.
1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Unsure/don't know (Don’t read)
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. Refused

Q41. It would bother me if I had a job in which my supervisor was a different race than me.
1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Unsure/don't know (Don't read)
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. Refused

Q42. It would be okay if a family of a different race with an income similar to mine were to live nearby.
1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Unsure/don't know (Don't read)
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. Refused

Q43. It would be okay if a person of a different race were to marry into my family.
1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Unsure/don't know (Don't read)
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. Refused

The following demographic questions are for statistical purposes only:

D1. Which of the following best describes the highest level of education that you have completed? (Read categories)
1. No high school
2. Some high school
3. High school graduate
4. Vocational or trade school graduate
5. Some college
6. College graduate
7. Post graduate work or degree
8. (Don't read) Refused
D2. In what year were you born?_______________

D3. What county and state do you live in? _________________________________

D4. What is your zip code? ________________

D5A. Do you have any children?
   1. Yes (go to question D5B)
   2. No (go to question D6A)
   3. Refused

D5B. How old is the eldest child? ________________.

D6A. What race do you consider yourself? (DON'T read categories)
   1. White
   2. Black
   3. Asian or Pacific Islander
   4. American Indian
   5. Mixed Race
   6. Other (Please specify ________________ )
   7. Refused

D6B. Are you of Latino or Hispanic origin?
   1. Yes
   2. No
   3. Refused

D7. Politically, would you consider yourself conservative, moderate, or liberal?
   1. Conservative
   2. Moderate
   3. Liberal
   4. Refused

D8. Which political party do you consider yourself a member of? (Don't read categories)
   1. Republican
   2. Democrat
   3. Independent
   4. Other (Please specify _____________________ )
   5. Refused
D9. What was your total household income in 2000? (Read categories)
   1. less than $25,000
   2. $25 - $49,000
   3. $50 - $74,000
   4. $75 - $99,000
   5. $100 - $149,000
   6. $150-$199,000
   7. $200,000 or more
   8. (Don't read) Refused

Thank you very much for helping us in this study and for your time. I have no more questions.

D10. Record sex of respondent.
   1. Male
   2. Female

C1. Record Month _______________ and date _______________

C2. Record start _______________ and stop time _______________

C3. Record your sex
   1. Male
   2. Female

C4. Record your race
   1. White
   2. Black
   3. Asian or Pacific Islander
   4. Other (Please specify _____________________ )

C5. Record the respondent telephone number: ________________________________
APPENDIX B

HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE APPROVAL
APPROVAL MEMORANDUM
from the Human Subjects Committee

Date: January 18, 2002

From: David Quadagno, Chair

To: Kelly Welch and Dr. Ted Chiricos
MC: 1127
Dept: Criminology and Criminal Justice

Re: Use of Human subjects in Research
Project entitled: Punitive Attitudes and the Racial Typification of Crime

The forms that you submitted to this office in regard to the use of human subjects in the proposal referenced above have been reviewed by the Secretary, the Chair, and two members of the Human Subjects Committee. Your project is determined to be exempt per 45 CFR § 46.101(b)(2) and has been approved by an accelerated review process.

The Human Subjects Committee has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human participants and the aspects of the proposal related to potential risk and benefit. This approval does not replace any departmental or other approvals which may be required.

If the project has not been completed by January 17, 2003 you must request renewed approval for continuation of the project.

You are advised that any change in protocol in this project must be approved by resubmission of the project to the Committee for approval. Also, the principal investigator must promptly report, in writing, any unexpected problems causing risks to research subjects or others.

By copy of this memorandum, the chairman of your department and/or your major professor is reminded that he/she is responsible for being informed concerning research projects involving human subjects in the department, and should review protocols of such investigations as often as needed to insure that the project is being conducted in compliance with our institution and with DHHS regulations.

This institution has an Assurance on file with the Office for Protection from Research Risks. The Assurance Number is IRB00000446.

Cc:
APPLICATION NO. 01557
APPENDIX C

SURVEY PROMPTS
Punitive Attitudes and Racial Typification of Crime
Survey Spring 2002

*How did you get my number?* → Random digit dialing. The computer randomly generates phone numbers.

*How is this confidential if you have my number?* → The computer randomly dialed your number and I do not know your name or location. We do not associate your number with your responses to the survey.

*What is Research Network?* → RN is a local survey research firm that conducts a wide variety of research related to social science, marketing, customer satisfaction, and political issues. They are allowing FSU to use the facility for this research.

*What is the phone number for Research Network?* → Staff can be reached during normal business hours at (850)-681-9955.

*What is the survey about?* → Crime and the media.

*What is the purpose of this survey?* → To provide academic research for Florida State University.

*Can I get a copy of the results?* → Yes, when the study is completed (several months from now), but you’ll have to provide me with your name and address.

*Who is the research for?* → The School of Criminology at Florida State University. (DO NOT USE INDIVIDUAL NAMES OF TAs AND INSTRUCTORS.)

*How long will it take?* → Approximately eight to ten minutes, and will depend on whether you have questions or not.

*Respondent says that the survey is biased.* → The survey is not meant to be biased. We are attempting to collect responses from individuals with a wide variety of opinions in order to accurately reflect public opinion on crime and the media.

*Who wrote these questions?* → The questions were written by faculty and graduate students at the Florida State University, School of Criminology and Criminal Justice.
Why are you asking me for personal information? We collect this information to help us analyze the survey results among different groups of people.

QUESTIONS

Q01. What do you mean by “concerned” about crime? How much attention do you pay to crime and how much does it worry you.

Q02. What do you mean by “crime overall?” All crimes combined.

Q03. What do you mean by “violent crime?” This would include any crime that involved violence, like robbery, assault, rape, and murder.

Q04A-H. It depends on what kinds of crimes they commit. This question refers to crimes in general. In general, on a scale from 0-10 how much would you support this policy?

Q04C. What is a chain gang? It is a group of prison inmates forced to do hard labor.

Q04E. What is “3 Strikes?” It is a policy that requires a mandatory prison sentence for repeat offenders.

Q04F-G. Is this for convicted juvenile offenders? Yes.

Q04F-H. How are you classifying juveniles? Juveniles include anyone under 18 years old.

Q06. What area are you referring to? The area where you live.

Q07. It depends. In general, then, are you in favor of the death penalty for persons convicted of murder?

Q10. I don’t know. We would just like you to estimate the percent of violent crimes.
Q11. Why don’t I need to be exact? → Other racial and ethnic group members are imprisoned in this country, so your number could total less than 100. Also, some individuals are members of more than one race or ethnicity, so your number could total more than 100. It is more important for us to get an estimate than to have the numbers be exact.

Q11,13,14,15,19,21. Each group has equal representation in crime. → So, would you say 33% for blacks, 33% for whites, and 33% for Hispanics?

(If respondent gets upset about one of these questions, move on to the next one.)

Q12. What is racial profiling? → It is the intentional law enforcement targeting of individuals based on their race rather than a probable cause to believe they have participated in criminal activity.

Q13. You already asked me that question. → I previously asked you about those who are in prison. Now I am asking about those who commit violent crimes.

Q16. Respondent does not tell you an answer in hours. → Approximately how many hours would you say that is per week?

Is that a 7 day week? → Yes.

Q17. Do you mean local crime news? → Yes.

Q17-22. Why are you asking me about local TV news when I already told you that I do not watch it?

→ Even though you do not watch local TV news, we value your perceptions about it.
Q18,20,22.  *What do you mean by “exaggerates crime?”*  →  I mean make it seem like there is more crime than there is, and that it is more serious than it is.

*What do you mean by “underestimates crime?”*  →  I mean make it seem like there is less crime than there is, and that it is less serious than it is.

Q19.  *What do you mean by “accused” criminals?*  →  Since many people accused of committing crimes have not yet been convicted in court, we are calling them accused instead of convicted criminals.

Q21.  *Didn’t you just ask me that question?*  →  Previously I asked about the percentages of accused criminals who commit all types of crimes. Now I am asking about the percent of accused criminals who commit VIOLENT crime.

Q23-32.  *What is that?*  →  These are shows that are on television.

*I watch that show rarely*  →  Would you say you watch it sometimes, then?

Q43.  *Married to which member of my family?*  →  Married to a member of your immediate family, which would include brothers, sisters, parents, or children.

D5A.  I don’t have children, but I am expecting a baby.  →  (Interviewer—record as no children).

D5B.  *My oldest child is deceased.*  →  Then, what is the age of your eldest living child?

*My child/children is/are deceased.*  →  (Interviewer—record as no children.)

D6A.  *I am American.*  →  Yes, and would you describe yourself as White, Black, Asian or Pacific Islander, American Indian, or another race?
D7.  What does liberal mean?  →  Generally speaking, one who favors equality over liberty and sees government as the way to achieve equality.  (If they need an example: support affirmative action).

What does conservative mean?  →  Generally speaking, one who favors liberty over equality and sees individual responsibility as the tool to achieve equality, not government.  (If they need an example: oppose regulation of business.)
APPENDIX D

FACTOR ANALYSIS DATA
Table 17. Factor Analysis of Indicators of Punitive Attitudes (PUNATT):

**Total Variance Explained**

<table>
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<th>Component</th>
<th>Initial Eigenvalues</th>
<th>Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings</th>
</tr>
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<td>3.796</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 18. PUNATT Component Matrix(a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Make sentences more severe for all crimes</td>
<td>.759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take away T.V. and recreation privileges from</td>
<td>.676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use more mandatory minimum sentencing for repeat offenders</td>
<td>.676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make prisoners work on chain gangs</td>
<td>.714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Execute more murderers</td>
<td>.778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send repeat juvenile offenders to adult courts</td>
<td>.777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use death penalty for juveniles who murder</td>
<td>.725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lock up more juvenile offenders</td>
<td>.750</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a 1 components extracted.
Table 19. Factor Analysis of Indicators of the Black Typification of Crime (BLKCRIME): Total Variance Explained

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Initial Eigenvalues</th>
<th>Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>% of Variance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.272</td>
<td>75.722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>.408</td>
<td>13.593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>.321</td>
<td>10.686</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 20. BLKCRIME Component Matrix(a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What percent of robbers with guns are black?</td>
<td>.887</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What percent of burglars are black?</td>
<td>.870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What percent of violent criminals are black?</td>
<td>.853</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
a 1 components extracted.
### Table 21. Factor Analysis of Indicators of Fear of Victimization (FEARVIC): Total Variance Explained

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Initial Eigenvalues</th>
<th>Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>% of Variance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.307</td>
<td>71.784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>.557</td>
<td>9.275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>.418</td>
<td>6.960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>.285</td>
<td>4.752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>.272</td>
<td>4.531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>.162</td>
<td>2.698</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

### Table 22. FEARVIC Component Matrix(a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Component 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How much do you fear being beaten up or assaulted by strangers?</td>
<td>.909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much do you fear having someone break into your house?</td>
<td>.796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much do you fear having your car stolen?</td>
<td>.751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much do you fear being murdered?</td>
<td>.871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much do you fear being raped or sexually assaulted?</td>
<td>.850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much do you fear being robbed or mugged on the street?</td>
<td>.896</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a 1 components extracted.
Table 23. Factor Analysis of Indicators of Racial Prejudice (RACEPREJ): Total Variance Explained

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% of Variance</th>
<th>Cumulative %</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% of Variance</th>
<th>Cumulative %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>56.452</td>
<td>56.452</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>56.452</td>
<td>56.452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>.708</td>
<td>14.163</td>
<td>70.616</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>.614</td>
<td>12.271</td>
<td>82.887</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>.538</td>
<td>10.765</td>
<td>93.652</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>.317</td>
<td>6.348</td>
<td>100.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 24. RACEPREJ Component Matrix(a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>It would bother me if I had a job in which my supervisor was a different race than me</th>
<th>Component 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It would be okay if a person of a different race joined a social club or organization of which I was a member</td>
<td>.690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It would be okay if a member of my family wanted to bring a friend of a different race home for dinner</td>
<td>.834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It would be okay if a family of a different race with an income similar to mine were to live nearby</td>
<td>.824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It would be okay if a person of a different race were to marry into my family</td>
<td>.678</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a 1 components extracted.
Table 25. Factor Analysis of Indicators of Television Drama Viewing (TVDRAMA): Total Variance Explained

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Initial Eigenvalues</th>
<th>Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>% of Variance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.630</td>
<td>36.298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.275</td>
<td>12.747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.026</td>
<td>10.262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>.853</td>
<td>8.526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>.807</td>
<td>8.072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>.661</td>
<td>6.608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>.636</td>
<td>6.363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>.522</td>
<td>5.215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>.366</td>
<td>3.659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>.225</td>
<td>2.249</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 26. TVDRAMA Component Matrix(a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>.202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Watch</td>
<td>.553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law and Order: Special Victims Unit</td>
<td>.825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Practice</td>
<td>.565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYPD Blue</td>
<td>.416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law and Order</td>
<td>.774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSI: Crime Scene Investigation</td>
<td>.605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossing Jordan</td>
<td>.654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law and Order: Criminal Intent</td>
<td>.786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alias</td>
<td>.315</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
a 1 components extracted
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Kelly A. Welch is a candidate for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Florida State University. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree from the department of Social Ecology at the University of California, Irvine in 1996 and her Master of Science degree from the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Florida State University in 1999. Her research interests include race and crime, public attitudes about crime and punishment, social justice, public policy, criminological theory, and crime victims. She has been appointed Assistant Professor of Sociology at Villanova University, where she will be teaching criminal justice courses.