

# “TRUE TO OUR NATIVE LAND”

## *Distinguishing Attitudinal Support for Pan-Africanism from Black Separatism*

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### **Abstract**

There have been several recent attempts to operationalize and measure empirically attitudinal support for Black nationalism. However, scholars have not yet reached a consensus as to what precisely constitutes Black nationalism and its manifestations. Our work addresses three critical questions. First, is Black nationalism a uni-dimensional or a multi-dimensional construct? Second, is Black nationalism another form of xenophobia? Third, is support for Black nationalism a function of time? Some scholars note that Black nationalism takes on the character of its material context and that it cannot be easily subsumed into a trans-historical ideology (Reed 2002; Robinson 2001). We indirectly test these hypotheses by examining the relationship between two components of Black nationalism—Black separatism and Pan-Africanism. To test these hypotheses, we analyze data from the 1979–1980 National Survey of Black Americans (NSBA). Overall, we establish the determinants of support for Black separatism and Pan-Africanism while distinguishing these ideologies’ similarities and differences.

**Keywords:** Public Opinion, Black Nationalism, Pan-Africanism, Black Politics

### **INTRODUCTION**

As a prolific student of African American politics, Hanes Walton laments that Black nationalism is the most misunderstood of American ideologies. He asserts that this confusion stems from the overall problem confronting the characterization of Black political thought, in general, and nationalism, in particular (Walton 1985). Many

scholars have attempted to grapple qualitatively with the contours of this latter ideology, and there also have been several recent attempts to operationalize and measure empirically attitudinal support for Black nationalism. Quantitatively though, scholars have not yet reached a consensus as to what precisely constitutes Black nationalism and its manifestations. Further, they have not come to agreement as to whether Black nationalism is directly correlated with non-Black antipathy. Finally, they have not yet broached the question of whether Black support for Black nationalism is a direct consequence of life experience. By examining support for Pan-Africanism, we attempt to address these questions. We find that Pan-Africanism should be considered a distinct form of Black nationalism, particularly when juxtaposed against Black separatism. We find that support for Pan-Africanism is correlated with an increased willingness to engage in coalitions with other non-Blacks. Finally we find that support for both Pan-Africanism and Black separatism is conditioned by life experiences.

## THE LITERATURE

Scholars have recognized that at the elite level, actors have articulated support for very different forms of Black nationalism (Bracey et al., 1970; Bush 1999; Essien-Udom 1971; Henderson 2000; Robinson 2001; Stuckey 1987; Van DeBurg 1997). The statist, capitalist-centered conception of Marcus Garvey, for example, is very different from the early nationalist conceptions of the African Blood Brotherhood, whose members were more socialist in orientation (Van DeBurg 1997). Even before the Black Panther Party made a turn toward Maoism, its focus on politics and class was very different from the cultural focus of the United States. And Harold Cruse is probably the most prominent supporter of the pendulum thesis—the idea that mass Black political ideology shifts between integrationist and nationalist polls depending on the context of the time (Cruse 1984).

A number of scholars have begun to address these questions empirically using a combination of large-N surveys and longitudinal datasets. The 1993 National Black Politics Study (NBPS) has been the most important dataset for research in this area. Using it, Brown and Shaw found that Black nationalism at the mass level cohered around at least two dimensions—one based on community concerns (or on Black empowerment politics) and another based on the desire to be autonomous or separate from the larger community (Brown and Shaw, 2002). Michael Dawson, one of the primary investigators of the NBPS came to somewhat similar conclusions (Dawson 2001), finding support for economic nationalism, community nationalism, and Black separatism. Dawson's work is particularly helpful as he traces not simply support for Black nationalism but also the relationship between Black nationalism and other prominent Black political ideologies. As Black nationalist thought does not occur in an ideologic vacuum, it is crucial that we consider the influence other ideologies exert on Black nationalism and vice versa. However, indicating the complexity of measurement issues using the same dataset, Davis and Brown (2002, pp. 239–253) argue that Black nationalism is uni-dimensional, and furthermore, intolerant.

This is the second major area of disagreement. There has been vigorous debate as to whether or not Black nationalists are inherently hostile toward White Americans and thus likely to be antagonistic toward all outgroups. Along with Davis and Brown, Jennifer Hochschild (1995) has reached this conclusion. However, there is a counter view that Black nationalism is a complex ideology and while its adherents

likely share a resentment of White racism, there are differing strains of it that are receptive and hostile to aligning with other racial and ethnic minorities (Brown and Shaw, 2002, pp. 22–44).

Finally there is another thread that is indirectly related to questions of dimensionality and intolerance. We referred to Harold Cruse's pendulum thesis above. Errol Henderson (2000) argues that support for Black nationalism at the elite level is cyclical and most likely to occur in periods of racial retrenchment, American interventionism, and war; economic factors have little to no bearing. These contentions contradict Dean Robinson's (2001) qualitative conclusions that elite expressions of Black nationalism are so shaped by the particularities of each historical period and material context that generalization across periods is highly problematic if not implausible.

The quantitative work on Black nationalism, therefore, revolves around three questions. First, how do Black citizens as a whole understand Black nationalism? Does their support indicate that Black nationalism is a uni-dimensional ideology or a multi-dimensional ideology? This question is important because answering it gives scholars in general, and those interested in empirically studying the concept in particular, a better handle on Black nationalism (as an independent variable) as it relates to behavior and attitudes. Second, is Black nationalism another form of racism?<sup>1</sup> This question ties into larger questions regarding nationalism broadly considered as an ideology that veers almost inexorably into xenophobia (Nairn 1977). Third, is support for Black nationalism a partial function of collective memory? If indeed Black nationalism is a function of material context, this provides support for scholars' theories, and also adds a level of complexity to the first two questions; there may very well be times in which the dominant form of Black nationalism is racially intolerant, just as there may be times in which nationalism is largely one-dimensional.

In order to weigh in on these questions we tackle what we believe to be an unexplored dimension of Black nationalism—Pan-Africanism. As we show below, Pan-Africanism has played a very important role in political activity at both the elite and the mass level. However, there have been no attempts to measure support for it quantitatively, nor have there been attempts to distinguish support for it from other forms of Black nationalism. We hypothesize that while Black separatism and Pan-Africanism share nationalist principles, separatists are hostile toward alliances with other communities of color, whereas Pan-Africanists are receptive to such alliances. We believe that differing *mass constituencies, political climates, as well as collective memory contexts* matter in determining support for Black separatism *vs.* Pan-Africanism, though the more racially conscious and less affluent are attracted to both.

To test these hypotheses, we analyze data from the 1979–80 National Survey of Black Americans (NSBA). Our reason for using this dataset is that, unlike other attitudinal studies examining Black nationalism in the 1980s and 1990s (see Davis and Brown, 2002; Dawson 1994; Gurin et al., 1989; Tate et al., 1988), the 1979–1980 NSBA uniquely permits us to establish this critical period immediately following the height of the Black Power Movement as an ideological baseline for subsequent expressions. In this regard, we can fill an empirical lacuna in our historical knowledge and speculate on what laid the attitudinal groundwork for current movements (such as the growing reparations movement). We can also qualify the conclusions of those who lament the late 1970s as a period of Black demobilization and, by extension, one of ideological incoherence (Dawson 1994; Reed 1999; Smith 1996). Prior to our analysis, we will discuss the reasons why and the ways in which Black separatism and Pan-Africanism converge and diverge as nationalist ideologies, as well as delineate the factors that shape both.

## PAN-AFRICANISM AND BLACK SEPARATISM: SHARED VERSUS DIFFERING PRINCIPLES

*"Shadowed beneath Thy hand, May we forever stand, True to Our God, True to our native land."*  
James Weldon Johnson and Rosamond Johnson, "Lift Ev'ry Voice," 1900

When civil rights leader and author James Weldon Johnson first wrote the above verse over one hundred years ago, for a hymn later revered as the "Negro National Anthem," he may have presented his audience with a poetic ambiguity. By loyalty to "our native land," did he mean the American soil upon which the African American identity was borne or did he mean their ancestral motherland of Africa? In either case, sympathetic thinkers have interpreted this ambiguity to mean that the Black freedom struggle is bound not only to the "Black nation" in North America—Black American nationalism—but also to the unity of all of Africa's descendants "at home and abroad"—Pan-Africanism. Contemporary evidence for this connection between a Black endorsement of nationhood in America and uniting with African people abounds in the activities of several cultural and political grassroots movements. By the late 1980s, many of the same Black youth who used rap music lyrics, t-shirts, and baseball caps to popularize new forms of Black nationalist iconography also displayed pan-African solidarity by supporting the Free South Africa Movement or by avidly embracing the new group identity of "African American" (Henderson 1996; Lemann 1993; Martin 1991; Watkins 2002). There are other examples. While a million Black men responded to the 1995 call from Black nationalist leader Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam to gather in Washington, DC to reaffirm Black values like self-help (McCormick and Franklin, 1999; West 1998), years earlier many of these same men joined other African Americans to respond to Afrocentrism's call for rediscovering African values by enrolling their children in schools with African-centered curricula or embracing African-inspired fashions or art (Karenga 1998; Robinson 2001; Walters 1993).<sup>2</sup>

Having said this, there is at least one important caveat that explains why there is not always an association between sentiments of Black American nationhood and unity among Africa's descendants. While many Pan-Africanists may sympathize with Black nationalism or calls of national self-determination, not all Black nationalists are necessarily Pan-Africanists (Esedebe 1994; Walters 1993). For example, Harold Cruse believed strongly in the idea of a Black cultural nation, but he argued firmly that this nation was to be found totally within the confines of the United States (Cruse 1984). Also, in 1996, Louis Farrakhan, following the Million Man March, took a "World Friendship Tour" among African nations to show pan-Islamic solidarity, yet Pan-African sympathizers considered many of these regimes as authoritarian and brutal (Robinson 2001).<sup>3</sup>

### Definitions

Thus, it is important we begin our examination of the intrinsic commonalities and differences between Pan-Africanism and Black nationalist separatism by defining both. According to Esedebe, Pan-Africanism rests upon the following broad principles: "Africa as the homeland of Africans and persons of African origin, solidarity among people of African descent, belief in a distinct African personality, rehabilitation of Africa's past, pride in African culture, Africa for Africans in church and state,

and the hope for a united and glorious future of Africa” (Esedebe 1994, p. 4). Debate has raged for decades among scholars as to how much, if any, African Americans have retained of their ancestral African culture—this includes the legendary Herskowitz versus Frazier debate (Holloway 1990). However, it is likely true that Africa remains a vital and contested element of Black Americans’ political imagination (Berry and Blassingame, 1982; Walters 1993; White 1990). A multitude of ideological strands have comprised the matrix of this likewise multi-dimensional ideology—from Ethiopianism to Negritude to Pan-African socialism to contemporary Afrocentricity (Van DeBurg 1997). However, we are going to focus upon a form of Diasporic Pan-Africanism where one believes that, at the very least, African Americans ought to identify with Black people in Africa, with other Black people in the diaspora (especially the Caribbean and South America), and with expressions of African culture among Black Americans.

Examining the literature on Black nationalist separatism, it is clear that a debate rages as to its causes as well as the very origins of the concept of the “Black nation” (Holden 1973). There is a limited consensus among scholars that there are at least two fundamental aspects to nationalism: a group of people who share either enough cultural or territorial characteristics to be considered a “nation”; and/or a group of people who desire autonomy, unity, and loyalty within a pre-existing nation-state (Smith 2001). The desire for autonomy, unity, and loyalty are likewise present in Black nationalism writ large. Focusing specifically on autonomy, Dawson asserts that Black nationalism means “support for African-American autonomy and various degrees of cultural, social, economic, and political separation from White America. It is important to note here that the goal of most forms of Black Nationalism is not the creation of a separate state. Race is seen as the fundamental category for analyzing society, and America is seen as fundamentally racist” (Dawson 2001, p. 20). While we agree with Dawson that it is wrong to assume all forms of Black nationalism are separatist, it is also true that those manifestations of Black nationalism that have garnered the largest mass followings in the twentieth century—from Marcus Garvey’s United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) to Elijah Muhammad’s Nation of Islam—called for at least a strategic if not permanent separation between Blacks and Whites. For the purposes of this article, we define the Black separatist component of Black nationalism as supporting the following actions: stressing one’s Black identity over one’s American identity; believing that Whites seek to oppress African Americans racially; and calling for Black political independence as one solution. We stress that our “Black separatist” definition in no way defines the breadth of Black nationalism, especially since we think Pan-Africanism is also a nationalist ideology. We only use this definition in order to accentuate the commonalities and the differences between various forms of Black nationalism.

### **Shared Principles: Nationalist Linkages**

As we stated in the introduction, there are various points in African American history when explicit linkages have been made between Black separatism and Pan-Africanism. In fact, various schools of Black American-centered nationalism were inextricably linked to elements of Pan-Africanism in the thinking and activism of such leaders as Rev. Henry Highland Garnett and his antislavery/African-emigration appeals; Marcus Garvey and the UNIA; Malcolm X and his Organization of Afro-American Unity; Imari Obadele and the Republic of New Afrika; and Maulauna Karenga and The Organization US (Clarke 1974; Cunnigen 1999; Sales 1994; Stuckey 1987). Stokely Carmichael once remarked to the Sixth Pan-African Confer-

ence: "Pan Africanism is the highest political expression of Black Power" (Walters 1993, pp. 59–68).

Underlying each of the above exemplars were the nationalist principles of cultural ties to Africa (as opposed to America), antiracism, political self-determination, and economic self-determination. How were African cultural ties apparent? By the late 1960s, African cultural ties were apparent for a great deal of cultural cross-fertilization occurred between Black Nationalism and cultural nationalism or the focus upon the African ties of the Black American "nation." A series of historic, pan-African arts and cultural festivals, which were attended by African American delegations, helped to foment such linkages. They began in 1969 with the First Pan-African Cultural Festival held in Algiers and later with the 1977 Second World Festival of Black and African Arts and Culture held in Lagos. Within the United States, a new Black Arts Movement fueled this rediscovery and celebration of an African ethos. In turn, proponents of the Black Power Movement wore dashikis, learned African languages such as Swahili, established African-inspired rituals, religions, and holidays such as Kwanzaa, and assumed or gave their children African names. Stokely Carmichael, one of the chief articulators of Black Power, even married South African singer Mariam Makeba (nicknamed 'Mama Africa') and became Kwame Ture. He and other former Black Power advocates not only moved to Ghana as disciples of Kwame Nkrumah, but founded the All-African Peoples Revolutionary Party as a pan-African extension upon Black Power (Esedebe 1994; Van DeBurg 1997; Walters 1993).

Overall, it is difficult to overestimate the enormous, reciprocal inspiration the African decolonialization struggle and the Black Liberation Movement lent to each other during the 1950s and 1960s. Black Power advocates fervently admired Afro-Caribbean and African leaders Walter Rodney of Guyana, Frantz Fanon of Martinique, Jomo Kenyatta (and the Mau Mau) of Kenya, Patrice Lumumba of the Congo, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana (Clarke 1991; Dawson 2001; Meriwether 2002). "Internal colonialism" became a paradigm Black nationalists and other radicals borrowed from the African anticolonial struggle to analyze the plight of the "Black colony" in the United States (Allen 1990; Carmichael and Hamilton, 1967). The Black Power Conventions of the late 1960s and into the 1970s, which culminated in the 1972 Gary Convention, were replete with references to Black "nation time" right next to calls for Black Americans to be relevant to the broader African condition (Smith 1996).

Lastly, economic autonomy constitutes another area of agreement. For example, Marcus Garvey, who preached a form separatism in the 1920s, proposed a collective, Pan-African capitalism as a revision upon Booker T. Washington's conservative economic nationalism (Martin 1986). In the 1940s, Du Bois, as a premiere Pan-African intellectual, advocated creating Black economic cooperatives to confront Southern segregation around the same time Rev. Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., and other Black Harlemites launched "Buy Black" campaigns (Du Bois 1940; Franklin 1992). And while James Forman and the National Black Economic Development Conference appealed for reparations to Black America from White churches as well as solidarity with Africa, Amiri Baraka's Congress of Afrikan People advocated merging Pan-Africanism and socialism (Kadalie 2000, pp. 563–564).

### **"Principle" Differences: Different Nationalisms**

Plainly stated, the central difference between Pan-Africanism and Black nationalist separatism is that Pan-Africanism explicitly attempts to forge cross-national relation-

ships. Pan-Africanism represents the principle of Black solidarity wherever persons of African descent reside, whereas Black nationalist separatism centers its call for empowerment within the United States (Esedebe 1994). Thus, there are distinctions in whether and how each conception implicitly forges ties across the "Black Atlantic" as well as between African Americans and other racial minorities. Students of Black attitudes frame this as a question of what ideological sentiments encourage African Americans to have shared affinities with other Blacks in the African diaspora versus other racialized persons in the United States (Thornton and Taylor, 1988a; Thornton and Taylor, 1988b).

Are Pan-Africanists more likely to consider a broad array of "Third World" peoples their allies precisely because they think abroad in their political and cultural affinities? We think so. To reiterate an early point, radical strains of Pan-Africanism have often made linkages to the Third World as an indispensable ingredient of African liberation. In the mid-1960s, Malcolm X increasingly embraced pan-Africanism while speaking of a Third World or "Black Revolution" including Asia, Latin America, and Africa. Increasingly radicalized members of the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee made ties with Africa while also opposing the U.S. war against the Vietnamese. In the 1970s, the Republic of New Afrika, the Congress of Afrikan People, and All African Peoples Revolutionary Party aligned with nationalists or socialists in nations ranging from Viet Nam to Cuba (Cunnigen 1999; Dawson 2001). And as recently as 1999 the Black Radical Congress embraced the principle of "solidarity with peoples of African descent throughout the African Diaspora" alongside their seeking "alliances with other people of color to develop unified strategies for achieving multicultural democracy" (Black Radical Congress 1999, pp. 5-6).

On the other hand, those who support strict notions of Black separatism consider it necessary first to "close ranks" or believe that "group solidarity is necessary before a group can operate effectively from a bargaining position of strength in a pluralistic society" (Carmichael and Hamilton, 1967, p. 44). African Americans who strictly interpret this self-determination maxim may conclude that not only must Black empowerment groups be all Black, but also, all non-Blacks, including other racial minorities, are at best unreliable allies and at worst, adversaries. This is in the vein of what has been called "separatist nationalism," and recent research has concluded that its adherents may not see Asian Americans or Latinos as natural allies (Brown and Shaw, 2002). Among the most publicized examples of separatist clashes with other racial or ethnic groups are the infamous tussles of Black grassroots activists or Nation of Islam leaders, such as the vitriolic Khalid Muhammad, versus Korean, Jewish, and Latino store owners in New York and Los Angeles (Sniderman and Piazza, 2002). Undoubtedly, such incidents occur against a political backdrop that at times is rife with subtle and not so subtle tensions between African Americans and other racial minorities, whether it is Cubans in Miami or Chicanos in Chicago (Sonenshein 1997).

## **THE CONSTITUENCIES, CLIMATES, AND COLLECTIVE MEMORY CONTEXTS OF BLACK IDEOLOGY**

At this point, we have theoretically established that Pan-Africanism and Black separatism share certain principles and thus are inter-related ideologies. However, due to their differences in focus, they should still be thought of as distinct components of a broader Black nationalism. What are the shared and distinct constituencies, political/

economic climates, and collective memory contexts associated with these ideologies? The following are the key independent variables in our models.

Consistent with the attitudinal findings of previous works, (Gurin et al., 1989; Tate 1993; Dawson 1994), we argue that racially conscious and lower-income African Americans should largely support both ideologies. When we refer to group cooperation, group initiative, and group loyalty, we are referring to a sense of linked fate. African Americans who are conscious of the individual and collective experience of being Black should be more likely to support both expressions of solidarity with Africa and support for Black autonomy. For example, leaders ranging from Marcus Garvey to Louis Farrakhan, and thus their adherents, placed paramount value upon the centrality of Blackness in their ideological conceptions of group well-being (Van DeBurg 1997). Though racial oppression has truncated the range of material resources available to African Americans, there are still significant class differences in Black communities (Boston 1988). So, we expect working-class African Americans or those with a lower socioeconomic status to support both Black separatism and Pan-Africanism more so than their middle-class counterparts. Among mass Black publics, it has historically been the working class and poor who were attracted to Garvey's UNIA, Elijah Muhammad's Nation of Islam, or the Black Panther Party. Each proffered visions of Pan-Africanism and/or Black separatism that argued White America's racial intransigence meant that integration was not a viable option for most African Americans, most especially those at the lower rungs of the economic ladder (Bush 1999).

For much of this and the previous theoretical section, we have drawn from examples of the 1970s in order to suggest the contextual factors that laid the ideological groundwork for Black attitudes late in that decade, and thus for the dataset we utilize. The late 1970s and early 1980s was a period in which a galvanized Black vote was electing increasing numbers of African Americans to public office in the wake of the declining, mass mobilization phases of the Civil Rights and Black Power movements. Despite these gains, issues of police brutality, residential segregation, and burgeoning Black unemployment challenged these new politicians and aggravated their Black constituents (Marable 1990; Preston et al., 1987). So, what bearing would these conditions have upon Black attitudes?

The theory of collective memory posits that the past and more specifically—*memories of the past*—serve to link various members of a society together (Schuman and Corning, 2000; Schuman and Scott, 1989; Schwartz 1997). Schuman and Scott (1989) are most helpful, for they discover support for the idea that the seminal events of a given period exert a powerful effect upon a generation, particularly on those individuals just reaching adulthood. Scholars who study nationalism are also helpful. They argue against elitist conceptions of nationalism by positing that symbols and myths are translated over time not simply through or by elites but through communities of people (Anderson 1991; Smith 2001). Collective memory not only structures their conceptions of that seminal time period, it also has an effect on their present behavior and attitudes. Taking a cue from Schuman and Scott, Gibson and Caldeira (1992) find that the generation of African Americans who became adults sometime during the Warren-era Supreme Court held a reservoir of support for the Supreme Court that withstood the transition from a liberal court to a conservative court. Frederick Harris (2001) also finds that collective memory has an impact on political behavior of African Americans and that this impact is mediated by institutions. This represents an important contribution to the literature as it introduces an element of intentionality. Collective memories are not something that a generation simply shares by dint of being born at the same time. A sense of collective memory—

just like linked fate—can be inculcated either by institutions or by individual behavior. We think of collective memory as involving both components, a sense of shared living or shared reality, as well as activity designed to inculcate that sense of shared living or shared reality. More specifically, we argue that members born during the Black Power Movement will be more likely to support Black separatism since the Black Power Movement represented an attempt to build political, economic, and cultural power for African Americans (Morris et al., 1989). However, those engaged in explicit behavior designed to inculcate a grander sense of shared history, one involving the diaspora—such as, for instance, researching their African American family history—should be more likely to support Pan-Africanism than Black separatism. Besides, the late 1970s was a period when African Americans were deeply contemplating Black history and the African origins of their family genealogy due to the groundbreaking television docudrama *Roots* (Fairchild et al., 1982).

### Analysis

As aforementioned, we are using the first wave of the NSBA. As a probability household survey, NSBA comprised face-to-face interviews conducted between 1979 and 1980. It was administered to 2,107 individuals who were at least eighteen years old and who self-identified as African American. Concerned with major social, psychological, and cultural issues of Black life, the survey focused primarily upon questions of social support and health. Yet, there were several questions useful for our purposes in that they probed attitudes toward various populations, particularly Africans and West Indians, and asked respondents their perceptions of Black political life and ideology.

Recall our assumption that Pan-Africanism or closeness to the African diaspora differs from Black separatism in that, quite simply, the former will emphasize solidarity with persons of African descent external to the United States, and the latter will stress identities and institutions of Black self-determination internal to the United States. One of our objectives is to demonstrate that although the above two impulses are interrelated, they are still distinct in kind if not degree. To test our assumption, we conduct a factor analysis including variables from the 1979–1980 NSBA that relate to African diasporic versus Black separatist values. In Table 1, we present our results. Factor analysis (or more accurately Principal Components Analysis) is an appropriate technique because it allows us to discern whether groups of variables are linear combinations of underlying, theoretically relevant dimensions such as closeness to the African diaspora or a belief in Black separatist values. When more than one component is extracted in the search for dimensions, we are able to assess whether a group of variables are correlated more with one presumed component than another (Hawkins and Fatti, 1984).

### THE AFRICAN DIASPORA AND BLACK SEPARATIST COMPONENTS

The variables we included are the following: close to people in Africa; close to West Indians; close to Black Americans who take African names; being Black is more important than being American; Whites want to keep Blacks down; and Blacks should form their own political party. The first three variables all measure the affinity African American individuals have toward other people of African descent or those who value their ancestral culture enough to assume an African moniker. Well over half of the sample felt close to African people, and nearly half admired Black

**Table 1.** Principal Components Analysis of the 1979–1980 National Survey of Black Americans

	Component 1: African Diaspora Component (ADC)	Component 2: Black Separatist Component (BSC)
How close do you feel in your ideas and feelings to Black people in Africa? Coded—1 “Very Close”; 0 “Not Close At All” (Close % = 57.2)	0.86	0.01
How close do you feel in your ideas and feelings to West Indians—such as Black people from Jamaica, Bermuda, or Haiti? Coded—1 “Very Close”; 0 “Not Close At All” (Close % = 44.4%)	0.84	–0.09
How close do you feel in your ideas and feelings to Black Americans who take African names? Coded—1 “Very Close”; 0 “Not Close At All” (Close % = 48.2)	0.59	0.34
Which would you say is more important to you—being Black or being an American, or are both equally important to you? Coded—1 “Black”; 0.5 “Both Equally Important”; 0 “American” (Black % = 20.0)	0.09	0.63
On the whole, do you think most White people want to see Blacks get a better break, or do they want to keep Blacks down, or don’t they care one way or the other? Coded—1 “Keep Blacks Down”; 0 “Give Blacks A Better Break” (Keep down % = 41.5)	–0.13	0.63
Do you think Black people should form their own political party? Coded—1 “Yes”; 0 “No” (Yes % = 46.2)	0.14	0.62
Eigenvalue	1.91	1.24
% of Total Variance Explained	31.79	20.59
% of Total Cumulative Variance Explained (Both Factors)	52.37	
Number of cases	1539	

Extraction Method: Principal Components Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax Rotation with Kaiser Normalization

SPSS 10.0.5 was used to perform this analysis. An oblique rotation of these same items provided very similar results with 52.37% of the total cumulative variance explained. The correlation between the two factors was .123, which suggests a strong degree of orthogonality.

people with African names. This was only a little less true of respondents’ affinity toward Afro-Caribbean persons. Our overall rationale for including these variables is that they approximate what we have described as a core sentiment of Pan-Africanism, i.e., identification with and connection to Africa and the African diaspora is desirable. This is true whether these peoples are on the continent, in the Caribbean, or in the United States but assume distinct African retentions such as clothing or names (Esedebe 1994).

To be sure, the next three variables are interesting in that they hint at why Black separatism (centered in the United States) seeks to overcome racial oppression and emphasizes Black political independence.<sup>4</sup> Admittedly, these variables speak as much to an affirmative Black autonomy as they do to the frustrations embedded in Black separatism. Yet we include each because they approximate the core separatist senti-

ment that African Americans are only empowered when they distance themselves from America; from Whites, who by definition have racist motives; and from mainstream institutions such as political parties that invariably will not represent Black interests (Hall 1978). Note that both components cohere fairly well (a total of 52% of the variance explained). The first three comprise what we consider an African Diaspora Component or ADC, and the last three comprise what we consider a Black Separatist Component or BSC. We label these components as such because we do not presume they encompass the entirety of Black nationalism.

### Support for the African Diaspora Component

Next, Table 2 presents results from the ADC and BSC as regressed against various constituent, climate, and contextual variables. We include a battery of standard control variables to understand simply the social, economic, or civil characteristics of

**Table 2.** Support for African Diaspora Component (ADC) and the Black Autonomy Component (BAC), 1979–1980 National Survey of Black Americans

Independent Variables	African Diaspora Component (ADC)	Black Separatist Component (BSC)
Black Identity	2.16*** (.13)	.41** (.14)
Family Income	-.31** (.10)	-.24* (.10)
Education	-.00 (.12)	-.62*** (.13)
Age	-.33 (.17)	-1.73*** (.17)
Female	-.23*** (.05)	-.06 (.05)
Respondent from South	-.16** (.05)	-.02 (.05)
Member of a Black Organization	.15* (.07)	.11 (.07)
Better Off Financially Than You Were Three Years Ago	.02 (.06)	-.03 (.07)
Believes Blacks in America Have a Great Deal of Power	-.02 (.09)	-.24* (.10)
Upset by Bad Treatment of You or Your Family Because of Race	.19* (.09)	.36*** (.10)
Member of Black Power Generation—1966–1975	-.03 (.06)	.14* (.07)
Family Has Traced Family Roots	.24*** (.07)	-.05 (.06)
Constant	-1.15*** (.15)	.98*** (.17)
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.18	.10
Standard Error of the Estimate	.90	.94
Number of cases	1463	1463

Entries are unstandardized, ordinary least square (OLS) regression estimates with standard errors in parentheses. All variables were recoded on a 0–1 interval. Values are rounded to 0.01, with some exceptions. All tests are two-tailed. \* indicates  $p < .05$ . \*\* indicates  $p < .01$ . \*\*\* indicates  $p < .001$ .

those respondents most likely to feel close to other people of African descent or who stress an African identity. The independent variables we included (which are all recoded to range between 0 and 1) are seven control variables: Black Identity in lieu of no common fate/linked fate measure for NSBA 1979–1980 (it is an index variable of closeness to poor Blacks, religious Blacks, young Blacks, middle-class Blacks, working-class Blacks, older Blacks, and elected Blacks); Family Income; Education (or years of schooling); Age; Female = 1.00; Respondent from the South = 1.00; and Membership in a National Black Organization = 1.00. In this respect we replicate the previous work by Dawson (1994), Gurin and her colleagues (1989), and Tate (1993), where each presumed that Black group attachments, socioeconomic status, age, gender, region, and Black group memberships are strong determinants of Black nationalism. Next there are four climate variables to gauge the individual racial and economic well-being of a respondent as well as her optimism about Black political influence—Better Off Financially Now Than Three Years Ago (Better = 1.00; Same = 0.50; Worse = 0.00); Believes Blacks in the U.S. Have Great Influence (Yes = 1.00); Upset by Bad Racial Treatment of You or Family in Past Month (Upset A Great Deal = 1.00; Upset a Lot = 0.75; Upset Only A Little = 0.50; Not Upset From Race Problem = 0.25; Had No Race Problem = 0.00). Again, these variables approximate respondent assessments of personal and group economic and racial climate. Lastly, we have a generational variable in order to test whether respondents who turned sixteen years of age between 1965 and 1975 were socialized as part of a distinct Black Power Generation = 1.00, and a variable that assesses the degree to which respondents actively searched for familial linkages to the diaspora. We expect that our two forms of nationalism are most salient to those who came of age in a period—the late 1960s and early 1970s—when declarations of Black unity and autonomy flourished.

As indicated in the first column of Table 2, African Americans who are more Black-identified and belong to members of national Black organizations are significantly more likely to have an affinity with other people of/or who strongly identify with African descent. Consistent with other findings about Black racial identification (Thornton et al., 1997), it is not surprising that persons who more eagerly embrace other African Americans, despite their differing social characteristics, are more likely to embrace people of African descent. Racial (or cultural) solidarity is very important to these individuals. Thus, note the coefficient for Black identity remains strong and statistically significant across both columns of Table 2. Given the number of national organizations that mobilized for the cause of African solidarity in the late 1970s, including the umbrella African Liberation Support Committee (and later the Free South Africa Movement) (Reed 1999; Walters 1993), it is important to note that this coefficient is positive and significant across the model. We predicted that family income would be negatively associated with support for Pan-Africanism. Other studies have confirmed that the working class and poor, young people, men, and persons outside the South are more attracted to cultural politics and by extension they identify more with the African diaspora (Gurin and Epps, 1975; Simpson 1998), although the gender effects are not always as predicted here (Brown and Shaw, 2002).

Other than the racial treatment variable, none of the other climate variables is significant. Not surprisingly, persons who endured recent racial mistreatment had a stronger identification with African heritage and/or descent. As we indicated in our discussion about race as a shared basis of experience and/or commiseration for African people, greater sensitivity to racism makes it more likely that one will, in the words of Marcus Garvey, see through “African spectacles” (Jacques-Garvey 1986). Lastly, it appears from the second column that the more respondents have actively sought out their diasporic heritage, the more prone they are to support Pan-Africanism.

### **Support for the Black Separatist Component**

Looking at the second column of Table 2, the coefficients and the direction of the coefficients for the BSC mirror our findings with the ADC. In line with our hypothesis, those with higher Black identification are significantly more likely than those with lower Black identification to support the BSC. Likewise, family income is negative and significant, suggesting that lower-income persons and younger people more readily endorse these nationalist values/strategies than their counterparts. Unlike the ADC, education is also negative and highly significant. Here education may be serving as a proxy for class, but it could also be serving as a proxy for information or knowledge. Those with a higher education may view the idea of Black autonomy as highly unlikely. As a testament to the relatively less variance the BSC explains in contrast to the ADC, none of the other control variables besides age is significant. Note, however, that those who have a pessimistic assessment of Black political power and who have recently confronted individual racial taunts are more likely to endorse the BSC. This subtly confirms the apprehensions or predictions of those who, for differing reasons, have readily concluded that Black nationalism is either a logical or a corrosive outgrowth of Black racial alienation (Hochschild 1995). Lastly, there is a positive and significant relationship between being a member of the Black Power Generation and support for the BSC. This suggests that this generation may still positively support principles of autonomy in the wake of the previous movement. We now discuss similarities and differences in the principles endorsed by adherents.

### **AGREEMENT BETWEEN PAN-AFRICANISM AND BLACK SEPARATISM**

In examining support for various policies and ideas regarding Black life, where should we expect to see commonalities and differences? Given that Pan-Africanism is a broad, diasporic ideology, we would expect Pan-Africanists to agree with Black separatists on the nature (and extent) of White racism. We would also expect them to agree on the necessity of group cooperation, initiative, and loyalty. However, we would expect them to disagree upon the need for diasporic/ethnic alliances. As we have discussed earlier, not all forms of Black nationalism are inherently pan-Africanist or center the "Black Nation" in Africa as opposed to the southern United States; such is especially true with the form of separatist nationalism our BSC captures. We first examine areas of agreement.

As presented in Table 3, our central dependent variables in this case are: Closer to Blacks in Africa than Whites in America; More racial discrimination now than twenty years ago; Should vote for Black candidates; Should shop in Black stores. These variables were chosen because they represent core nationalist values of Pan-Africanism and Black separatism. The first dependent variable examines support for ties to Africa in a way that echoes Du Bois's "double consciousness" (Du Bois 1903 [1997]). The second variable measures the degree to which the respondent acknowledges the pervasiveness of racism in this post-Civil Rights and Black Power era. The third variable measures support for Black political autonomy, and the final variable measures support for a measure of Black economic autonomy.

Focusing on the African Diaspora Component and Black Separatist Component, which we use as independent variables for this analysis, both are positively and significantly associated with each of the cultural, racial, political, and economic autonomy variables. Thus both lean in the expected direction. However, the strength of the coefficients seems to vary according to the salience of that item. For example,

**Table 3.** Agreement between African Diaspora Component (ADC) and Black Separatist Component (BSC), 1979–1980 National Survey of Black Americans

Independent Variables	(1) Closer to Blacks in Africa than Whites in America	(2) More Racial Discrimination Now than 20 Years Ago	(3) Should Vote for Black Candidates	(4) Should Shop in Black Stores
African Diaspora Component	.15*** (.01)	.03** (.01)	.02** (.01)	.03*** (.01)
Black Separatist Component	.10*** (.01)	.06*** (.00)	.07*** (.01)	.06*** (.01)
Black Identity	.11 (.07)	-.11* (.05)	.27*** (.04)	.10** (.04)
Family Income	-.05 (.05)	-.05 (.04)	-.06* (.03)	.04 (.03)
Education	.04 (.06)	.04 (.04)	-.18*** (.03)	.04 (.03)
Age	-.06 (.08)	-.07 (.06)	.09* (.05)	.25*** (.05)
Female	-.00 (.02)	-.03 (.02)	-.01 (.01)	-.02 (.01)
Respondent from South	.02 (.02)	-.04* (.02)	-.00 (.01)	.00 (.01)
Member of a Black Organization	.02 (.03)	.03 (.03)	-.00 (.01)	.05** (.01)
Constant	.61*** (.07)	.33*** (.06)	.37*** (.04)	.37*** (.04)
Adjusted R2	.17	.04	.20	.10
Standard Error of the Estimate	.40	.33	.24	.25
Number of cases	1270	1473	1472	1495

Entries are unstandardized, ordinary least square (OLS) regression estimates with standard errors in parentheses. All variables were recoded on a 0–1 interval. Values are rounded to 0.01, with some exceptions. All tests are two-tailed. \* indicates  $p < .05$ . \*\* indicates  $p < .01$ . \*\*\* indicates  $p < .001$ .

though both African diaspora supporters and Black separatists agree that they feel closer to Blacks in Africa than they do to Whites in America, those who support Pan-Africanist tenets have a stronger relationship as measured by the size of the coefficient. Inversely, those supporting tenets of Black separatism more strongly support the idea that Blacks should only shop in Black stores and only vote for Black political candidates. This is not surprising based upon previous research that suggests these variables help to measure core nationalist values (Dawson 1994; Tate 1993). Of the remaining independent variables, the Black identity variable suggests those with greater racial consciousness were optimistic about the state of racial discrimination but supportive of economic and political autonomy.

### Disagreement between the African Diaspora Component and the Black Autonomy Component

Turning to measures of disagreement, we measure closeness to non-Black ethnic groups in Table 4. This measure may indicate the likelihood of Black respondents

**Table 4.** Disagreement between African Diaspora Component (ADC) and Black Separatist Component (BSC), 1979–1980 National Survey of Black Americans

Independent Variables	(1) Close to Spanish Speaking Groups	(2) Close to Americans Indians	(3) Close to Asian Americans
African Diaspora Component	.13*** (.01)	.15*** (.01)	.12*** (.01)
Black Separatist Component	-.01 (.01)	-.02* (.01)	-.02** (.01)
Black Identity	.10* (.04)	.06 (.04)	.11** (.04)
Family Income	-.02 (.03)	-.03 (.03)	-.05 (.03)
Education	.12*** (.03)	.06 (.04)	-.03 (.03)
Age	.03 (.05)	.22*** (.05)	.05 (.04)
Female	-.06*** (.01)	-.08*** (.02)	-.03* (.01)
Respondent from South	-.07*** (.01)	-.04** (.02)	-.03 (.01)
Member of a Black Organization	.03 (.02)	.05* (.02)	.00 (.02)
Constant	.30*** (.05)	.34*** (.05)	.24*** (.04)
Adjusted R2	.26	.30	.25
Standard Error of the Estimate	.26	.27	.24
Number of cases	1503	1503	1503

Entries are unstandardized, ordinary least square (OLS) regression estimates with standard errors in parentheses. All variables were recoded on a 0–1 interval. Values are rounded to 0.01, with some exceptions. All tests are two-tailed. \* indicates  $p < .05$ . \*\* indicates  $p < .01$ . \*\*\* indicates  $p < .001$ .

seeing these other groups as prospective allies. We are careful not to conclude that this direct confirmation of group tolerance, even given that tolerance, likely precedes solidarity sentiments. As aforementioned, Pan-Africanism among African Americans is an internationalist ideology that implicitly asserts links not just between Black people within the African diaspora but also with other people of color. Thus we hypothesized that those endorsing this ideology would feel closer to other racial minorities. On the other hand, since Black separatists are strong intra-ethnic identifiers but weak inter-ethnic identifiers, we expect support for Black autonomy to be either unrelated to or negatively correlated with non-Black group closeness. Looking at the results we find support for our hypotheses. Support for the African diaspora is positively related to closeness to Latinos or “Spanish Speaking Groups,” Native Americans or “American Indians,” and Asian Americans where each is coded on a Likert scale (1.00 = Very Close). Support for Black separatism is negatively correlated with closeness to both American Indians and Asian Americans, though the coefficients are small. Akin to the findings of Thornton and his colleagues (Thornton and Taylor, 1988b) gender seemed to matter in that Black males were more likely to express closeness to these groups. To a certain extent these overall findings support our hypothesis that some forms of Black nationalism are associated with unwillingness to desire solidarity with other groups. Yet, in our conclusion we will explain why it is very important to qualify such an understanding.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Quite naturally, the reader may wonder what has become of the dynamic between Black separatism and Pan-Africanism since the late 1970s. One answer is that African Americans' identification with the people and cultures of their ancestral homeland has not abated, and, at certain moments, this identification has moved further away from the margin into the mainstream. Whereas 55% of all respondents to the 1979–1980 NSBA believed that Black children should learn an African language, by 1993 this percentage increased to 73%, according to the 1993 NBPS (Brown and Shaw, 2002, p. 25). When Nelson Mandela was released from prison in 1990, he conducted a tour of the United States. Visiting Tiger Stadium in Detroit, he spoke of how he passed the time while a political prisoner:

When we were in prison, we appreciated and avidly listened to the sound of Detroit, Motortown. On reaching Detroit, I recalled some of the words of the song sung by Marvin Gaye: 'Brother, brother, there's far too many of you dying. Mother, mother, there's far too many of you crying . . .' (Edmunds 2004).

While to a certain extent Mandela may be playing to the audience, the strength of the statement lies in the fact that it was so plausible, indeed so probable in the minds of listeners. And the reason he spoke in cities like Atlanta, Washington, D.C., and Detroit in the first place was not simply because of the strong African American presence in these cities, but because of the support that African Americans lent to his cause. Yet and still at the same period, and dovetailing with this emphasis upon Africa in the 1990s, was the reassertion of Black nationalist mobilization and leadership as was quite evident from the Nation of Islam-led Million Man March. The reemergence of the (New) Black Panther Party, the continued attraction of college students to Black nationalist rhetoric and ritual, as well as attempts by outwardly Black nationalist candidates to secure public office suggests that the political atmosphere in Black America was no less conducive to assertions of Black political autonomy than it was receptive to a regard for Africa (Jennings 1992; Lemann 1993; McCormick and Franklin, 1999). In this way what we are studying is not simply a matter of attitudes, but also the degree to which African Americans support the notion of national Black politics on the one hand and transnational Black politics on the other. By "transnational Black politics" we mean a form of politics that is based on ". . . horizontal, non-state-based relationships between political actors in various nation-states for the purpose of challenging or overturning policies in one or more nation-states" (Hanchard 2003, p. 22). What we have discovered in our examination of data from the 1979–1980 NSBA is that Pan-Africanism was a dimension separate from (although very related to) support for Black separatism in the late 1970s. It is highly likely that cultural nationalism—or an emphasis upon the African origins of the "Black nation"—served as an ideological bridge between the two (Van DeBurg 1997). But as we hypothesized, sentiments that ranged from a support for Black political parties to a regard for African culture did not all fall under a unitary Black nationalist construct. Instead, they coincided with a complex, overlapping constellation of nationalist tenets, while comprising distinct schools of thought. Yet we also discovered that those who embraced our African Diaspora Component (ADC) were more receptive to alliances with other people of color than were those who supported our Black Separatist Component (BSC). With the BSC, we likely discovered a variance of Black nationalism that has often been labeled Black separatism—one of its many forms. Its outgroup antipathy was possibly kindled by the slowly expanding ethnic

diversity of America and its communities in the period after 1965 (Browning et al., 1997).

Our findings are partly consistent with those of Brown and Shaw (2002) who found that in the early 1990s "separatist nationalism" differs from a more pluralist form of nationalism, or what they called "community nationalism." In the case of the 1979–1980 NSBA, it is those we consider the Pan-Africanists (the ADC supporters) that are the pluralists, for they identified with Blacks outside of the United States and other people of color within the United States. Not only do these conclusions challenge the view that Black nationalism is unitary, it also suggests that merely because an African American embraces nebulous nationalist tenets, she or he is not necessarily xenophobic. Recall the differences between Tables 3 and 4. Quite literally, the devil is in the details of whether she imagines the "nation" as broadly comprising an African diaspora aligned with other racialized communities or more narrowly comprising the Black American "race," first and foremost. Though we freely concede our findings are limited by the age of the dataset, as an antecedent, they counter Sniderman and Piazza's (2002) recent conclusions that Blacks who ideologically identified with their African past and African people were less antagonistic toward other groups than were Black autonomists. Yet, we must refrain from making any contemporary conclusions.

Lastly, we are also quite mindful that a cross-sectional dataset is ill equipped to test the effects of time. Yet, our findings do provide a limited test of the effects of constituencies, climates, and collective memory. Predictably, those constituents who were more racially conscious or had less income/education were more likely to support the principles of the ADC or BSC. Gender had little bearing upon a respondent's attraction to African culture or people, but men more so than women identified with Black separatist/autonomists sentiments. This is interesting since it was precisely in this 1970s period when contemporary Black feminism emerged and began to accuse Black nationalism of exuding sexism and patriarchy (Davis 1992).

With regard to the temporal dimension, we found some confirmation for Henderson's economic climate versus racial threat findings. A respondent's financial well-being had no significant effect upon her support of ADC or BSC. What mattered was whether she believed she or her family had recently suffered from racial discrimination. Thus, race clearly was more salient than personal economic evaluations, though being lower class still mattered. Interestingly, as a subtle challenge to Robinson's conclusions, a respondent's reflection upon or experience of the past clearly mattered in determining her support for either a Black nationalist or Pan-Africanist tradition. Membership in the Black Power generation—those sixteen years old between 1965 and 1975—had a significant effect upon BSC support while tracing one's family genealogy was significantly associated with the ADC.

We have empirically established what plausibly laid the groundwork for the fluidity between mass identification with Africa and with the Black (American) nation in the 1980s and 1990s. Presuming that the myopia and conservatism of Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam are now most representative of contemporary Black nationalist thought may be problematic (Robinson 2001). To do so might understate the complex expressions of this fascinating, even if often contradictory (and some say reactionary), ideology throughout Black America (Dawson 2001; McCormick and Franklin, 1999). Though the outgrowths of Pan-Africanism and Black nationalism from the late 1970s must be further explored, we are sure the persistent question about what constitutes Black Americans' true "native land"—Africa, a diverse America, and/or African America—provided fodder for further Black deliberation as well as debate.

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## NOTES

1. Researchers have examined whether those sympathetic to Black nationalism, akin to other nationalisms, are intolerant of intragroup differences among African Americans (e.g., gender, sexuality), as well as xenophobic toward other racialized groups such as Latinos, Native Americans, and Asian Americans (Brown and Shaw, 2002; Dawson 2001; White 1990). Evidence for such clashes range from the patriarchal and homophobic rhetoric that Louis Farrakhan and some nationalists have been accused of using to the tensions that emerged between Korean storeowners and Black empowerment advocates in New York and Los Angeles (Kim 2000; West 1998; White 1990).
2. Findings from the 1993–1994 National Black Politics Study attitudinally corroborate these activities in that those respondents who strongly supported the leadership of Farrakhan or Black autonomy principles were also more likely to have an affinity with Africa and its culture (Brown and Shaw, 2002; Dawson 2001).
3. To be fair, it is important to note that Pan-Africanism itself is a multi-dimensional construct. Without even taking ideological considerations into account (pragmatic *vs.* scientific *vs.* international socialism, for example), there are, as Ali Mazrui notes, different levels of Pan-Africanism based on geographic scope (West Hemispheric *vs.* Global Pan-Africanism, for example) (Mazrui 1977). Understand then that we acknowledge the complexity of Pan-Africanism as an ideology and are treating it as uni-dimensional only for lack of space.
4. We freely admit that these variables do not constitute the most complete measures possible of Black autonomy. In the best of all worlds, we would have included several additional variables that better approximated previous measures of Black autonomy, Black nationalism, or one's affect toward Africans and African culture. Yet, we are using this parsimonious specification for the sake of subsequent comparability.

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