Racial Discrimination and the Social Contract: Evidence from U.S. Army Enlistment during WWII*

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Abstract

This paper documents that the Pearl Harbor attack triggered a sharp increase in volunteer enlistment rates of American men, the magnitude of the increase was smaller for Black men than for white men and the Black-white gap was larger in counties with higher levels of racial discrimination. The negative effects of discrimination were more pronounced in places that were geographically distant from Pearl Harbor and in states that had joined the Union more recently. Consistent with the interpretation that discrimination lowers volunteer enlistment, we also document that Japanese American enlistment rates were higher where the Japanese American community was not interned than where it was interned.

Keywords: Political and Economic Exclusion, Social Contract, Nation Building
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> "Should I sacrifice my life to live half American? Will things be better for the next generation in the peace to follow? Would it be demanding too much to demand full citizenship rights in exchange for the sacrificing of my life? Is the kind of America I know worth defending?"
>
> – James G. Thompson, January 1942, *Pittsburgh Courier*.

1 Introduction

Most modern governments operate on the basis of a *social contract*, under which citizens support the state and, in exchange, the state provides public goods, such as protection to its citizens (Hobbes, 1651; Locke, 1690). In this spirit, recent political economy theories of the growth of democracies and the nation building process argue that wars and revolutions are important triggers of political inclusion. Governments become more inclusive when the ruling elites feel threatened because the outcomes of war depend on the consent and the motivation of its citizens, who will need to pay more taxes and fight in battles as conscripts or volunteers (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2000; Aidt and Franck, 2015; Jha and Wilkinson, 2012; Ticchi and Vindigni, 2008; Scheve and Stasavage, 2016). Political inclusion and state capacity are complementary during wars, because exclusion can limit the state's ability to recruit citizens precisely when they are most valuable (Besley and Persson, 2009, 2010).[1] Central to these theories is the assumption that during wartime, political inclusion will increase while exclusion will reduce support for the government and state capacity. There is little direct evidence for this claim.

The effect of exclusion on support for the government is ambiguous *ex ante*. On the one hand, the excluded population may withhold support. Individuals are more willing to exert effort to win the war if they believe that a defeat would reduce national public goods (Alesina et al., 2020). Since the excluded group benefits less from such public goods, their *extrinsic* value of winning the war, and thus their motivation to win the war, will be lower. More importantly, political exclusion can also reduce the *intrinsic* value of winning the war by weakening national identities (e.g., Bénabou and Tirole, 2011).[2] On the other hand, the excluded population may provide more support for the government during wartime to signal their value to the state (e.g., Spence, 1973). This was, for example, a common view amongst Black men in the United States during WWI (Williams, 2010) and Colonial Indian men during WWII (Karnad, 2015). The influence of exclusion on support for the government during wartime is ultimately an empirical question.

We aim to fill this gap in the literature by providing rigorous and novel evidence from a historically important and theoretically relevant context: racial discrimination and volunteer Army enlistment in the U.S. immediately after the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

This is an ideal context for our research question for two main reasons. First, the attack by Imperial Japan on U.S. soil transformed WWII from a distant war to one about the defense of the American nation. Victory was far from guaranteed. The experiences of WWII in Europe and Asia in the preceding years indicated the historical scale of the challenges to come. The American government anticipated needing to

[1] Also, see Levi (1997) for a study of the drivers of citizen consent during wartime.

[2] For example, Bénabou and Tirole (2011) provides a theoretical framework for how individuals trade-off the intrinsic and extrinsic costs of identity. Also, see Jia and Persson (2020) for a theoretical and empirical application in the context of China.

fully mobilize its population and economic resources. In this context, a man's motivation to volunteer was likely positively associated with his support for the American government. Second, WWII took place during the Jim Crow era, when racial discrimination was severe and pervasive. The Black population was *de facto* disenfranchised and the theoretical trade-offs we discussed earlier were intensely debated within the Black community, which felt considerable ambivalence about defending the explicitly racist American regime.

Our main data source is the universe of digitized WWII induction cards, which contain information about volunteer status, date, rank, county of origin and other characteristics. The 1940 Population Census contains information about the number of eligible men and numerous demographic and economic variables that we use as controls in the analysis. We use a large number of additional data sources that contain information about the level of discrimination, the presence of Black organizations, farms and many other variables. We measure discrimination with the variables that have emerged in the literature that vary at the county level and are available for all 48 continental states for this period. For parsimony, our main measure of discrimination is the first principal component of variables that reflects formal, informal, political, social and economic discrimination experienced by Black men and their communities. We perform several exercises to validate this measure and show that our findings are robust to alternative measures of discrimination. Our estimating sample is a weekly panel at the county and race level.

The granularity of the data and the suddenness of the Pearl Harbor attack allow us to formulate and test sharp empirical hypotheses. If American men supported the U.S. government when it is under threat, then volunteer enlistment rates for all races should increase after Pearl Harbor. If racial discrimination undermined support, then the increase in enlistment for Black men should be smaller in magnitude than the increase for white men, who did not face racial discrimination. The Black-white difference captures the effect of discrimination in the Army, which followed Jim Crow practices, as well as discrimination in society. To isolate the effect of discrimination in society, we can compare Black enlistment from counties with higher and lower levels of discrimination. This is because men from different counties are pooled together after they enlist such that the discrimination a man faces in the Army does not vary with his county of residence prior to enlisting.[3] If racial discrimination reduces support for the government at wartime, then the increase in enlistment after Pearl Harbor will be smaller in magnitude for Black men from counties with higher levels of discrimination than for those from counties with lower levels of discrimination. In contrast, the enlistment of white men should be similar in the two types of counties, since the racial discrimination we study targeted Black individuals.

Our paper proceeds in several steps. First, we examine volunteer enlistment patterns in the raw data. We examine a narrow window of eight weeks before and eight weeks after Pearl Harbor. This allows us to capture the full impact of discrimination because the government had not yet had time to respond to the war by implementing other changes. We document that volunteer rates increased immediately after Pearl Harbor for both races. However, the magnitude of the increase was smaller for Black men than white men. Moreover, when we separately examine counties with high and low levels of discrimination, we find that the increase in Black volunteer rates after Pearl Harbor was higher in counties with low discrimination than

[3] Army assignment may be correlated across larger regions (e.g., men from Alabama are more likely to be assigned to a Southern base than men from Maine). We will address this by controlling for county-week fixed effects in the analysis.

counties with high discrimination. In contrast, volunteer enlistment rates of white men, who did not face racial discrimination, are similar across the two types of counties. The descriptive patterns are consistent with discrimination undermining the ability of the U.S. government to mobilize men at the onset of a major conflict – an important dimension of state capacity. The main caveat for interpreting these patterns as the causal effect of discrimination is that Black and white men, and counties with high and low levels of discrimination, can differ in ways that affect enlistment but are unrelated to discrimination.

The second exercise addresses omitted variables and estimates a plausibly causal effect of discrimination on volunteer enlistment. We estimate a heterogeneous treatment specification that compares enlistment between Black and white men, across counties with varying levels of discrimination, before and after Pearl Harbor. The baseline estimate includes county-week fixed effects, which control for differences across counties over time (e.g., distance to the nearest recruitment office), and race-week fixed effects, which control for differences across races over time (e.g., health differences between Black and white men). We allow the influence of all of the controls used in the study to be fully flexible over time to account for the possibility that their relationship with discrimination and enlistment changes after Pearl Harbor. The baseline also includes county-race fixed effects, which control for time invariant county-race-specific differences. Causal interpretation of the triple interaction coefficient assumes that there are no other county-race-post-Pearl Harbor specific differences that are correlated with discrimination *and* influence enlistment decisions. We conduct numerous exercises to show that the results are robust to controlling for potential violations of this assumption, such as county-race-post-Pearl Harbor specific differences in economic opportunities, demographic composition, and farm ownership.

We find that discrimination reduces Black volunteer enlistment. According to our estimates, the rise in Black volunteer enlistment during the eight weeks after Pearl Harbor was 66% higher in a county at the 25th percentile of the discrimination measure relative to a county at the 75th percentile.

The results provide strong evidence that discrimination and exclusion reduce state capacity during wartime, which is consistent with the presence of a social contract. A likely channel for these effects is that discrimination discourages Black men from volunteering. However, there are other possible channels and it is beyond the scope of our paper to conclusively rule them out. Nevertheless, we carefully consider and discuss the most likely possibilities as motivated by historical narratives.

Historical accounts note that the Army sometimes turned away Black men during the early parts of WWII. This was due partly to the limited capacity to house and train Black men who were segregated from white men, and partly to discriminatory local Army Boards being unwilling to accept Black men (Flynn, 1984). These "demand-side" constraints would confound our preferred interpretation if capacity constraints or Army Board attitudes were correlated with discrimination. We address this in several ways. First, we control for the number of Black officers and the distance to the nearest military base in each county, which proxy for the capacity of the Army to absorb Black soldiers. Second, we examine draft enlistment rates, because Black conscripts faced similar capacity constraints and discrimination as volunteers. If anything, local Army Boards had more control over drafted men than volunteers. We find a null effect on Black draft rates. The main result of discrimination on Black volunteer rates is robust to controlling for Black draft

rates.[4] This supports the interpretation that discrimination discouraged Black men from volunteering. We acknowledge that we cannot rule out alternative forces that differ for Black and white men, the level of discrimination of each county, *and* also differ between volunteers and draftees.

We also consider and provide evidence against two additional mechanisms: differential salience in the news of the Pearl Harbor attack and the possibility that Pearl Harbor triggered racism against the Japanese that spilled over to Black men.

To enrich our study and to shed light on the mechanisms and the context, we conduct several supplementary analyses. Motivated by historical discussions, we investigate the influence of the WWI legacy on Black enlistment after Pearl Harbor. We estimate the baseline specification with the addition of the triple interaction of the Black dummy variable and the post Pearl Harbor dummy variable with each of the three following variables: the share of Black WWI veterans in the county, the share of eligible Black men living with Black WWI veteran household heads and the share of eligible Black men living with Black WWI veterans who are not household heads. The main triple interaction of discrimination is robust and very similar to the baseline estimate. Interestingly, we find that a higher share of WWI veterans in the same county reduces Black enlistment after Pearl Harbor, but a higher share of eligible Black men living with WWI veteran household heads increases Black enlistment after Pearl Harbor. The results suggest that the negative effect of the disappointment after WWI on enlistment during WWII was transmitted at the community level, while a positive preference for fighting is shared within the household (Campante and Yanagizawa-Drott, 2015).[5] An analogous exercise with Civil War veterans produces broadly consistent, but statistically imprecise results.

We also examine whether the discouraging effect of discrimination on Black enlistment was moderated or exacerbated by factors that are believed to have influenced Black attitudes towards WWII. For example, Black men in the South may have had a different response than those in the North. The NAACP was known to have encouraged Black enlistment, while Black churches are believed to have been relatively ambivalent. The number of years a man has lived in the Union can influence the strength of his national identity and, in turn, his motivation to enlist after Pearl Harbor. We also consider factors that affect the immediacy and the physical danger of the war, which are associated with the geographical proximity to Pearl Harbor, and general exposure to the Army, which are associated with the distance to the nearest military base. Finally, we examine the influence of Black radio ownership, which can moderate the discouragement effect by increasing the salience of the Pearl Harbor attack or exacerbate it by exposing listeners to more racist ideology. We find that the discouragement effect is smaller in magnitude in counties that were geographically closer to Pearl Harbor and in states that spent more years in the Union. These results suggest that proximity to the attack and physical danger and the historical duration of the collective or individual national identity can moderate the discouraging effects of discrimination.

Another people who were politically disenfranchised during WWII were the Japanese Americans. Within a few months since Pearl Harbor, almost all ethnic Japanese individuals living on the U.S. mainland were

[4]Controlling for draft enlistment also addresses the concern that Black men from counties with higher levels of discrimination have lower baseline health and are more likely to be rejected by the Army for legitimate reasons.

[5]Campante and Yanagizawa-Drott (2015) documents that fathers' and sons' preferences for war are positively associated, and interpret this as evidence for the intergenerational transmission of values.

interned. In 1943, the need for manpower motivated the U.S. government to allow Japanese men to re-enter the Army. We document that, in the subsequent weeks, Japanese American enlistment increased in Hawaii, where they were not interned, but remained near zero on the U.S. mainland. These patterns are consistent with discrimination and disenfranchisement discouraging military participation.

By mid-1942, U.S. policymakers were deeply concerned by the low Black volunteer rates after Pearl Harbor and engaged in a propaganda campaign to recruit Black men. The changes were mostly symbolic and superficial and the U.S. government and military continued to enforce Jim Crow practices. Consistent with the importance of intrinsic motivations, we observe a rise in Black volunteer enlistment. Like in the main analysis, we find that the rise is driven by counties with lower levels of discrimination. We do not have measures of exposure to the recruitment campaign and there were many other changes in the second half of 1942. Thus, the longer run patterns should be interpreted cautiously as merely suggestive. To be comprehensive, we also present the increase in volunteer enlistment after Pearl Harbor for each race that can be identified in the enlistment data.

This paper provides rigorous empirical evidence that discrimination reduces state capacity during wartime, possibly because it discourages the excluded group. We add to the large literature on discrimination, which has mostly focused on labor market outcomes.[6] Our findings demonstrate a new channel through which racial discrimination can be socially costly. In this sense, we are most closely related to Fouka (2020). Governments of diverse societies usually implement two types of policies to minimize the political and social influence of discriminated minority groups: assimilation and/or exclusion. Fouka (2020) documents that German American volunteer enlistment during WWII was negatively associated with their exposure to aggressive assimilation policies. These findings, together with ours, show that both assimilation and exclusion can undermine state capacity during wartime. The two papers provide concrete examples of when the social contract binds (Hobbes, 1651; Locke, 1690; Levi, 1997).

There are several recent studies about the determinants of political participation and military behavior during WWII. For example, Cagé et al. (2023) finds that those connected with Petain were more likely to collaborate with the Nazis. Campante and Yanagizawa-Drott (2015) finds evidence of father-to-son transmission in the preference for fighting. Caprettini and Voth (2023) finds that support for WWII was higher in U.S. counties that received larger New Deal transfers.

Finally, we provide empirical support for the largely theoretical literature about nation building and the expansion of the franchise discussed at the beginning of the introduction, and complement recent empirical findings on the positive relationship between political participation and tax contributions in England after the Norman Conquest of 1066 (Angelucci et al., 2022), in German cities from the 13th to the 18th century (Becker et al., 2019), and recently, in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Weigel, 2020). Piecing together these empirical results forms a picture that is consistent with the idea that inclusion facilitates nation building and group division hinders the growth of nations and the efficacy of their policies (e.g., Alesina and Spolaore, 2005; Alesina and La Ferrara, 2005). Our finding that discrimination can undermine national identity complements the recent findings that common endeavors and inter-group contact can strengthen national identity and bond divided groups (Bazzi et al., 2019; Depetris-Chauvin et al., 2020).

[6] See Becker (2010) for an overview of the large literature about the consequences of racial discrimination in the U.S.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 discusses the historical background. Section 3 discusses the conceptual framework. Section 4 describes the data. Section 5 presents the main results. Section 6 presents additional findings. Section 7 concludes.

2 Background

2.1 Discrimination

The U.S. entered WWII during the Jim Crow era, when racial discrimination against African Americans was at its severest since emancipation. Black men had very limited civil and political liberties, due to both formal and informal discrimination. Many southern states passed laws intended to disenfranchise the Black population starting in the 1890s. Racial segregation meant that the Black population had access to fewer and lower quality public and private goods (e.g., police protection, restaurants, schools, water fountains, buses). Interracial marriages were made illegal.

There was substantial geographical variation in the degree of discrimination. Discrimination was not isolated to the South. For example, between 1913 and 1948, 30 out of the then 48 states enforced anti-miscegenation (mixed-race marriage) laws. Many schools in Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New Jersey were completely segregated, even though it was *de jure* illegal. Similarly, white residents *de facto* enforced racial residential segregation in most northern and western cities. Discrimination was often exercised informally by organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan, and more generally, by coordinated actions of the white community. Between 1882 and 1968, as many as 3,446 Black Americans were lynched (Tuskegee Institute, 2020).

Black men had limited economic opportunities and were excluded from most non-menial jobs. War industrial policies were not yet in place during the early period of the war that we study. When they did come into place, Black workers benefited less than white workers (Davis, 1955).

2.2 WWII and Pearl Harbor

Imperial Japan conducted a surprise military strike against the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor in Honolulu, Hawaii, at 7:48AM on Sunday, December 7, 1941. In the attack, 2,403 Americans were killed and 1,178 others were wounded, and over 180 U.S. aircrafts were destroyed along with other physical military capital. The attack happened without a declaration of war amidst ongoing peace negotiations. Japan declared war on the United States later that day. News of Pearl Harbor was immediately broadcast across the U.S. via all available forms of communication, including newspapers, radios, and churches. Congress officially declared war on Japan the following day.[7] For Americans, Pearl Harbor transformed WWII from a distant and foreign conflict about abstract ideas related to colonialism, democracy and fascism into a war of national self defense. Japan conducted additional strikes against the U.S. Pacific fleet in the following days, adding to the sense of a nation under attack among Americans.

The outcome of the war was highly uncertain at the onset. At the time of Pearl Harbor, the Axis powers were winning both in Europe and in Asia. Germany already controlled Western Europe, Operation Bar-

[7]Germany declared war on the U.S. four days later, marking the American entrance into both the European and the Pacific fronts.

barossa on the Eastern Front was a disquieting success and many expected Germany to win the Battle of Britain. Japan had similar successes in Asia and the Pacific. Important future turning points for the war such as the Battle of Stalingrad, which ended in February 1943, and the Battle of Midway, which took place in June 1942, had not yet taken place.

The U.S. entered the war with the expectation of needing to fully mobilize its economy and manpower for a long and drawn-out total war, much like the United Kingdom. Motivating Black men, who constituted ten percent of the total number of eligible men, was seen by the governments of the United States and its allies as critical to the success of the war effort. The perceived necessity of Black men at the beginning of the war is important to keep in mind when interpreting our results on Black volunteer enlistment as critical for the U.S. government.

2.3 Military Enlistment

Our main analysis focuses on the eight weeks before and the eight weeks after Pearl Harbor. Procedures for volunteer and draft enlistment were already in place and experienced little change during this short window of time. There were similarly little changes in the operations of Army recruitment or eligibility criteria within this period. The one exception was the expansion of the age range of eligible men, which the empirical analysis will take into account.[8] Volunteers and conscripts were accepted into the military based on similar criteria (e.g., a health test). Once inducted, an enlisted man's occupation in the military depended on factors such as education and occupation prior to enlistment, as well as race.

Military assignment did not depend on whether the man volunteered or was conscripted; nor did it depend on the county of residence, which in our study and data refers to the county where a man registered for selective service in 1940. Men had little discretion over occupations or assignments within the Army (Flynn, 1993; Ferrara, 2022). The share of Black men inducted as privates (98.9%) within our sample period is nearly identical between volunteers and conscripts. Military wage compensation did not vary by race within grade, rank, years of service and factors such as having a specialist rating. Black soldiers earned less than white soldiers with similar qualifications because they were inducted into a lower grade and rank, and faced more difficulty in qualifying for specialist ratings.

In our context, the predominant sentiment of the Army was to minimize Black enlistment (Flynn, 1984, 1993).[9] The ostensible argument was that Black soldiers would reduce the morale of white soldiers and empower Black resistance against Jim Crow (Osur and Force, 2000). During WWI, race-specific quotas restricted Black enlistment. These official quotas were abolished before WWII. Nevertheless, racial preferences still influenced enlistment because the induction of both volunteers and conscripts were implemented by over 6,000 local boards, whose members were chosen from the local community. Army boards were

[8]The Selective Training and Service Act (STSA), signed by President Roosevelt on September 16, 1940, established the first peacetime draft in the United States. It required the registration of all men between the ages of 21 and 35, with selection for one year's service by a national lottery. After Pearl Harbor, on December 20, 1941, Congress passed Public Law No. 360, which allowed the STSA to extend the term of service to the duration of the war and an additional six months, and expanded eligible ages to 18 to 64.

[9]During later parts of WWII, when the draft had been expanded, discriminatory boards were known to give more generous exemptions to white men (Murray, 1971). The most common individual characteristics considered by local boards for deferrals or exemptions were marital status, fatherhood, farm status, or German, Asian, and Italian ancestry (Acemoglu et al., 2004; Aizer et al., 2020; Ferrara, 2022).

almost uniformly white. Only 1.1% of local board members were Black, and only three southern states had any Black officials.[10]

Black men were often rejected during pre-induction health examinations. Some of these were legitimate, while many others were excuses for discriminatory boards to avoid Black enlistees. For example, the high rejection rates justified by health reasons in Georgia resulted in Selective Service officials complaining that "The rejection rate is exceedingly high and it is very difficult for Georgia to fill calls for Negroes – they simply don't want them" (Lee, 1966). Historians have also pointed out that the literacy standard of being able to write at the fourth grade level was unevenly implemented to reduce Black enlistment (e.g., Dalfiume, 1969). Another reason for turning Black men away was that many Army bases lacked the physical capacity for housing and training Black men. Since the Army was segregated and there had been very few Black soldiers prior to Pearl Harbor, many bases were unable to absorb Black enlistees right after the surprise attack.

Army boards had control over both volunteers and conscripts (Murray, 1971). The draft, which was initially implemented with a national lottery, shifted to administrative selection conducted by local boards in 1941. The same medical excuses were used to justify turning away Black conscripts as well as Black volunteers. The limited physical Army facilities also affected volunteers and conscripts similarly because the two groups were pooled together after enlistment. Acceptance rates of volunteers were unrelated to the local draft rates during this early period of the war. On December 5, 1942, an executive order banned volunteers so that the government could have full control over the labor force.

During WWII, approximately 51% of all enlistees were assigned to logistics and support positions.[11] Most Black men were in logistic positions. These included both skilled (e.g., nurses, physicians, dentists) and unskilled (e.g., porters) jobs.

It is hard to know the anticipated mortality risk of Black soldiers. On the one hand, the U.S. military establishment had been reluctant to allow Black men into combat positions. On the other hand, the history of racial discrimination meant that it would have been reasonable for Black men to expect to be sent to the least desirable and most dangerous positions. In practice, there were ultimately few Black combat troops, but they were highly decorated and suffered high mortality rates. For example, the 761st Tank Battalion (the "Black Panthers") was activated in 1942 and suffered a 21.9% casualty rate, which was higher than the 13.8% suffered by all overseas armored forces (DC, 1946).[12]

Race relations within the U.S. military mirrored those of the nation. Black and white soldiers were segregated until 1948. During WWII, they had separate canteens, barracks, nurses, and even blood banks. Black soldiers served under Black or white officers. White soldiers only served under white officers (e.g., Flynn, 1984).

2.4 Contemporary Discussions

When WWII erupted, a heated debate emerged within the Black community. On the one hand, some

[10] See Davis (1955), Table 1, page 34.

[11] See McGrath (2007), Figure 52.

[12] The casualty data for the 761st Tank Battalion is sourced from the official U.S. Army website: https://www.army.mil/blackamericans/761st.html.

viewed military service as a hard-earned right. Many hoped that military service would be an effective way to signal the value of Black citizens to the United States, and that this would reduce future discrimination. On the other hand, there was much disappointment in the lack of social progress following WWI. The worst WWII atrocities, such as the Holocaust and Camp 731 in Manchuria, were not yet known. Many Americans during this early period viewed the discriminatory policies of the U.S. as little better than those prevailing in the Axis powers. For example, prior to Pearl Harbor, in 1937, *The New York Amsterdam News* wrote "[Nazis' plan to segregate Jews on German railways was] taking a leaf from United States Jim Crow practices".[13] The Harlem-based Negroes Against War Committee urged Black Americans throughout 1939 and 1940 not to become interested in the events overseas. *Pittsburgh Courier* columnist George Schuyler asked "Why should Negroes fight for democracy abroad when they are refused democracy in every American activity except tax paying?" (Jefferson, 2008, p. 28-61).

In response to low Black enlistment rates at the beginning of WWII and the escalation of the war, the U.S. government embarked on an extensive recruitment campaign starting in the spring of 1942, after the period of our main analysis. The campaign was not one decisive change, but rather a series of efforts from different parts of the military and government. The efforts were mostly symbolic and very little changed in terms of discrimination in American society or the Army. Nevertheless, the Black community, particularly organizations such as the NAACP, invested in increasing enlistment. Most famously, the Double V Campaign encouraged Black men to fight for victory abroad so as to obtain a victory at home. We discuss the later parts of 1942 more in Section 6.

To isolate the full impact of discrimination and avoid possibly confounding influences from war industrial policy, propaganda efforts and military shifts in the war (e.g., victory at the Battle of Midway), the main analysis focuses on the two months immediately after the attack on Pearl Harbor, before these other changes took place.

3 Conceptual Framework

The empirical analysis examines the effect of discrimination and political exclusion on support for the U.S. government during wartime, which we will proxy for with volunteer enlistment rates. As we discussed in the Introduction, this effect can be positive or negative in principle.

First, consider the negative forces. Discrimination and exclusion lower the economic (extrinsic) incentives for Black men to enlist. A man presumably enlists to help win the war and contribute to the continuation of the regime. But discrimination and exclusion lower the social and private value from winning by reducing economic opportunities and political and social rights. Black men were kept out of the best jobs, were effectively disenfranchised and their property and person were given little protection by the state. Discrimination and exclusion can also lower the psychological (intrinsic) motivation to enlist. This has been the focus of

[13] There were many explicit comparisons of the U.S. to the Nazis. In 1935, *The New York Amsterdam* wrote "If the Swastika is an emblem of racial oppression, the Stars and Stripes are equally so....". Langston Hughes in 1935 wrote "..You tell me that Hitler / Is a mighty bad man / I guess he took lessons from the Ku Klux Klan [...] I ask you this question / Cause I want to know / How long I got to fight / BOTH HITLER — AND JIM CROW". The ostensible pointlessness of fighting is articulated in 1939 by Black writer, C. L. R. James, when he wrote "Why should I shed my blood for the whole Jim Crow, Negro-hating South, for the low-paid, dirty jobs for which Negroes have to fight, for the few dollars of relief and insults, discrimination, police brutality, and perpetual poverty to which Negroes are condemned even in the more liberal North?"

the studies about motivations to fight (McPherson, 1997; Ager et al., 2021; Marchais et al., 2021; Jha and Wilkinson, 2023). Enlistment is partly motivated by patriotism and a person's national identity and discrimination can weaken both. Intuitively, this is the flip-side of how joint efforts towards common objectives facilitate the unification of national identities (Depetris-Chauvin et al., 2020). A man's intrinsic motivation can also depend on the legitimacy of the government and racial discrimination reduced the legitimacy of the U.S. government for the Black community (Levi, 1997). The American establishment was explicitly racist. Black people were officially held to be of lesser value than white people. Discrimination undermined the credibility that the U.S. government was fighting for freedom and democracy.

Discrimination in our context extended beyond government policy. As we discussed in the Background section, the Black population was subjected to constant informal discrimination and harassment. In particular, Black soldiers were known to have been harassed and subjugated to discrimination (beyond what was dictated by official policy). In a social contract framework, informal discrimination can also undermine the relationship between Black men and the government if Black men believe that the government is supposed to provide security.

Second, consider the positive forces. Men who are politically excluded and disenfranchised may see a closely contested war as an opportunity to demonstrate their value to the establishment. The efforts of the discriminated group could be the difference between victory or defeat, and Black men may have viewed WWII as a chance to show that their cooperation was necessary for the good of all Americans. This was the spirit of the Double V Campaign for encouraging Black enlistment later in 1942 (see Section 6.2). It was also a common view amongst Black men during WWI (Williams, 2010) and Colonial Indian men during WWII (Karnad, 2015).

Peer effects can amplify the forces described above. A man's motivation to enlist can be influenced by the actions of other individuals in the same network (e.g., Cagé et al., 2023). A Black man's decision to enlist will be positively correlated with the enlistment decisions of his neighbors and peers. Since our measure of discrimination varies at the county level, the estimates in this paper capture these social effects.

The discussion in this section highlights the main channels through which discrimination can influence the motivation of men to volunteer – i.e., the supply-side effect of discrimination. After we present the main results, we discuss alternative mechanisms – i.e., demand-side factors.

4 Data

4.1 Enlistment

Enlistment is reported at the individual level in the *World War II Army Enlistment Records* (NARA-AAD, 2002) for the period 1938-1946. The dataset includes the universe of 9,039,840 individual service records (induction cards) of American soldiers who served in the Army from 1938 to 1946 and were digitized by the National Archives. The individual-level data include information about the date of induction, birth year, education, occupation, marital status, race, citizenship, volunteer status, branch and rank and county of residence. In most cases, the demographic and socio-economic information was reported for Selective Service in 1940, more than one year before Pearl Harbor. This mitigates concerns about endogenous location

(and other characteristics) in response to the U.S. entry into WWII.

Induction sometimes occurred after a volunteer applied or after the receipt of a draft "call-up" notice. During the early stages of the war, this was mostly due to the lack of adequate facilities for housing and training and was similar for volunteers and conscripts.

The main analysis uses a sample that includes Black and white men. Together, they account for more than 93% of all individuals in the enlistment data. The baseline sample includes 2,306 counties in the 48 mainland states. The counties that lack variation in enlistment rates during the time frame of our analysis are excluded from the sample. Some states do not have information from all Army boards. We will later show that the results are similar if we omit these states from the analysis.

The sample includes the eight weeks before and the eight weeks after the Pearl Harbor attack. We normalize enlistment by the number of eligible men in each county-race-week and conduct the analysis at this level. For consistency, all descriptive statistics and regressions presented below are weighed by the number of eligible men.

The main outcome of interest in our analysis is the enlistment rate – the number of volunteers of each race in each county and week for every 100,000 eligible men. We use the 1940 full-count U.S. Census to calculate the number of eligible men and adjust the denominator to account for the expansion of eligible ages on December 20, 1941. We also use the 1940 Census and many other data sources for control variables. We discuss these later when relevant. We interpret voluntary enlistment as reflecting motivation to participate in the war and support of the U.S. government when it is under threat. We provide evidence against alternative interpretations after presenting the main result.[14]

4.2 Discrimination

We construct a parsimonious measure of discrimination by calculating the first principal component of political, social and economic discrimination for the county of enlistment. We include variables that are commonly used to measure racial discrimination during the early 20th century that vary at the county level and that are available for the entire country: the presence of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) from 1915 to 1940, the number of lynchings until 1939, the Democratic vote share in Congressional and presidential elections between 1900 and 1930, the index of residential segregation, the racial gap in years of education and the racial gap in income inequality. Racial discrimination is highly persistent over time and the enlisted men in our sample are young: the median age is 23. Thus, our discrimination measure broadly reflects a person's own experience and that of his community. There is substantial variation within states.[15]

We conduct several exercises to validate the discrimination measure. First, to check that it captures variation that is relevant for discrimination, we compare it to two other well-known measures. The first one is the 1948 presidential vote share for Strom Thurmond, a Dixiecrat candidate who opposed efforts to end segregation. The second one is a summary measure of racial inequality in school quality as of 1940 in the spirit of Carruthers and Wanamaker (2017). These measures are not used to construct the

[14] Army personnel (discharge) records provide an alternative measure of motivation and performance. Unfortunately, most service records from this period were destroyed in a fire. Data on medals and awards cannot be systematically linked to enlistment records.

[15] See Online Appendix Table A.1 for the sources of the variables used to measure discrimination. Online Appendix Figure A.1 plots the index of discrimination demeaned by state fixed effects.

principal component measure because they are not available for the entire U.S.[16] Our discrimination measure is strongly and positively associated with these two measures.[17]

Second, we verify that each variable used to construct the principal component has a similarly signed correlation with enlistment.[18] We also demonstrate that the results are similar if we individually omit any of the variables discussed earlier from the construction of the principal component. These results alleviate the concern that variables such as support for the Democrats is more strongly associated with racism in the South than in the North.[19] Third, we verify that the results are robust to including additional historical variables when constructing the principal component.[20] Finally, note that in the construction of the discrimination measure, we follow standard practices and proxy for income using occupational scores. We do not use the wage variable in the 1940 Census because it excludes farm earnings and in-kind payments. Similarly, we use the traditional measure that pools white and Black men together in the 1950 Census when calculating occupational incomes. This measure captures cross-occupational wage differences between Black and white men, but misses within-occupational differences (Jácome et al., 2021). We will show later that our results are not sensitive to any of these choices.

Table 1 presents the correlates of county-specific variables and discrimination. The regressions will exploit within state variation. Thus, we regress discrimination on a number of potential correlates, measured in 1940, while controlling for state fixed effects. As in the regression analysis, we weigh each county-year observation by the number of eligible individuals during the sample period. Each row is one regression. The explanatory variable is reported in the row heading. The sample mean and standard deviation of that variable are reported in columns (1) and (2). The standardized correlation coefficient is reported in column (3).

Panel A shows that counties with higher levels of discrimination are larger in population and more urbanized. Discrimination is higher in places with larger Black populations and smaller white populations, and higher in places that are further away from Pearl Harbor. Panels B and C examine the correlates of discrimination for Black and white men separately. The main take-away is that the correlates can differ in

[16]The Thurmond vote share is available only for a subset of counties in our sample. Black and white school quality is only available for the following states: Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas.

[17]Online Appendix Figure A.2 plots the relationship between the index of discrimination (on the x-axis) and, respectively, Thurmond vote share (left panel) and school inequality (right panel), after demeaning by state fixed effects. The correlation in both figures is positive and statistically significant at the 1% level.

[18]We estimate the baseline equation presented in the next section with each individual variable instead of the principal component measure. The coefficients all have the same sign, though precision and magnitudes vary (see Appendix Table A.5, Panel A). For comparison purposes, we also report standardized beta coefficients in square brackets.

[19]See Appendix Table A.5, Panel B. In results that are not reported in the paper but are available upon request, we verified that the Democratic vote share is statistically significant and large only for the sample of southern states. This is consistent with the notion that, at least until the 1930s, Democrats were the champions of racial exclusion and white supremacy in the U.S. South (Naidu, 2012; Ottinger and Winkler, 2022).

[20]These are the number of enslaved individuals divided by county population in 1860; the racial gap in employment rates in 1940; the share of land cultivated in cotton and in sugarcane in 1940; and, the racial gap in mortality rates in 1940 (see Appendix Table A.6). Data on the number of enslaved individuals are taken from Haines et al. (2010). Data on the number of deaths by county and race in 1940, which are not available for the full sample, are obtained from Manson et al. (2023). To derive the mortality rate, we scale the number of deaths by the 1940 county-race population. The share of land in cotton and sugarcane are taken from the 1940 Census of Agriculture. These were the crops most heavily associated with slavery and, after 1865, discriminatory behavior against African Americans (Fogel and Engerman, 1977).

size and even sign for the two groups. For example, discrimination is negatively (positively) associated with the share of Black men working in manufacturing (agriculture), but positively (negatively) associated with the share of white men working in manufacturing (agriculture).

The correlations show that discrimination is not random and is correlated with economic and demographic factors that can influence the decision to enlist. The baseline regressions will address these omitted variables by controlling for two-way fixed effects. Panels B and C also show that the correlates of discrimination can differ between Black and white men. We address this after we present the main results by additionally controlling for a large number of county-race-specific variables interacted with week fixed effects.

4.3 Enlistment Rates Over Time

During our study period, from week -7 to week 8 since Pearl Harbor, 2,025 and 108,962 Black and white men volunteered in the Army. Taking into account the eligible population of either race, the Black and white volunteer rates per 100,000 eligible men between week -7 and week 8 are 60.03 and 323.6, respectively. Table A.2 presents the mean and the standard deviation of volunteer enlistment rates during our study period for Black and white men pooled together (Panel A) and separately (Panels B and C). It shows that the average volunteer rates in the pre-Pearl Harbor weeks were 6.84, 0.115 and 13.38 for the two races combined and for Black and white races, respectively. As expected, they are substantially higher in the post-Pearl Harbor weeks, increasing to 39.66, 8.82, and 46.28, respectively.[21] Figure 1 plots volunteer enlistment rates for Black and white men during the eight weeks before and the eight weeks after the attack on Pearl Harbor.[22] Consistent with the historical narrative that discrimination discouraged Black volunteers during this period, Black enlistment was lower than white enlistment before and after Pearl Harbor. After Pearl Harbor, enlistment rates for both white and Black men sharply increase, but the magnitude of the increase is smaller for Black men.

These patterns are interesting for several reasons. The surge in overall enlistment after Pearl Harbor is consistent with the notion that the sudden attack motivated men to join in the defense of their nation. The fact that white men volunteered at higher rates than Black men after Pearl Harbor is consistent with discrimination discouraging Black enlistment. The fact that the Black-white gap widens after Pearl Harbor suggests that at least part of the post-Pearl Harbor gap reflects Black-white differences in their support for the U.S. regime. This is relevant for our study because military service is more important for the survival of the U.S. regime when the latter is under the threat of war than during peacetime. In the theories of nation building that we discussed in the Introduction, political exclusion and discrimination are important because they affect the regime's survival precisely when it is under threat.

Next, we divide the sample into counties with discrimination levels above and below the sample median. Figure 2 shows that after Pearl Harbor, the rise in Black enlistment is much larger in magnitude for counties with low levels of discrimination. Note that when we zoom in on the pre-Pearl Harbor period, we observe

[21] The number of observations in the table varies across weeks, because we restrict attention to county-race-week cells that can be included in our baseline regression (in a few cases, race-week-county cells are dropped with the inclusion of fixed effects).

[22] To have a fully symmetric window around the attack on Pearl Harbor, we consider the eight-week period before Pearl Harbor (week -7 to week 0) and the eight-week period afterwards (week 1 to week 8). Week 0 is defined as the week ending on Sunday December 7 1941, and week 1 is defined as the week starting on Monday December 8, 1941.

that Black enlistment is very low, but has positive values in most weeks in both samples (Appendix Figure A.3).[23] Figure 3 shows that the enlistment of white men, who did not face racial discrimination, is similar in the two subsamples of counties after Pearl Harbor. Figure 2 is consistent with discrimination reducing the increase in Black enlistment after Pearl Harbor. Figure 3 also indicates that racial discrimination did not motivate white men to volunteer more (to demonstrate white supremacy).

Figure 4 combines the figures just described and illustrates the variation underlying the regression estimates in the next section, which compares the difference in enlistment between counties with varying levels of discrimination, between Black and white men, before and after Pearl Harbor.

5 Results

5.1 Baseline Estimates

The baseline regression estimates the heterogeneous treatment effect of Pearl Harbor on volunteer enlistment rates for Black and white men, and allows the effect to vary with the extent of racial discrimination in his county of residence. While enlistment records are available for those who served, we cannot observe individuals who did not volunteer. For this reason, we conduct the analysis at the county-race-week level, and estimate the following equation:

$$y_{ijt} = \alpha + \beta D_j \times P_t \times B_{ij} + \theta_{ij} + \lambda_{it} + \pi_{jt} + \varepsilon_{ijt} \tag{1}$$

The volunteer enlistment rate as a share of eligible men of race i in county j during week t, y_{ijt}, is a function of: the triple interaction of discrimination in county j, D_j, a dummy variable that equals one for the eight weeks after the attack on Pearl Harbor, P_t, and a dummy variable that equals one if race i is Black, B_{ij}; fixed effects at the race-week, λ_{it}, county-week, π_{jt}, and county-race levels, θ_{ij}. The lower order terms are absorbed by the fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the county level. Regressions are weighed by the race-specific population of eligible men in each county-week in order to make the estimated coefficients as close as possible to those that would be obtained by estimating individual level regressions.[24]

We interpret the Pearl Harbor attack as a sudden increase in the threat to national security and hypothesize that a man's reaction to it depended partly on his support for the American regime. The latter, in turn, depends partly on the extent of discrimination that he and his community faced. One can also interpret Pearl Harbor as a shock to the demand for volunteers, which allows the econometrician to trace out the supply curve of volunteers which varies with discrimination. The coefficient of interest is β. If discrimination and political exclusion undermine a man's support for the government during wartime and this negative effect dominates the positive signaling value of enlisting, then $\beta < 0$. In contrast, if the positive signaling value dominates the negative discouragement effect, then $\beta > 0$.

[23] Figure A.4 plots the analogous graph for white volunteer enlistment.

[24] In Appendix Table A.9, we consider the possibility of spatially correlated errors: Conley adjustment with spatial cutoffs of 100, 200, and 300 km; clustered at the commuting zone; spatial HAC errors using 2 lags, 7 lags and 14 lags. To correct for heteroskedasticity and serial correlation in the error term, we use the Newey–West estimator and define the number of lags following Greene (2012). In particular, we consider the integer approximate of $T^{(1/4)}$, where T is the total number of weeks. The results are unchanged when using different values for the number of lags.

This specification controls for a large number of fixed effects to account for potential omitted variables that might be correlated with both discrimination and Black enlistment. County-week fixed effects control for differences across counties that vary over time, such as distance to Pearl Harbor or urbanization. Race-week fixed effects control for differences across races that vary over time, such as the racial gap in education. We also control for county-race fixed effects, which absorb time-invariant factors that vary by race and county, such as age or the employment share in key sectors like manufacturing or agriculture. For an omitted variable to confound our triple interaction of interest, it would need to differ by county, time and race *and* not be accounted for by the baseline controls. We minimize this possibility by focusing on a narrow window of time around the attack. We will also present many robustness checks after the main results, including the interaction of county-race-specific variables with week fixed effects.

Note that racial discrimination was pervasive throughout the United States during the period that we study and Black men faced discrimination everywhere. This means that our analysis will likely underestimate the influence of discrimination on enlistment.

Table 2 presents the baseline estimates. To illustrate the influence of the fixed effects, columns (1) to (3) begin by including the lower order interaction terms instead of the interacted fixed effects. Column (1) controls for state fixed effects and a dummy variable that takes the value of one if the Pearl Harbor attack has occurred. Column (2) controls for county instead of state fixed effects. Column (3) additionally controls for week fixed effects instead of the post-Pearl Harbor dummy variable. The triple interaction coefficient of interest is stable across specifications. It is negative and statistically significant at the 1% level. It shows that in places with more racial discrimination, the Black-white gap in volunteer enlistment increased after Pearl Harbor. The triple interaction and the lower order interaction coefficients are consistent with the descriptive evidence presented in Figure 4.

In column (4), we present the baseline specification that includes race-county, race-week and county-week fixed effects. The fixed effects absorb the lower order interactions. The interaction coefficient of interest in column (4) is -2.80 and statistically significant at the 1% level. Thus, the discouragement motive dominates the signaling motive.

To assess the magnitudes, note that one standard deviation of the pre-Pearl Harbor Black volunteer enlistment rate is 6.4. The coefficient implies that after Pearl Harbor, a one standard deviation increase in discrimination (1.5) reduced Black volunteer enlistment by 0.66 standard deviations ($(-2.80 \times 1.5)/6.4 = 0.66$, or 4.22 per 100,000 eligible individuals). Since the average Black volunteer enlistment rate during the sixteen week period of our analysis is 6.01 per 100,000 and the inter-quartile range of discrimination is 1.41, our estimates imply that enlistment rates for Black men living in a county at the 25th percentile of discrimination would have been 66% ($(-2.80 \times 1.41)/6.01 = 0.66$) higher that for those living in a county at the 75th percentile.

One potential concern is that, despite the sudden and unexpected nature of the shock on Pearl Harbor, our results are driven by pre-trends in volunteer rates. Figure 4 goes against this idea, showing that volunteer rates evolved along parallel trends in the weeks prior to Pearl Harbor. To more formally examine the presence of pre-trends in our data, Table A.4 in the Online Appendix implements the test outlined in Roth (2022).

Another potential concern with our baseline estimates is that we may be mis-measuring wage discrimination by not accounting for within-occupation income inequality by race. To address this concern, we replicate the procedure detailed in Jácome et al. (2021) to calculate race-specific occupational income scores in column (5). The interaction coefficient using the disaggregated measure is similar to the baseline.

To understand the variation driving our baseline estimates, we include state×race×week fixed effects, which controls for race-specific differences across states and their changes over time in a fully flexible manner. Column (6) shows that the estimate is -3.216 and statistically significant at the 1% level. This suggests that the baseline result is mostly driven by within state and race differences in volunteer enlistment, rather than cross-state variation such as diverging responses to Black enlistment between the North and South after the Pearl Harbor attack.

The baseline estimate is weighed by the number of eligible men for each race and county measured in 1940 to approximate aggregate population effects. Column (7) estimates unweighed regressions, where all county-year observations have the same weight. The triple interaction coefficient is negative (-9.853) and statistically significant at the 1% level.

Finally, in column (8), we estimate the baseline without the states with incomplete induction data (Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming). The estimate is very similar to the full sample estimate in column (4).

5.2 Interpretation

The empirical findings show that the severe and pervasive racial discrimination moderated the positive response of Black volunteer enlistment after the Pearl Harbor attack. This is consistent with the hypothesis that discrimination reduced state capacity during wartime. One explanation for the result is that discrimination discouraged Black men from enlisting. As we discussed in Section 3, this could be due to extrinsic or intrinsic motivations, and could be due to discrimination from official government policy or discrimination experienced by Black men and their communities in their day-to-day lives.

The main alternative explanation is that Black men in high discrimination counties were motivated to enlist, but were physically prevented from doing so by local Army Boards who wanted to keep Black men out of the military. Local boards were established prior to Pearl Harbor and operated in a similar way just before and after the attack. Local boards were selected from the local white community and controlled enlistment. If those in counties with higher levels of discrimination were more resistant to Black soldiers or had to turn away Black men because they had less capacity to house and train them, then our results may be partly driven by demand-side forces.

It is beyond the scope of our paper to completely rule out this alternative. We are able to partially address it by controlling for the draft enlistment rate for each race, county, and week. Our logic is that discriminatory draft boards would have also tried to keep Black draftees out of the Army, and that the physical housing and training constraints were similar for Black volunteers and draftees who were pooled together after induction.

The draft lottery was implemented by the federal government. But, in practice, local boards were given discretion to make decisions based on the standards and needs of their communities. The local board oversaw the selective service registration process and received deferment or conscientious objector requests and other appeals (see Harper et al., 2007, pp. 19-21, and Bailey, 1977). The causes for disqualification (e.g., health)

were similar for conscripts and volunteers. A local board that wished to keep Black men out of the military could have, if anything, more easily reduced the number of Black draftees than that of Black volunteers. For drafted men, the board controlled both which men to call up and who to reject. For volunteers, the board only controlled who to reject.

The housing and logistical capacity of regional facilities for Black soldiers were similar for volunteers and conscripts. Volunteers and drafted men were pooled together after induction, living and training in the same facilities.

We present results in Table 3. Column (1) re-states the baseline for comparison purposes. Column (2) examines draft rates as the dependent variable. The estimate is positive and statistically imprecise. The standardized coefficient is presented in square brackets. Compared to the estimate for volunteers, it is very small in magnitude. The estimates imply that discrimination had no effect for Black draft enlistment. This supports our interpretation that the estimates for volunteers are not confounded by demand-side forces. It also alleviates concerns that counties with higher discrimination drafted more Black men, which can mechanically reduce Black volunteer rates.

Column (3) shows that the triple interaction coefficient is similar to the baseline (column 1) when we control for race-county-week specific draft enlistment rates. The results are similar if we replace the contemporaneous draft rate with its one week lag (column 4), or with the interaction between week dummies and the baseline county-race draft rates (column 5). Controlling for draft rates also addresses the concern of a mechanical relationship between conscripts and volunteers.[25]

These results support the interpretation that discrimination discouraged Black men from enlisting. We acknowledge that our estimates will capture other forces if they vary for Black and white men, across counties with different levels of discrimination, *and* differ for draftees and volunteers. We conducted an extensive review of the historical literature on this period. As discussed in the Background section, there are many accounts and narratives that suggest high degrees of racial discrimination against Black men in the military. However, we found no mention of differential treatment for Black volunteers versus conscripts. Similarly, if white civilians who wished to keep Black men out of the military physically stopped Black men from enlisting, this could bias our results if the white men targeted volunteers over drafted men. We have not come across accounts of such systematic targeting in the historical literature.

Finally, in columns (6) and (7), we control for two proxies for the local capacity of the Army to train and house Black men. The first one is the number of Black and white officers as a share of all eligible men. We calculate this variable for each race and county using the occupation and race information in the 1940 Census and control for its interaction with week fixed effects. The second one is the distance from the nearest military base. We control for its interaction with race and week fixed effects.[26] The coefficient of interest is robust to including these additional controls.

[25] In principle, the relationship between the draft rate and the volunteer rate can be positive or negative. On the one hand, as more men are drafted, there will mechanically be fewer eligible men left to volunteer. On the other hand, Black men may be more likely to volunteer if they know that there will be other Black men in the Army from the draft. In our sixteen-week sample, we find no relationship between conscripts and volunteers. These results are available upon request.

[26] We collected data on the location of all Army camps and bases that were active as of December, 1941 from multiple sources and calculated the distance to each county centroid.

5.2.1 News Coverage of Pearl Harbor and Changes in Racial Views

One may also wonder whether the salience of Pearl Harbor and America's entry into the war was lower for Black men in counties with higher discrimination. This seems unlikely *ex ante*, given that the attack was reported immediately throughout the entire nation. Moreover, county-week and race-week fixed effects account for the possibility that news penetration differs by population density or the size of a county. County-race controls interacted with week fixed effects (discussed below) account for the possibility that factors such as differential residential, demographic or occupational patterns can affect news access.

To be cautious, we examine coverage in local newspapers, the main news platform alongside radio. We conduct a search for articles that mention the terms "Pearl Harbor" and "Japs", the derogatory term for the Japanese. To account for differential newspaper length across papers and time, we normalize by the number of pages containing the word "and". Thus, our coverage measure reflects the share of coverage in a given paper and week.[27]

Panels A and B of Figure 5 show that there is little difference between high (solid line) and low (dashed line) discrimination counties. We find similar patterns when we examine articles with the terms "Army" (Panel C) and "We Need You" (Panel D), amongst the most used phrases in Army recruiting. Coverage was also similar between Black and white mainstream papers. For example, all papers had at least one front page mention of Pearl Harbor or the war in the newspaper everyday for the first month after the attack.[28] The descriptive evidence is consistent with the conventional wisdom that news of Pearl Harbor was unlikely to have systematically varied across counties with different levels of discrimination or between Black and white men. In the Online Appendix, we provide additional evidence that differential exposure to Black newspapers is unlikely to explain our findings (see also Appendix Table A.7).

Note that Black-oriented radios did not exist before 1947 (Reed, 1974; Barlow, 1999). Later in Table 7, we control for radio ownership.

5.2.2 "Spillover" Racism

Given that propaganda against Japan after the Pearl Harbor attack contained a high degree of racial prejudice against the Japanese, one may question whether this spilled over and affected racism against the Black population. Spillover racism would affect our estimates if it varied with discrimination against the Black population. The spillover can be positive or negative. On the one hand, the sudden appearance of an external threat might have created a sense of unity between the white and the Black population. On the other hand, Pearl Harbor may have increased hostility against all minorities. The effect of the spillover on Black enlistment is also ambiguous *ex ante*. Solidarity between Black and white populations can encourage Black men to enlist. However, Black men may also be motivated to enlist more in places where spillover racism is negative, as a means to distinguish themselves from the Japanese.

[27] Local newspapers data come from the website Newspapers.com. Data are available for 584 of the 2,306 counties in our main sample. The number of pages is not directly observable. Results, not reported for brevity, are very similar without the normalization by paper length.

[28] These statistics are not reported in tables for brevity. We do not divide the papers across counties *and* race because our sample contains only six Black newspapers (*California Eagle, The Detroit Tribune, The Mobile Weekly Advocate, The New York Age, The Pittsburgh Courier,* and *The Weekly Review*).

To investigate the influence of spillover racism, we examine whether the number of racist articles against the Black population increases after Pearl Harbor and differs between high and low discrimination counties. Specifically, we count the number of articles in local newspapers that contain the word "Negro" and a series of racially disparaging stereotypes.[29] Figure 6 plots weekly averages for counties above (solid line) and below (dashed line) the sample median for discrimination. As expected, newspapers in counties with higher discrimination have a higher frequency of racial stereotypes in all weeks. However, there is no increase after Pearl Harbor for either sub-sample and the gap between the two remains constant overtime. Thus, there is no evidence that Pearl Harbor triggered additional racism towards the Black population.

5.2.3 Opposition to the Nazis

At the beginning of WWII, the Nazis were considered a greater threat than the Japanese by most Americans. According to a Fortune/Roper poll conducted during the week following Pearl Harbor, 47% of respondents thought that Germany "was more of a 'menace' to Americans than Japan", 32% viewed the two countries as equally threatening, and only 10% considered Japan a larger threat than Germany. It was not until around ten months after Pearl Harbor that polls showed Americans viewing Japan as a greater threat than Germany.[30]

Concerns about Germany can cause differential Black volunteer enlistment if they vary with county-level discrimination. It was well known that Nazi racial theory was partly inspired by American racial theory (Kuhl, 2002; Kakel, 2011). If our results partly capture Black opposition to the Nazi regime because Pearl Harbor gave salience to Nazi racial theory and Black men who had faced more discrimination were more motivated to oppose the Nazis, then our main estimates understate the negative effect of racial discrimination in the U.S. on Black volunteer rates.

5.3 Robustness

5.3.1 Outside Opportunities

The main empirical concern about the causal interpretation of our baseline estimate is omitted variables. Specifically, factors that vary by county, race and change after Pearl Harbor that are correlated with discrimination and enlistment are not accounted for by the two-way fixed effects in the baseline specification. In our context, an important concern is that the Black-white difference in the opportunity cost of enlisting varies with discrimination and changes as the U.S. enters into WWII. Black men gained less than white men from the war industry that arose after Pearl Harbor and the gap likely varied with discrimination across counties because the use of federal money and employment was locally administered.[31] This is unlikely to confound the triple interaction effect of interest because most of these changes occurred after our study period. However, one may question whether enlistment decisions were made in anticipation of future government

[29] To compile the list of derogatory terms most commonly used in our historical context, we follow Fouka et al. (2022). As before, we normalize by the number of pages containing the word "and".

[30] See `https://ropercenter.cornell.edu/blog/polling-and-pearl-harbor`.

[31] Among the 1,630 defense job training courses financed by a $60 million fund appropriated by Congress in 1940, only 194 accepted Black applicants. In 1942, Black individuals accounted for only 0.7% of essential war production workers. In 1943, this number had only risen to 1.3%. In January 1942, only 25% of the heads of several hundred companies that held war contracts stated in a U.S. Employment Service survey that they planned to hire Black workers. 51% stated that they did not plan then or in the future to ever employ Black workers (Davis, 1955).

investment.

We address this concern in several ways. First, we consider the fact that economic opportunities differ by employment status and age. We control for average employment rates and the average age of eligible men for Black and white men in each county in 1940. We control for their interactions with week fixed effects because these variables are time invariant and their influence on the opportunity cost evolves with the development of the war.[32] The estimates in columns (2) and (3) of Table 4 are similar to the baseline (reported in column 1).

Following a similar logic, we interact week fixed effects with the county-race-specific share of employment in each 1-digit sector. This is motivated by the fact that economic opportunities, and thus, the opportunity cost of enlisting, varied across sectors. We alternately introduce the controls for each sector into the baseline specification. Figure 7 plots the main triple interaction coefficient and 95% confidence interval from these regressions.[33] The first dot from the left is the coefficient from the baseline specification and the subsequent ones going towards the right display results controlling for these additional variables. The magnitude and the precision of coefficients are similar to the baseline.

Second, we consider the notable increase in female labor supply during WWII (Acemoglu et al., 2004; Goldin and Olivetti, 2013) and the fact that this may increase labor market competition for Black men. Most of the increase occurred after our study period, but we control for these potential changes out of an abundance of caution. Black and white women differed in labor supply and faced different economic opportunities, which implies that the degree to which they competed with Black and white men in the labor market also differed. Thus, we control for the interaction of week fixed effects and county-race-specific female labor supply. In Table 4, we alternately measure female labor supply as female labor force participation in column (4), the number of women in the labor force relative to the number of men who were eligible to serve in column (5), and the share of women between ages 15 and 35 in column (6). The last measure is motivated by Goldin and Olivetti (2013), which finds that women in this age range were particularly likely to enter the labor force during WWII.

The opportunity cost of enlisting was particularly high for farm owners. In fact, later in the war after the period that we study, farm ownership was a key consideration for obtaining a deferral or exemption from the draft (Geva, 2013). This can bias our results if Black men were less likely to be farm owners in counties with higher levels of discrimination. The earlier results show that our findings are robust to controlling for the interactions of week fixed effects and the share of Black and white employment in agriculture. But not all those employed in agriculture own farms. In Table 5, we address this concern more directly by controlling for the interaction of week fixed effects with different measures of farm ownership reported in the 1935 Census of Agriculture.[34]

[32] We do not control for the interactions of the Black-white occupational income score gap because this variable is used to construct the discrimination principal component.

[33] The coefficients and standard errors are reported in Appendix Table A.8.

[34] We use the 1935 rather than the 1940 Census of Agriculture because only the former reports the number of owners and non-owners by race. Results are unchanged when using the 1940 Census of Agriculture to measure the total number of farms, the number of people living in farms, and land in farms (by race, but not separately by owner status). The number of observations in columns (4), (5), (7) and (8) is lower than in other columns because information on ownership as opposed to other forms of land use (e.g., tenancy) is not available for all counties.

These are the race-county specific measures of the number of individuals living in farms (column 2), the number of farms (column 3), the number of farm owners (column 4), and the number of farm operators other than owners (column 5). The latter variable also includes tenants. This is important as white landowners in counties with high levels of discrimination may have been motivated to prevent Black men from enlisting because of suppressed Black labor costs in these areas. Reassuringly, results are in line with those from the baseline. In columns (6) to (8), we also document that results are robust to interacting week dummies with the acres of land in farms (of all operators, owners, and operators who were not owners of either race).

To further address the concern that white landowners may have opposed Black volunteers, we control for the interaction of week fixed effects, the Black dummy variable and proxy variables for Black labor coercion identified in earlier studies and obtained from the 1940 Census of Agriculture. In columns (2) and (3) of Table A.10, we consider average farm size and the average value of land in farms. These variables capture the idea that landowners' coercive power was increasing in farm size (Spencer, 1994). Next, in columns (4) and (5), we include the share of farms with horses or mules and the average number of horses or mules per farm. These controls address the concern that opposition to Black volunteer enlistment might have been higher in counties where mechanization was lower and landowners were thus more reliant on Black labor (Woodruff, 1994; Hornbeck and Naidu, 2014). Following a similar logic, columns (6) and (7) control for the share of farms with tractors and the number of tractors per farm.[35] The triple interaction coefficients of interest are very similar to the baseline.

5.3.2 WWI Veterans

In this section, we consider the legacy of Black WWI enlistment, which plays a prominent role in historical narratives. Since the location of Black WWI veterans might be correlated with discrimination, the legacy of Black WWI enlistment can bias the baseline estimate if it is correlated with Black enlistment in WWII.

The influence of the WWI legacy on the motivation of Black men to enlist after the Pearl Harbor attack is also interesting in and of itself. The effect is ambivalent *ex ante*. Historical accounts emphasize the disappointment in the Black community after WWI. This may have reduced the enlistment of younger generations of Black men. At the same time, Campante and Yanagizawa-Drott (2015) finds that the motivation to join the military partly depends on individual preferences and values that are transmitted from father to son. This suggests that young Black men growing up with WWI veterans may be more likely to volunteer after Pearl Harbor.

Table 6 first reports the baseline specification in columns (1) and (2) for the full sample and the sample restricted to counties for which we observe the presence of a WWI veteran.[36] The triple interaction estimate

[35] The additional control variables in Table 5 are reported by the 1935 Census of Agriculture.

[36] WWI veteran is reported in the 1930 (and not in the 1940) Census. The share of Black WWI veterans is computed relative to the (Black) eligible population. We follow Mazumder (2019) and Campante and Yanagizawa-Drott (2015), and use age in 1930 to predict whether a man is eligible to serve in WWI. Similar to Mazumder (2019), we calculate age in 1917 for each Black man in the 1930 U.S. Census and compute the number of Black men eligible to serve in WWI (ages 18-45) in 1917. The share of WWI Black veterans in 1930 is the number of WWI veterans divided by the number of eligible individuals. Using the age of Black men in 1930, we can construct the share who would have been eligible to serve in WWII and were living in a household with a WWI veteran. The validity of this measure depends on migration rates during 1930 and 1940. Using the 1940 census, we find that migration between

for discrimination is very similar in the two samples. In column (3), we control for the number of Black WWI veterans normalized by the number of Black men in the county who would have been eligible to serve in WWI based on their age, as well as the share of Black men in each county eligible to enlist in WWII who are living in a household with a Black WWI veteran. In column (4), we separately estimate the effect of the share of men living with a Black WWI veteran into households in which the veteran was and was not the household head.

The estimates show that the main result for discrimination is robust to the inclusion of these additional controls and is not confounded by the legacy of WWI. They also shed light on additional motivations for Black men to (or not to) enlist. The triple interaction coefficient for the share of Black WWI veterans living in the county is negative in columns (3) and (4) and statistically significant at the 10% level in column (4). This is consistent with the view that the WWI legacy discouraged the next generation of Black men from enlisting after Pearl Harbor and suggests that this legacy effect is transmitted at the community level. In the same specifications, the triple interaction of the share of eligible Black men living with a WWI veteran in column (3) and the share living with a veteran head in column (4) are positive, large and statistically significant at the 10% level. This supports the view that there is father-to-son intergenerational transmission of a preference for participating in wars.

In columns (5) and (6), we present analogous estimates for the presence of Civil War veterans. Our main interaction coefficient of interest is robust. The interaction coefficients of Civil War veterans are positive but statistically imprecise.

5.3.3 Imported Discrimination

The period we study falls between the two waves of the Black Great Migration (Collins, 2021). This raises the question of the role of discrimination imported from other counties by migrants. For example, if Black men moved from high to low discrimination counties, then the high enlistment rates we observe in low discrimination counties may be partly driven by men who originated from high discrimination counties. In this case, our estimates would understate the negative effect of exposure to discrimination on enlistment. To investigate this possibility, we construct a proxy for "imported" discrimination using the question from the 1940 U.S. Census that asks individuals for their county of residence in 1935.[37]

Column (7) of Table 6 controls for the triple interaction of imported discrimination, Black and the post-Pearl Harbor dummy variable. The coefficient of interest remains negative and statistically significant. This implies that our main result is driven by own-county discrimination and not by discrimination transmitted by new migrants. The triple interaction of the migration transmitted discrimination is statistically zero. The standardized coefficient in square brackets is small and the estimate is statistically imprecise.

5.3.4 Additional Sensitivity Checks

We conduct several additional sensitivity checks. One concern is that our results may be driven by a few observations with extreme values that might be particularly influential. To address this potential issue,

1935 and 1940 of Black men is uncorrelated with 1930 WWI veteran presence.

[37] For each county, we calculate the number of Black migrants arrived between 1935 and 1940 and multiply this by discrimination in the county of origin. We then scale this measure by the 1940 (receiving) own county Black population to account for the fact that the same number of migrants will have different effects depending on the size of the destination county.

we perform a randomization inference exercise in the spirit of Young (2019). We randomly assign the discrimination measure across counties and re-estimate the baseline specification. We do this for 1,000 iterations. Figure A.5 is a density plot of the coefficients. The dashed vertical line corresponds to the coefficient from the baseline using the actual data (i.e., the number reported in column 4 of Table 2). The results show that our baseline estimate is unlikely to be driven by coincidence.

Since discrimination is measured with noise, we re-estimate the baseline where we measure discrimination as a dummy variable that equals one if the it is above the sample median and zero otherwise. Column (2) of Table A.11 shows that the triple interaction coefficient is -11.0 and statistically significant at the 1% level. This implies that, after Pearl Harbor, the enlistment rate of Black men from counties with above sample median discrimination was lower than that of Black men from counties with below sample median discrimination by approximately 11 per 100,000 men. The sample mean of Black enlistment is 8.819 per 100,000 in the eight weeks after Pearl Harbor. Thus, the effect of discrimination is large. In columns (3) and (4), we verify that results are robust to taking the log and the hyperbolic sine transformation of the volunteer rate. In column (3), we take the log of 0.01 to maximize observations.

Table 7 presents the baseline enlistment regression that includes a large number of additional variables interacted with week fixed effects and the Black dummy variable to allow their influences to vary over time and differ for Black and white men. Panel A column (1) restates the baseline for comparison. In column (2), we control for the interaction of week fixed effects with cross-county net migration for each race between 1930 and 1940 estimated by Gardner and Cohen (1992).[38] This addresses the concern that migration rates were correlated with discrimination and enlistment. To address concerns over the accuracy of the calculated migration rates, column (3) alternatively controls for migration rates during 1935-1940 based on the reported 1935 and 1940 county of residences in the 1940 Census.[39] In column (4), we control for the county-specific rates of race change from Black to white in the 1930 and 1940 U.S. Population Censuses estimated by Dahis et al. (2019) interacted with the Black and the post-Pearl Harbor dummy variable.[40] This addresses the concern that race misclassification in the census was correlated with discrimination and changes in Black volunteer enlistment after Pearl Harbor.

In columns (5) to (8), we control for proxies of exposure to events that may have influenced Black men's attitudes about the U.S. armed forces. The first African American U.S. Army Air Force was trained in Tuskeegee, Alabama. One of the most prominent attacks on the Black community occurred in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in 1921 (e.g., Albright et al., 2021). Ramos-Toro (2021) finds that Civil War refugee camps were conducive to the development of racially-progressive politics, which persisted over time. Dippel and Heblich (2021) documents that the historical presence of (emigrated) leaders of the failed 1848-1849 German revolution (the "48ers") is associated with stronger support for racial equality in the long run, possibly influencing Black Americans' incentives to volunteer. We control for distance to Tuskeegee, Tulsa, the nearest refugee camp and the nearest 48ers settlement.[41]

[38] Recall that the location observed in the NARA dataset is usually the location in 1940, which moderates concerns of endogenous location in response to WWII. The results are unchanged when replacing 1930-1940 migration rates with those from previous decades (e.g., 1910-1920, 1920-1930, or 1910-1930). These are not reported for brevity and are available upon request.

[39] For each county and race, we calculate the number of net migrants in 1935 and 1940 divided by 1940 county population.

[40] The number of observations is slightly different due to the limited availability of the additional control.

[41] Data on the nearest refugee camp and 48ers settlements come from Ramos-Toro (2021) and Dippel and Heblich (2021),

In Panel B, we control for variables that we discuss in the next section when we examine heterogeneous treatment effects: NAACP presence, Black Church membership rate, distance to Pearl Harbor, years in the Union and Black radio ownership rate.

Finally, in Figure A.6, we drop each of the 11 former Confederate southern state individually and all of them together. The results are similar to the baseline estimate (the first dot from the left).

5.4 Heterogeneous Effects

In this section, we examine what factors exacerbate or moderate the discouraging effects of discrimination on Black enlistment after Pearl Harbor. We divide the sample according to whether the county is in the South, whether it has at least one NAACP chapter, its 1926 county-level membership rate in Black churches, the number of years spent in the Union, distance to Pearl Harbor, the distance to the closest military base and Black radio ownership.[42] The NAACP typically encouraged Black enlistment, while Black churches were more ambivalent. The number of years the state of residence has been part of the Union can affect the strength of the national identities of its residents because they are more likely to have attended schools or social and community activities that emphasize the national identity. The distance to Pearl Harbor affects the immediacy of the physical danger of the war. The distance to the nearest military base can affect a man's exposure to the Army. Black radio ownership can increase the salience of the Pearl Harbor attack.

The estimates in Table 8 show that the discouragement effect is smaller in magnitude in counties that were geographically closer to Pearl Harbor (column 4) and in states that spent more years in the Union (column 5). These results suggest that proximity to the attack and physical danger, and the historical duration of the collective or individual national identity can moderate the discouragement effects from discrimination. The p-value for the difference in the two subsamples is presented at the bottom of the table in Panel E. The differences are statistically significant at the 5% or higher level. The estimates also suggest that the discrimination effect was larger in counties with an NAACP chapter, more Black church members, and higher Black radio ownership. However, Panel E shows that the differences are not statistically significant.

Note that we also examined whether the discrimination effect was exacerbated or muted by the presence of WWI veterans, net migration rates, the immigrant share from Japan or Germany, urbanization and other measures of economic development, and distances to Tuskegee, Tulsa, the closest Civil War refugee camp or the nearest 48ers city. We found no evidence of differential effects and do not report these in tables for brevity. They are available upon request.

6 Additional Results

6.1 Japanese Americans

Japanese American men, who volunteered at high rates immediately after Pearl Harbor, were barred

respectively.

[42] Data on the local presence of NAACP chapters are from Gregory and Estrada (2019). We measure NAACP presence as an indicator variable equal to one if a county had at least one NAACP chapter between 1919 and 1940. Membership in Black churches is the number of members of Black churches reported in the 1926 Census of Religious Bodies, divided by 1930 Black population. We use the Census of Religious Bodies of 1926 instead of that of 1936, because in 1936 the number of Black churches was likely under-counted due to financial constraints (Finke and Scheitle, 2005; Gruber and Hungerman, 2007). We do not separately examine distance to Germany because it is inversely correlated to distance to Japan and does not provide additional information.

from the military soon after the war began.[43] Civilians with Japanese ancestry were segregated and disenfranchised. Executive Order 9066, signed on February 19, 1942, authorized the forced internment of Japanese Americans. Army-directed "evacuations" began on March 24, 1942. People had six days of notice to dispose of their property other than what they could carry, leading to enormous economic losses. Anyone who was at least 1/16th Japanese was forcibly relocated. Between 110,000 and 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry were subject to forced internment, including approximately 80,000 second generation and third generation Americans, 17,000 children under ten years of age, as well as several thousand elderly and handicapped men and women.[44] Internment was implemented rigorously on the U.S. mainland. In Hawaii, general internment of Japanese Americans, who comprised approximately 30% of the total Hawaiian population, was seen as practically infeasible. Only 0.09% of Japanese Americans in Hawaii (1,500 people) were sent to the mainland for internment. Due to the high demand for men, the U.S. military backtracked on its initial ban and on February 1, 1943, President Roosevelt announced the creation of a segregated battalion comprised of Japanese American soldiers commanded by white officers to increase U.S. fighting capacity. With few exceptions, they were allowed to join only the Army and fought primarily in Europe.

We do not have county-level measures of discrimination against the Japanese and cannot replicate the main analysis at the same level of granularity. However, we are able to investigate the effect of discrimination and political exclusion on the motivation of Japanese American men to enlist in the U.S. Army by comparing Japanese American volunteer rates before and after they were allowed to re-enter the Army, between the U.S. mainland and Hawaii. If discrimination and exclusion undermined the motivation of these men, we should see lower enlistment from the mainland.

The first cohort to be allowed re-entry was inducted on March 1, 1943. The government aimed for 3,000 volunteers from the mainland and 1,500 from Hawaii. To be eligible for selective service, loyalty questions were administered to all Japanese American men.[45] Only those who provided acceptable answers were inducted into the military. This conditionality gave Japanese American men discretion over whether they enlisted (e.g., Hayashi, 2010). For consistency with our previous analysis, we restrict attention to the eight weeks before and after March 1, 1943.

Figure 8 plots Japanese American enlistment rates over time for the mainland and Hawaii. It shows that enlistment was almost zero prior to March 1st because Japanese Americans had been banned from service with very few exceptions. After the policy change, there was a large spike in enlistment in Hawaii, but no noticeable change from the mainland. The reduction in enlistment in the last few weeks of the figure corresponds to the War Department's temporary pause in Japanese American recruitment to assess the causes

[43] Selective service stopped accepting Japanese American men. Most Japanese American soldiers already in the army were sent to Camp Robinson in Arkansas, where their guns were taken away, and they were made to perform menial tasks. Approximately 600 were discharged from the Army (Castelnuovo and Shimo, 2010).

[44] The internment camps ended in 1945 following the Supreme Court decision, *Endo v. the United States*. It was ruled that the War Relocation Authority "has no authority to subject citizens who are concededly loyal to its leave procedure". The Supreme Court allowed Franklin Roosevelt to end internment one day before they publicly announced the decision.

[45] The two most controversial "loyalty" questions were numbers 27 and 28. Question number 27 asked if second generation Japanese Americans (i.e. those born in the United States) were willing to serve in combat duty wherever they were ordered. Question number 28 asked if individuals would swear unqualified allegiance to the United States and forswear any form of allegiance to the Emperor of Japan. 17% of all registrants and approximately 20% of all second-generation Japanese Americans answered "No" to loyalty questions 27 and 28 (Lyon, 2012).

of low mainland enlistment rates. These patterns are consistent with Japanese Americans living in Hawaii, who faced less discrimination, being more willing to volunteer. Japanese American enlistment patterns in early 1943 are consistent with the main result that disenfranchisement and discrimination reduces volunteer enlistment. Ultimately, approximately 33,000 Japanese Americans fought for the U.S. during WWII, with 20,000 in the Army.

6.2 Later in 1942

To identify the full influence of discrimination, the main analysis focuses on a narrow window of time during the early phase of U.S. participation in WWII, before the U.S. government undertook actions specifically aimed at recruiting Black men and other policies in response to the war. This section examines Black enlistment during the later parts of 1942 until volunteer enlistment was banned in December that year. A few months after Pearl Harbor, the U.S. government recognized the urgency of boosting Black enlistment rates and focused significant propaganda efforts on the Black community. Groups such as the NAACP and Black news outlets also began to promote the Double V Campaign – the idea that victory abroad would lead to victory against racism at home. The gestures from the Army and the U.S. government were mostly symbolic and very few substantive changes occurred. Jim Crow practices remained in place inside and outside the Army. The Army continued to be segregated and the discrimination faced by Black men was unchanged. Most Black men continued to be assigned to menial positions. A few Black combat units such as the Black Panthers and the Tuskeegee Airmen were formed, but they were segregated and commanded by white men. Similarly, wartime economic policies typically benefited white workers more than Black workers.

Despite the lack of substantive change, total Black volunteer enlistment rates begin to increase starting in June 1942. Figure 9 plots volunteer enlistment rates for Black men from counties with above and below median levels of discrimination. Twenty weeks after Pearl Harbor, Black enlistment rates begin to dramatically increase in counties with low discrimination, while they remain much lower in counties with high discrimination. Between the attack on Pearl Harbor and December 5, 1942 (when voluntary enlistment was banned), as many as 60,486 Black men volunteered. This corresponds to 1,793 Black volunteers per 100,000 enlistable men.[46] Consistent with the patterns depicted in Figure 9, volunteers disproportionately came from low discrimination counties: 6,025 per 100,000 enlistable Black men volunteered in counties with low discrimination, while only 1,447 per 100,000 volunteered in counties with high discrimination.

The response of Black enlistment to symbolic gestures that were not accompanied by substantive change suggests that intrinsic motivations play an important role in the decision to enlist. The fact that the positive response to government propaganda is driven by counties with low discrimination suggests that individuals who have faced relatively less discrimination are more easily persuaded. These results are consistent with the view that discrimination can undermine the strength of national identity. We do not have disaggregated measures of exposure to government propaganda or the many other changes in the later parts of 1942 to investigate this more rigorously. Thus, it is beyond the scope of our paper to be conclusive on this point.

6.3 All Races

To enrich our understanding of the role of discrimination in WWII military enlistment, we examine the

[46] For comparison, during the same time period, 513,280 whites (or, 1,524 per 100,000 eligible men) volunteered.

patterns of volunteer enlistment for all other racial groups identified in the NARA dataset. To be consistent with the main analysis, we focus on the 48 mainland states during the eight weeks before and after Pearl Harbor. Figure A.7 plots volunteer enlistment rates for all races that our data allow us to identify – white, Black, Native American, Japanese and Chinese: all ethnic groups responded to the Pearl Harbor attack and increased volunteer enlistment.

The patterns across groups are interesting. Volunteer enlistment rates were lowest for Black men, who faced the most severe discrimination during this period. Chinese and Japanese Americans faced broadly similar discrimination in U.S. society prior to the war. The high enlistment rates of Japanese Americans are consistent with historians who argue that Japanese Americans, to prove their loyalty to the U.S. or to avoid retaliation, volunteered at high rates prior to being barred from the military.[47]

Native American enlistment rates after Pearl Harbor were similar to white (and Japanese) enlistment rates, despite having faced a long history of discrimination. This is consistent with the fact that during WWII, Native Americans were promoted as an embodiment of the American identity in government propaganda and popular culture and they served in integrated units (Bernstein, 1986). Native Americans also had low outside opportunities since many lived on economically deprived reservations (Sorkin, 1974).

7 Conclusion

The results in this study provide novel empirical support for recent theories of nation building by showing that when a nation is under threat, political exclusion and discrimination can reduce state capacity during wartime. The Pearl Harbor attack triggered a surge in volunteer enlistment. However, the response from Black men was moderate relative to white men, especially from counties with high levels of racial discrimination. Although Japanese American men volunteered at the same rates as white men immediately after Pearl Harbor, those on the mainland did not respond to the Army's call one year later, nearly a year after they and their families were forcibly incarcerated in internment camps. In contrast, Japanese American men from Hawaii, who were not interned, enlisted at much higher rates.

One interpretation of the results is that discrimination and exclusion discouraged Black men from volunteering. The evidence suggests that intrinsic motivations were likely to have been important. Japanese men from the mainland enlisted less than those from Hawaii, even though they faced worse outside opportunities. The discouraging effect of discrimination on Black enlistment was particularly pronounced in places that had more recently joined the Union, which is likely to influence the strength of a man's national identity but unlikely to affect the tangible trade-offs of enlisting. Also importantly from a historical perspective, Black enlistment from places with low discrimination increased dramatically after the U.S. government embarked on a campaign to recruit Black men, even though there were few substantive changes to racial discrimination in the Army or U.S. society.

It is beyond the scope of our study to be conclusive about exactly why discrimination undermines an individual's support for the government, or to rule out all alternative explanations. Deepening our under-

[47] See Soennichsen (2011) for a detailed discussion. Saavedra (2021) shows that Japanese Americans born right after Pearl Harbor had more American sounding names, relative to kids born just a few days before, as Japanese American parents responded to concerns about heightened anti-Japanese sentiments.

standing of why discrimination reduces enlistment is an important avenue for future research. More generally, the dynamic relationship between nation building and discrimination is complex and multifaceted, and an exciting subject to study. In the U.S. context, an interesting question is how Black WWII participation affected the Civil Rights movement.

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Table 1: The Correlates of Discrimination

	Dependent Variable: Discrimination				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Standardized Coefficient	Obs.	R-squared
A. All					
Log Population	11.99	1.712	0.259***	2,306	0.788
Urban Share	0.599	0.323	0.247***	2,306	0.787
Black Population Share	0.0990	0.144	0.466***	2,306	0.825
White Population Share	0.897	0.143	-0.447***	2,306	0.821
German (ancestry) Population Share	1.723	1.725	0.151***	2,306	0.758
Italian (ancestry) Population Share	3.205	4.139	0.149***	2,306	0.755
Japanese (ancestry) Population Share	0.0940	0.352	0.010	2,306	0.750
Distance from Pearl Harbor (1,000 km)	6.940	1.111	0.434***	2,306	0.752
B. Black					
Log Population	9.966	1.427	0.247***	2,303	0.807
Age	27.50	2.757	0.097***	2,306	0.766
Share Employed	0.807	0.101	0.045***	2,306	0.764
Log Occupational Income Score	2.833	0.172	0.030**	2,306	0.763
Share Employed in Manufacturing	0.157	0.0965	-0.012	2,306	0.763
Share Employed in Farming	0.127	0.112	0.040***	2,306	0.763
C. White					
Log Population	11.95	1.734	0.269***	2,306	0.750
Age	31.42	2.628	0.249***	2,306	0.735
Share Employed	0.817	0.0480	-0.020	2,306	0.710
Log Occupational Income Score	3.197	0.140	0.299***	2,306	0.772
Share Employed in Manufacturing	0.240	0.125	0.133***	2,306	0.720
Share Employed in Farming	0.0571	0.0608	-0.249***	2,306	0.750

Notes: Each row is one regression. Observations are at the county level. All regressions control for state fixed effects, and are weighed by the 1940 population of eligible men in each county and race. Standard errors are robust. Significance levels: ***p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table 2: The Effect of Discrimination on Black Volunteer Enlistment

	Dependent Variable: # Volunteers per 100,000 Eligible Men							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
				Baseline	Disaggregated Income Scores		Unweighed	Omit States with Incomplete Information
Discrimination x Black x Post	-2.158	-2.117	-2.130	-2.803	-2.607	-3.216	-9.853	-2.797
	(0.593)	(0.599)	(0.599)	(0.547)	(0.509)	(0.758)	(3.040)	(0.553)
Discrimination x Black	-0.308	-1.440	-1.459					
	(0.406)	(0.556)	(0.557)					
Black x Post	-14.326	-14.52	-14.639					
	(1.087)	(1.111)	(1.105)					
Black	-11.706	-10.563	-10.525					
	(0.647)	(0.783)	(0.787)					
Controls								
State FE	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
County FE	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N
Week FE	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N
County-Week FE	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Race-Week FE	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Race-County FE	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Race-State-Week FE	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N
Observations	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,948	71,992	71,992	62,180
Adjusted R-sq	0.223	0.307	0.403	0.579	0.579	0.575	0.005	0.595
Mean Y	30.224	30.224	30.224	30.224	30.226	30.224	23.402	30.210
Std. Dev. Y	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.527	38.525	547.596	38.153

Notes: Observations are at the race, county and week level. Column (5) replaces the income scores with race-specific 1950 income scores. Column (7) replicates the baseline without weighing and column (8) drops the states whose counties report missing information (Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming). All regressions include county-week fixed effects, race-week fixed effects, and county-race fixed effects. The regressions include all lower order interaction terms and are weighed by the 1940 population of eligible men in each county and race (except for column 7). Standard errors are clustered at the county level.

Table 3: The Effect of Discrimination on Black Volunteer Enlistment – Controlling for Draft Enlistment and Capacity Constraints

	Dependent Variable (except column 2): # Volunteers per 100,000 Eligible Men						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	Baseline	Dep. Variable: Draft Rate	Race-County-Week Draft Rate	Lagged Race-County-Week Draft Rate	Baseline Draft Rate x Week FE	1940 Black/White Share of Officers x Week FE	Distance to the nearest military base x Week FE
Discrimination x Black x Post	-2.803	3.136	-2.804	-2.687	-2.736	-2.897	-2.806
	(0.547)	(5.109)	(0.547)	(0.547)	(0.542)	(0.530)	(0.558)
Standardized coefficient	[-0.042]	[0.010]	[-0.042]	[-0.040]	[-0.041]	[-0.043]	[-0.042]
Observations	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992
Adjusted R-sq	0.579	0.603	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.579
Mean Y	30.224	80.214	30.224	30.224	30.224	30.224	30.224
Std. Dev. Y	38.525	181.205	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.525

Notes: Observations are at the race, county and week level. Column (1) reports the baseline specification. Column (2) replicates the baseline using as dependent variable the draft rate. From column (3) onwards, we replicate the baseline specification controlling for each county-race-week control reported at the top of the column. All regressions include county-week fixed effects, race-week fixed effects, and county-race fixed effects. Regressions are weighed by the 1940 population of eligible men in each county and race. Standard errors are clustered at the county level. Standardized coefficients are reported in brackets.

Table 4: The Effect of Discrimination on Black Volunteer Enlistment – Controlling for Outside Economic Conditions

	Dependent Variable: # Volunteers per 100,000 Eligible Men					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Baseline	Employment Share	Age	Female labor force participation	Female labor force participation, rel. to eligible men	% women 15-35
Discrimination x Black x Post	-2.803	-3.124	-2.741	-2.881	-2.427	-2.900
	(0.547)	(0.665)	(0.560)	(0.603)	(0.579)	(0.549)
Observations	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992
Adjusted R-sq	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.579
Mean Y	30.224	30.224	30.224	30.224	30.224	30.224
Std. Dev. Y	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.525

Notes: Observations are at the race, county and week level. Column (1) reports the baseline specification. From column (2) onwards, we replicate the baseline specification controlling for each county-race control reported at the top of the column, interacted with week fixed effects. All regressions include county-week fixed effects, race-week fixed effects, and county-race fixed effects. Regressions are weighed by the 1940 population of eligible men in each county and race. Standard errors are clustered at the county level.

Table 5: The Effect of Discrimination on Black Volunteer Enlistment – Controlling for Agriculture and Farm Ownership

	Dependent Variable: # Volunteers per 100,000 Eligible Men							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Baseline	People living in farms	# of farms	Farm owners	Operators other than owners	Land in farms	Land farm owners	Land operators other than owners
Discrimination x Black x Post	-2.803	-3.105	-3.039	-2.242	-2.13	-3.02	-2.287	-3.118
	(0.547)	(0.606)	(0.588)	(0.740)	(0.814)	(0.541)	(0.762)	(0.774)
Observations	71,992	71,896	71,896	40,848	40,848	71,896	40,848	40,848
Adjusted R-sq	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.705	0.706	0.579	0.706	0.706
Mean Y	30.224	30.229	30.229	26.193	26.193	30.229	26.193	26.193
Std. Dev. Y	38.525	38.526	38.526	42.423	42.423	38.526	42.423	42.423

Notes: Observations are at the race, county and week level. Column (1) reports the baseline specification. From column (2) onwards, we augment the baseline specification by interacting race by county controls (obtained from the 1935 Census of Agriculture) with week fixed effects. Specifically, column (2) includes the race-county number of people living in farms. Columns (3) to (5) (resp., (6) to (8)) control for the county-race number of farms (resp., land in farms) of: any operator, owners, and operators other than owners. The category farm owner includes both partial and full owners, while operators other than owners is obtained as the sum of managers, croppers and other operators. Land is measured in acres. All regressions include county-week fixed effects, race-week fixed effects, and county-race fixed effects. Regressions are weighed by the 1940 population of eligible men in each county and race. Standard errors are clustered at the county level.

Table 6: The Effect of Discrimination on Black Volunteer Enlistment – Veterans, Migration-induced Discrimination

	Dependent Variable: # Volunteers per 100,000 Eligible Men						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
			WWI Veteran		Civil War Veteran		
Discrimination x Black x Post	-2.803	-2.806	-2.584	-2.573	-2.415	-2.417	-2.285
	(0.547)	(0.547)	(0.670)	(0.722)	(0.554)	(0.555)	(0.739)
	[-0.042]	[-0.042]	[-0.039]	[-0.039]	[-0.044]	[-0.044]	[-0.034]
Share of Black veterans x Black x Post			-34.888	-39.453	12.005	11.953	
			(25.787)	(25.879)	(3.914)	(3.925)	
			[-0.032]	[-0.036]	[0.028]	[0.028]	
Share living with Black veteran x Black x Post			153.195		503.985		
			(81.437)		(355.497)		
			[0.019]		[0.006]		
Share living with Black veteran non-head x Black x Post				78.009		401.663	
				(41.601)		(431.936)	
				[0.035]		[0.003]	
Share living with Black veteran head x Black x Post				12.699		653.567	
				(33.190)		(578.753)	
				[0.005]		[0.004]	
Migration transmitted discrimination x Black x Post							-12.257
							(10.335)
							[-0.013]
Observations	71,992	70,820	70,820	70,820	48,940	48,940	70,820
Adjusted R-sq	0.579	0.575	0.575	0.575	0.721	0.721	0.575
Mean Y	30.224	30.194	30.194	30.194	29.102	29.102	30.194
Std. Dev. Y	38.525	38.395	38.395	38.395	34.401	34.401	38.395

Notes: Observations are at the race, county and week level. All regressions include county-week fixed effects, race-week fixed effects, and county-race fixed effects. Regressions are weighed by the 1940 population of eligible men in each county and race. Standard errors are clustered at the county level. Standardized coefficients are reported in brackets.

Table 7: The Effect of Discrimination on Black Volunteer Enlistment – Additional Controls

	Dependent Variable: # Volunteers per 100,000 Eligible Men							
Panel A.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
		Control for Week FE x Black x Variable in Column Heading						
	Baseline	Net mig. Rate 1930-40	Net mig. rate 1935-40	Passing for white	Tuskegee	Tulsa	Closest Refugee Camp	Closest 48ers city
Discrimination x Black x Post	-2.803	-2.732	-3.322	-2.779	-3.175	-2.617	-2.89	-2.595
	(0.547)	(0.550)	(0.573)	(0.560)	(0.737)	(0.573)	(0.559)	(0.605)
Observations	71,992	71,380	71,896	65,636	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992
Adj. R-squared	0.579	0.577	0.579	0.626	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.579
Mean Y	30.224	30.217	30.222	29.99	30.22	30.22	30.22	30.22
Std. Dev. Y	38.525	38.475	38.517	37.14	38.52	38.52	38.52	38.52
Panel B.	Control for Week FE x Black x Variable in Column Heading							
	NAACP	Black Church	Dist. to Pearl Harbor	Years in the Union	Black Radio Ownership			
Discrimination x Black x Post	-2.395	-2.567	-2.762	-2.798	-2.616			
	(0.664)	(0.577)	(0.549)	(0.553)	(0.720)			
Observations	71,992	71,604	71,992	71,992	71,196			
Adj. R-squared	0.579	0.578	0.579	0.579	0.576			
Mean Y	30.22	30.22	30.22	30.22	30.20			
Std. Dev. Y	38.52	38.48	38.52	38.52	38.43			

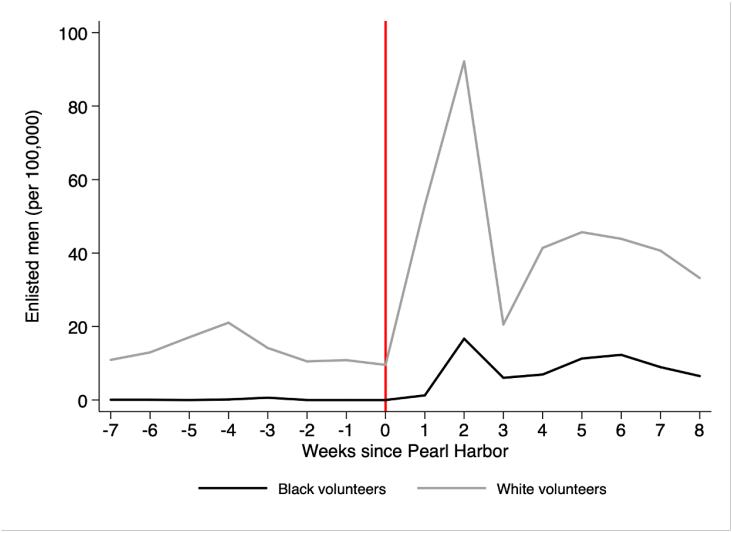
Notes: Observations are at the race, county and week level. Column (1), Panel A, reports the baseline specification. In columns (2) and (3), Panel A, we replicate the baseline specification controlling for each county-race control reported at the top of the column, interacted by week fixed-effects. From column (4) onwards, in both panels, we replicate the baseline specification controlling for each county control reported at the top of the column, interacted with Black and week fixed effects. All regressions include county-week fixed effects, race-week fixed effects, and county-race fixed effects. Regressions are weighed by the 1940 population of eligible men in each county and race. Standard errors are clustered at the county level.

Table 8: The Effect of Discrimination on Black Volunteer Enlistment – Heterogeneous Effects

	Dependent Variable: # Volunteers per 100,000 Eligible Men						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	X=South	X= NAACP Chapter in 1940	X=Black Churches in 1926	X=Distance to Pearl Harbor	X=Years in the Union	X=Distance from closest Military Base	X=Black Radio Ownership in 1930
	Panel A. X = 0		**Panel B. X < Median Value**				
Discrimination x Black x Post [1]	-4.214	-2.314	-1.863	-1.368	-4.333	-2.429	-1.462
	(1.651)	(0.686)	(1.118)	(0.865)	(0.801)	(0.761)	(0.906)
Observations	31,816	65,452	34,768	35,144	36,596	36,580	35,616
Adjusted R-sq	0.501	0.520	0.514	0.576	0.554	0.710	0.636
Mean Y	31.73	31.02	32.22	33.19	34.10	29.70	22.38
Std. Dev. Y	36.25	45.15	40.31	45.33	45.30	33.90	42.59
	Panel C. X = 1		**Panel D. X > Median Value**				
Discrimination x Black x Post [2]	-1.637	-4.32	-3.075	-3.857	-1.968	-3.482	-3.673
	(0.833)	(1.828)	(0.538)	(0.618)	(0.667)	(0.764)	(1.119)
Observations	40,176	6,540	36,836	36,848	35,396	35,412	35,580
Adjusted R-sq	0.703	0.795	0.661	0.578	0.605	0.431	0.550
Mean Y	26.61	29.16	27.96	28.37	27.54	31.35	32.17
Std. Dev. Y	43.29	27.24	36.18	33.45	32.76	46.96	37.05
	Panel E. Difference in Coefficients – Panels A-C and Panels B-D						
[1] − [2] p-value	0.3345	0.8149	0.3561	0.0135	0.0214	0.3536	0.2255

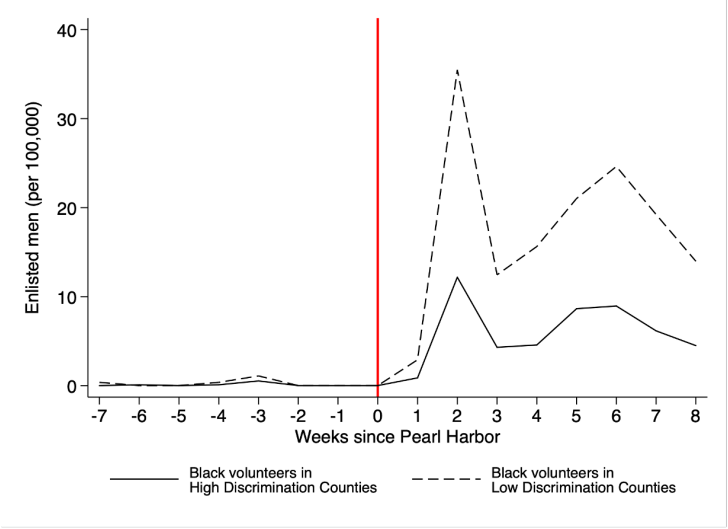
Notes: Observations are at the race, county and week level. Sample restrictions are stated in the column headings (X is the variable with which the sample is cut). All regressions include county-week fixed effects, race-week fixed effects, and county-race fixed effects. Regressions are weighed by the 1940 population of eligible men in each county and race. Standard errors are clustered at the county level.

Figure 1: Volunteer Enlistment – Black, White



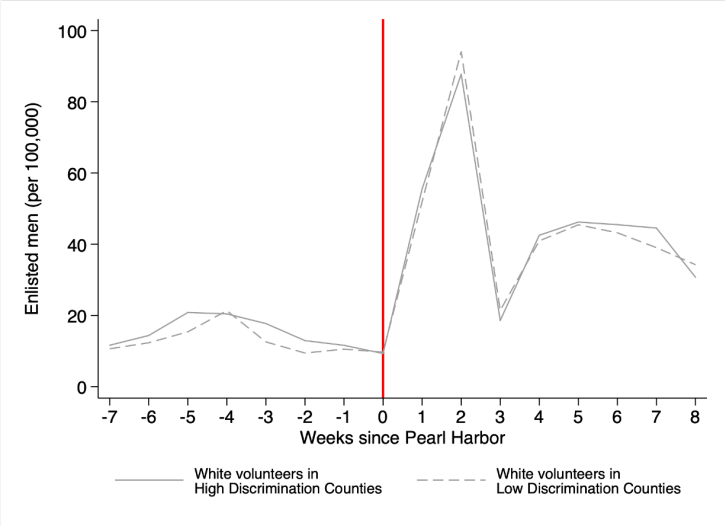
Notes: The figure shows the number of Black and White volunteers (per 100,000 eligible men) in the 8 weeks pre- and post-attack on Pearl Harbor. Week 0 is defined as the week ending on Sunday December 7, 1941, and Week 1 is defined as the week starting on Monday December 8, 1941.

Figure 2: Volunteer Enlistment – Black, High and Low Discrimination



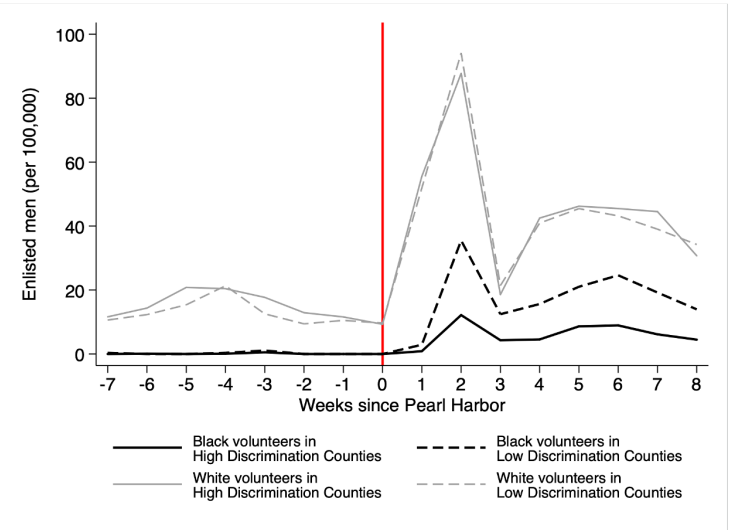
Notes: The figure shows the number of Black volunteers (per 100,000 eligible men) from high and low discrimination counties, in the 8 weeks pre- and post-attack on Pearl Harbor. Low (High) discrimination counties are those for which discrimination is below (above) the sample median. Week 0 is defined as the week ending on Sunday December 7, 1941, and Week 1 is defined as the week starting on Monday December 8, 1941.

Figure 3: Volunteer Enlistment – White, High and Low Discrimination



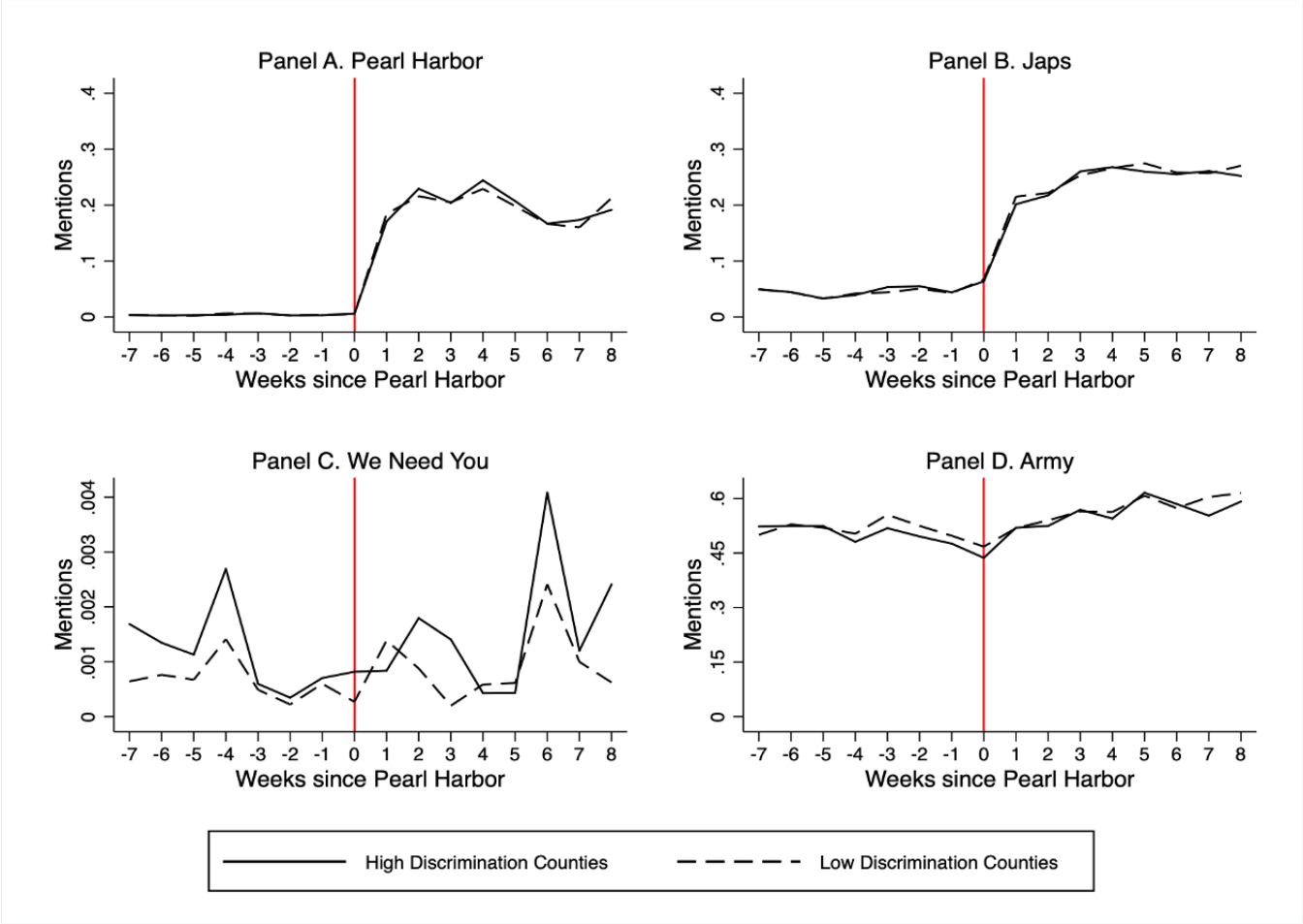
Notes: The figure shows the number of White volunteers (per 100,000 eligible men) from high and low discrimination counties, in the 8 weeks pre- and post-attack on Pearl Harbor. Low (High) discrimination counties are those for which the discrimination is below (above) the sample median. Week 0 is defined as the week ending on Sunday December 7, 1941, and Week 1 is defined as the week starting on Monday December 8, 1941.

Figure 4: Volunteer Enlistment – Black and White, High and Low Discrimination



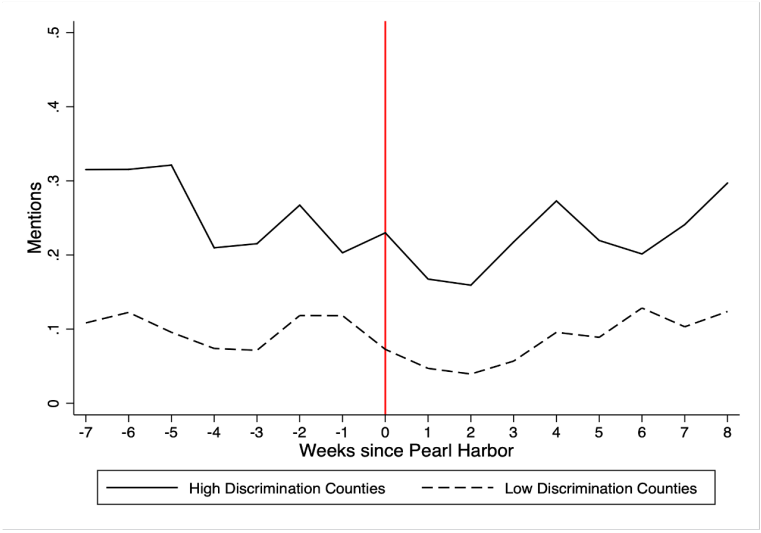
Notes: The figure shows the number of Black and White volunteers (per 100,000 eligible men) from high and low discrimination counties, in the 8 weeks pre- and post-attack on Pearl Harbor. Low (High) discrimination counties are those for which the discrimination is below (above) the sample median. Week 0 is defined as the week ending on Sunday December 7, 1941, and Week 1 is defined as the week starting on Monday December 8, 1941.

Figure 5: Share of News Coverage About the War in Local Newspapers



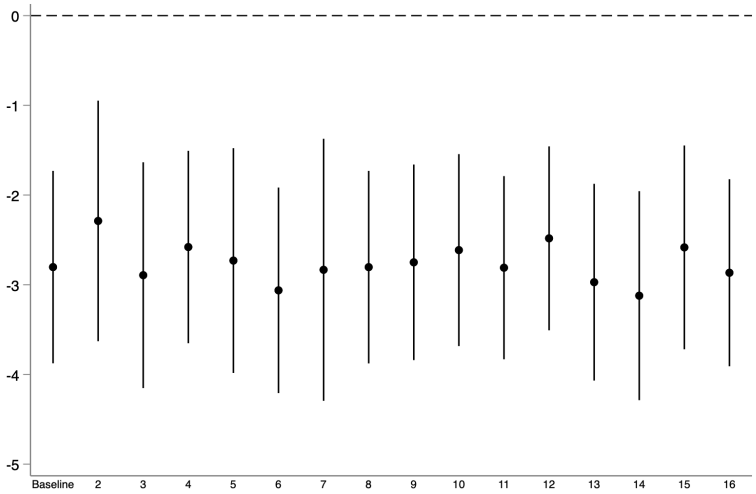
Notes: The figure shows the share of articles mentioning terms: "Pearl Harbor", "Japs", "We Need You", and "Army", respectively, in high (solid line) and low (dashed line) discrimination counties, in the 8 weeks pre- and post-attack on Pearl Harbor. Week 0 is defined as the week ending on Sunday December 7, 1941, and Week 1 is defined as the week starting on Monday December 8, 1941.

Figure 6: Racist Terms + "Negro"



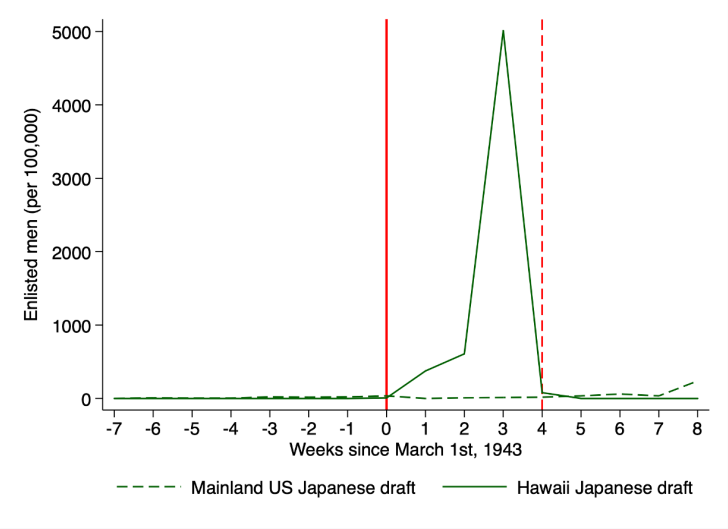
Notes: The figure shows the share of newspapers articles that simultaneously mention the word Negro and racially disparaging terms in high and low discrimination counties, in the 8 weeks pre- and post-attack on Pearl Harbor. Low (High) discrimination counties are those for which discrimination is below (above) the sample median. Week 0 is defined as the week ending on Sunday December 7, 1941, and Week 1 is defined as the week starting on Monday December 8, 1941.

Figure 7: Baseline Estimates – Controlling for County-Race-Specific Employment Shares in Each Industry



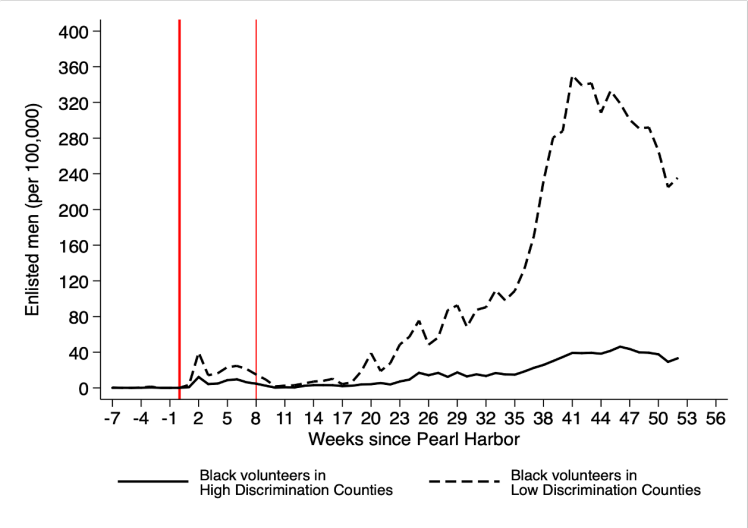
Notes: The y-axis is the triple interaction coefficients and the 95% confidence intervals of 16 regressions. Each point is one regression. From left to right on the x-axis, we present: (1) the baseline and regressions that control for employment share in each of the following categories – (2) agriculture, (3) retail, (4) wholesale, (5) trade, (6) manufacturing, (7) construction, (8) forestry or fishing, (9) mining, (10) service sector, (11) utilities sector, (12) finance or real estate, (13) professionals, (14) personal service, (15) entertainment service, (16) public administration.

Figure 8: Japanese Enlistment



Notes: The figure shows the number of mainland US Japanese and Hawaii Japanese enlistees (per 100,000 eligible men), in the 8 weeks before and after March 1, 1943.

Figure 9: Black Volunteer Enlistment until December 1942



Notes: The figure shows the number of Black volunteers (per 100,000 eligible men) in high and low discrimination counties, in the 8 weeks before, and 52 weeks after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Low (High) discrimination counties are those for which discrimination is below (above) the sample median. Week 0 is defined as the week ending on Sunday December 7, 1941, and Week 1 is defined as the week starting on Monday December 8, 1941.

Online Appendix Not for Publication

Testing for Pre-Trends Using Roth (2022)

As explained in Roth (2022), assuming the existence of a linear time pre-trend with a slope of δ, the test searches for the smallest absolute value of δ that results in at least one pre-trend coefficient being statistically significant at the $\lambda\%$ significance level. Roth (2022) considers three values of λ – ranging from 50% (less stringent) to 10% (more stringent). To implement the test, we replicate the baseline specification by replacing the Post-Pearl Harbor dummy with week dummies, omitting week -7. We report results in Table A.4. According to the test, even when considering the most stringent setting, the smallest value of the slope δ that would result in at least one pre-trend coefficient being statistically significant is 0.217. However, and importantly, except for the coefficient in week 1 (which is positive, albeit not statistically significant), all coefficients in the post-period have absolute values much greater than 0.217. This indicates that our results are not driven by pre-trends in volunteer enlistment (that varied by race and by the level of discrimination in a county).

Robustness to Controlling for the Presence of Black Newspapers

To test whether differential exposure to the news of Pearl Harbor can explain the results, one would examine the rhetoric of Black newspapers. Since the text of Black papers is not systematically available for this historical period, we conducted a different exercise. We collected the list of 178 Black newspapers that were active in 1941 based on the reported open and closure dates, and another 367 additional Black newspapers for which we could not verify the open-closure dates. For each paper, we geolocated the paper headquarter and created a dummy variable that equals one if a county had at least one Black newspaper headquartered there.

In Table A.7, we replicate our baseline specification by controlling for the interaction between the Black newspaper dummy, the Black dummy and week fixed effects. Column (1) re-states the baseline. Column (2) includes the dummy for newspapers presence for the set of 178 newspapers known to be active in 1941. Columns (3) and (4) replicate column (2) by including the 367 additional Black newspapers for which we could not verify the open-closure dates, and dropping the most prominent Black newspapers (because they have circulated beyond the headquarter county).[48] In columns (5) to (7), we experiment with different circulation areas by expanding the radii from the centroid of the headquarter county. In other words, we allow the newspaper dummy to take the value of one for counties near the headquarter. The results are very similar.

[48] We included in the list of "most prominent" newspapers the following 12 papers: *Atlanta Daily World*, *Baltimore Afro-American*, *Cleveland Call and Post*, *Chicago Defender*, *LA Sentinel*, *NY Amsterdam News*, *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, *Pittsburgh Courier*, *Philadelphia Tribune*, *Minnesota Spokesman-Recorder*, *Roanoke Tribune*, and *The Christian Recorder*. Results are not sensitive to the inclusion of additional newspapers.

Additional Tables and Figures

Table A.1: The Variables used to Construct the Baseline Discrimination Measure

Variable Name	Description	Source
Presidential vote share Democrat 1900-1930	Average vote share in presidential elections, for each election between 1900 and 1930.	Clubb et al. (1990)
Congress vote share Democrat 1900-1930	Average vote share in Congressional elections, for each election between 1900 and 1930.	Clubb et al. (1990)
Presence of KKK	Dummy = 1 if KKK is present any year between 1915 and 1940.	Kneebone and Torres (2015)
Number of lynching cases up to 1939	Total # of lynchings of Black individuals between 1803 and 1939.	Monroe Work Today (MWT)
Segregation index 1940	Likelihood of interracial interaction in residential communities.	Logan and Parman (2017)
White-Black educational level gap 1940	Difference in average educational level for white and Black American, 1940.	Author's computation from 1940 U.S. Census
White-Black log. occupational score gap 1940	Difference in average logarithm of occupational score for white and Black Americans in the labor force, 1940.	Author's computation from 1940 U.S. Census

Notes: The table presents the variables used to construct the discrimination principal component measure used in the main analysis. All variables are measured at the county level.

Table A.2: Volunteer Enlistment, by Race and Period

	Full Sample			Discrimination below median			Discrimination above median		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Obs.
# Volunteers per 100,000 eligible men									
Panel A: All									
Weeks: [-7, 8]	26.808	187.226	2,306	17.384	12.201	1,153	32.856	239.556	1,153
Weeks: [-7, 0]	6.836	6.037	2,216	7.266	6.282	1,143	6.543	5.849	1,073
Weeks: [1, 8]	39.663	182.352	2,306	27.557	20.758	1,153	47.383	232.487	1,153
Panel B: Blacks									
Weeks: [-7, 8]	4.399	23.992	2,306	3.213	6.500	1,153	10.101	55.711	1,153
Weeks: [-7, 0]	0.115	2.264	2,216	0.083	0.847	1,143	0.278	5.316	1,073
Weeks: [1, 8]	8.819	32.369	2,306	6.468	13.076	1,153	19.718	70.497	1,153
Panel C: White									
Weeks: [-7, 8]	30.159	16.790	2,306	30.014	19.357	1,153	30.235	15.269	1,153
Weeks: [-7, 0]	13.380	10.320	2,216	14.507	12.186	1,143	12.754	9.064	1,073
Weeks: [1, 8]	46.279	25.749	2,306	45.502	29.997	1,153	46.687	23.207	1,153

Notes: The table shows summary statistics for county-level (county-race-level) volunteer enlistment, both considering the full sample and splitting between above-median and below-median discrimination counties. Statistics are weighed by the population of eligible men in each subsample.

Table A.3: Individual Level Summary Statistics

	All Counties			High Discrimination			Low Discrimination		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
	Mean	Std. Dev	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev	Obs.
Panel A. Full Sample									
Volunteers	0.413	0.492	267,580	0.397	0.489	133,746	0.428	0.495	133,834
Draftees	0.587	0.492	267,580	0.603	0.489	133,746	0.572	0.495	133,834
Black	0.061	0.239	267,580	0.096	0.295	133,746	0.025	0.156	133,834
White	0.939	0.239	267,580	0.904	0.295	133,746	0.975	0.156	133,834
At least high school degree	0.522	0.500	267,580	0.502	0.500	133,746	0.541	0.498	133,834
Years of schooling	12.074	2.254	267,580	12.055	2.319	133,746	12.093	2.187	133,834
In agriculture	0.090	0.286	244,157	0.100	0.300	122,948	0.080	0.272	121,209
In manufacturing	0.215	0.411	244,157	0.189	0.391	122,948	0.243	0.429	121,209
In service and clerical occupations	0.324	0.468	244,157	0.359	0.480	122,948	0.290	0.454	121,209
At least some high school	0.786	0.410	267,580	0.775	0.417	133,746	0.797	0.403	133,834
In private grade	0.939	0.240	267,580	0.930	0.255	133,746	0.947	0.224	133,834
Age	23.623	3.097	267,475	23.666	3.129	133,693	23.579	3.065	133,782
Panel B. Black Men									
Volunteers	0.125	0.330	16,230	0.113	0.316	12,878	0.172	0.377	3,352
Draftees	0.875	0.330	16,230	0.887	0.316	12,878	0.828	0.377	3,352
At least high school degree	0.218	0.413	16,230	0.198	0.398	12,878	0.295	0.456	3,352
Years of schooling	10.613	1.986	16,230	10.493	1.968	12,878	11.074	1.987	3,352
In agriculture	0.161	0.368	12,353	0.194	0.396	9,682	0.041	0.199	2,671
In manufacturing	0.139	0.346	12,353	0.132	0.338	9,682	0.164	0.370	2,671
In service and clerical occupations	0.365	0.482	12,353	0.369	0.482	9,682	0.353	0.478	2,671
At least some high school	0.515	0.500	16,230	0.476	0.499	12,878	0.663	0.473	3,352
In private grade	0.989	0.106	16,230	0.987	0.111	12,878	0.993	0.083	3,352
Age	23.636	3.011	16,221	23.581	3.015	12,869	23.844	2.986	3,352
Panel C. White Men									
Volunteers	0.431	0.495	251,350	0.428	0.495	120,868	0.434	0.496	130,482
Draftees	0.569	0.495	251,350	0.572	0.495	120,868	0.566	0.496	130,482
At least high school degree	0.541	0.498	251,350	0.534	0.499	120,868	0.548	0.498	130,482
Years of schooling	12.169	2.238	251,350	12.222	2.292	120,868	12.119	2.186	130,482
In agriculture	0.086	0.281	231,804	0.092	0.289	113,266	0.081	0.273	118,538
In manufacturing	0.220	0.414	231,804	0.194	0.395	113,266	0.244	0.430	118,538
In service and clerical occupations	0.322	0.467	231,804	0.358	0.479	113,266	0.288	0.453	118,538
At least some high school	0.803	0.397	251,350	0.807	0.395	120,868	0.800	0.400	130,482
In private grade	0.935	0.246	251,350	0.924	0.265	120,868	0.946	0.226	130,482
Age	23.622	3.103	251,254	23.675	3.140	120,824	23.572	3.067	130,430

Notes: Observations are at the individual level. The sample includes men who were inducted during the eight weeks before and the eight weeks after Pearl Harbor. The data are reported in the Army induction cards. See the World War II Army Enlistment Records (NARA-AAD), 1938-1946.

Table A.4: The Effect of Discrimination on Black Volunteer Enlistment – Testing for Pre-Trends

	Dependent Variable: # Volunteers per 100,000 Eligible Men
	(1)
Discrimination x Black x Post	
Week -7	
Week -6	-2.623
	(0.691)
Week -5	-1.555
	(0.540)
Week -4	-0.294
	(0.732)
Week -3	0.0119
	(0.458)
Week -2	-1.252
	(0.532)
Week -1	-0.531
	(0.425)
Week 0	-0.073
	(0.430)
Week 1	1.735
	(1.342)
Week 2	-4.819
	(2.408)
Week 3	-1.630
	(0.486)
Week 4	-5.038
	(1.083)
Week 5	-3.699
	(0.976)
Week 6	-4.970
	(1.010)
Week 7	-6.357
	(1.129)
Week 8	-1.551
	(0.819)
Observations	71,992
R-squared	0.817
Pre-trends test power	
50	0.134
80	0.223
90	0.268

Notes: Observations are at the race, county and week level. The table shows the results of the test proposed in Roth (2022). All regressions include county-week fixed effects, race-week fixed effects, and county-race fixed effects. Regressions are weighed by the population of eligible men in each county, race and week. Standard errors, reported in parentheses, are clustered at the county level.

Table A.5: The Effect of Discrimination on Black Volunteer Enlistment – Individual Components

	Dependent Variable: # Volunteers per 100,000 Eligible Men							
	(1) Baseline	(2) Democratic vote share Presidential, 1900-1930	(3) Democratic vote share Congressional, 1900-1930	(4) KKK presence, 1915-1940	(5) Number of lynchings up to 1939	(6) Segregation index 1940	(7) Gap years of schooling (white - Black)	(8) Gap log. occscore (white - Black)
		Panel A. Discrimination is the variable in the column heading						
Discrimination x Black x Post	-2.803	-0.204	-0.177	-2.221	-0.389	-10.739	-2.975	-46.897
	(0.547)	(0.038)	(0.029)	(1.733)	(0.168)	(4.978)	(0.729)	(6.886)
	[-0.042]	[-0.085]	[-0.087]	[-0.012]	[-0.020]	[-0.047]	[-0.059]	[-0.102]
Observations	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992
Adjusted R-sq	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.578	0.578	0.578	0.578	0.579
Mean Y	30.224	30.224	30.224	30.224	30.224	30.224	30.224	30.224
Std. Dev. Y	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.525
		Panel B. Discrimination is the principal component of all variables except for the one in the column heading						
Discrimination x Black x Post	-2.803	-3.223	-3.042	-2.828	-3.685	-2.499	-2.951	-2.652
	(0.547)	(0.686)	(0.679)	(0.551)	(0.593)	(0.494)	(0.586)	(0.550)
	[-0.042]	[-0.044]	[-0.043]	[-0.042]	[-0.046]	[-0.036]	[-0.041]	[-0.038]
Observations	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992
Adjusted R-sq	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.579
Mean Y	30.383	30.383	30.383	30.383	30.383	30.383	30.383	30.383
Std. Dev. Y	38.147	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.525

Notes: Observations are at the race, county and week level. All regressions include county-week fixed effects, race-week fixed effects, and county-race fixed effects. Column (1) reports the baseline specification. Panel A reports the results after replacing the discrimination index with one of its components specified at the top of the column. Panel B reports the results after dropping, one by one, each component mentioned at the top of the column. All regressions include county-week fixed effects, race-week fixed effects, and county-race fixed effects. Regressions are weighed by the 1940 population of eligible men in each county and race. Standard errors are clustered at the county level. Standardized coefficients are reported in brackets.

Table A.6: The Effect of Discrimination on Black Volunteer Enlistment – Sensitivity to Alternative Discrimination Measures

	Dependent Variable: # Volunteers per 100,000 Eligible Men								
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
		Discrimination is the principal component of all of the variables in the baseline discrimination index + the variable in the heading							
	Baseline	Black/White Wage Gap	Enslaved population -1860	Employment share gap	Share in sugarcane	Share in cotton	Share in cotton and sugarcane	Mortality rate gap (white - black)	All additional variables
Discrimination x Black x Post	-2.803	-4.707	-2.056	-2.723	-2.810	-2.778	-2.756	-2.255	-1.915
	(0.547)	(0.965)	(0.600)	(0.527)	(0.550)	(0.498)	(0.497)	(0.573)	(0.574)
	[-0.042]	[-0.042]	[-0.034]	[-0.041]	[-0.042]	[-0.046]	[-0.045]	[-0.038]	[-0.040]
Observations	71,992	71,440	71,992	71,992	71,960	71,960	71,960	46,516	46,344
Adjusted R-sq	0.579	0.577	0.579	0.579	0.575	0.575	0.575	0.732	0.727
Mean Y	30.224	30.209	30.224	30.224	30.086	30.086	30.086	27.107	26.717
Std. Dev. Y	38.525	38.484	38.525	38.525	38.688	38.688	38.688	37.572	37.826

Notes: Observations are at the race, county and week level. All regressions include county-week fixed effects, race-week fixed effects, and county-race fixed effects. Column (1) reports the baseline specification. Column (2) onwards replace the baseline discrimination index with the principal component of all of the variables in the baseline discrimination index and the variable in the heading. All regressions include county-week fixed effects, race-week fixed effects, and county-race fixed effects. Regressions are weighed by the 1940 population of eligible men in each county and race. Standard errors are clustered at the county level. Standardized coefficients are reported in brackets.

Table A.7: The Effect of Discrimination on Black Volunteer Enlistment – Controlling for Black Newspapers

	Dependent Variable: # Volunteers per 100,000 Eligible Men						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
		Black Newspapers in county					
	Baseline	Main Definition	Expanded Definition	Dropping Prominent	Within 50km	Within 100km	Within 200m
Discrimination x Black x Post	-2.803	-2.829	-2.861	-2.810	-2.837	-2.895	-2.764
	(0.547)	(0.571)	(0.566)	(0.557)	(0.568)	(0.558)	(0.549)
Observations	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992
Adjusted R-sq	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.579
Mean Y	30.224	30.224	30.224	30.224	30.224	30.224	30.224
Std. Dev. Y	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.525

Notes: Observations are at the race, county and week level. Column (1) reports the baseline specification. Columns (2)-(7) replicate the baseline by further interacting week and race fixed effects with a dummy equal to one for having a Black newspaper in the county. In column (2), we consider only Black newspapers with headquarters in the county and for which it was possible to verify that the paper was active as of 1941. In column (3), we also include newspapers that might have been active in 1941. In column (4), we drop from the sample of column (2) the newspapers that we defined above (see main text) as "prominent" papers. In columns (5) to (7), we extend the dummy definition of column (2) to all counties within a 50km, 100km, and 200km radius from the county. All regressions include county-week fixed effects, race-week fixed effects, and county-race fixed effects. Regressions are weighed by the 1940 population of eligible men in each county and race. Standard errors are clustered at the county level.

Table A.8: The Effect of Discrimination on Black Volunteer Enlistment – Controlling for Industry Shares

	Dependent Variable: # Volunteers per 100,000 Eligible Men							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Control for Week FE x county-race share of employment in Column Heading							
Panel A.	Baseline	Agriculture	Retail	Wholesale	Trade	Manufacture	Construction	Forestry or Fishing
Discrimination x Black x Post	-2.803	-2.289	-2.893	-2.579	-2.73	-3.062	-2.833	-2.804
	(0.547)	(0.684)	(0.642)	(0.547)	(0.639)	(0.584)	(0.745)	(0.547)
Observations	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992
Adjusted R-sq	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.579
Mean Y	30.22	30.22	30.22	30.22	30.22	30.22	30.22	30.22
Std. Dev. Y	38.52	38.52	38.52	38.52	38.52	38.52	38.52	38.52
Panel B.	Mining	Service	Utilities	Finance/Real Estate	Professionals	Personal Service	Entertainment Service	Public Administration
Discrimination x Black x Post	-2.75	-2.614	-2.81	-2.483	-2.972	-3.122	-2.583	-2.866
	(0.556)	(0.546)	(0.521)	(0.523)	(0.559)	(0.594)	(0.579)	(0.532)
Observations	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992
Adjusted R-sq	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.579	0.580	0.579	0.579
Mean Y	30.22	30.22	30.22	30.22	30.22	30.22	30.22	30.22
Std. Dev. Y	38.52	38.52	38.52	38.52	38.52	38.52	38.52	38.52

Notes: Observations are at the race, county and week level. Column (1) reports the baseline specification. From column (2) onwards, we replicate the baseline specification controlling for each county-race control reported at the top of the column, interacted with week fixed effects. All regressions include county-week fixed effects, race-week fixed effects, and county-race fixed effects. Regressions are weighed by the 1940 population of eligible men in each county and race. Standard errors are clustered at the county level.

Table A.9: The Effect of Discrimination on Black Volunteer Enlistment – Sensitivity to Alternative Standard Errors

	Dependent Variable: # Volunteers per 100,000 Eligible Men							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Baseline	Conley adjustment spatial cutoff: 100km	Conley adjustment spatial cutoff: 200km	Conley adjustment spatial cutoff: 300km	Cluster at the commuting zone level	HAC - 2 lags	HAC - 7 lags	HAC - 14 lags
Discrimination x Black x Post	-2.803	-2.803	-2.803	-2.803	-2.803	-2.803	-2.803	-2.811
	(0.547)	(0.532)	(0.589)	(0.661)	(0.382)	(0.416)	(0.469)	(0.462)
Observations	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992
Mean Y	30.224	30.224	30.224	30.224	30.224	30.224	30.224	30.224
Std. Dev. Y	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.525	38.525

Notes: Observations are at the race, county and week level. Column (1) reports the baseline specification. Robustness exercises are noted at the top of each column. All regressions include county-week fixed effects, race-week fixed effects, and county-race fixed effects. Regressions are weighed by the 1940 population of eligible men in each county and race. Standard errors are clustered at the county level.

Table A.10: The Effect of Discrimination on Black Volunteer Enlistment – Controlling for Agriculture

	Dependent Variable: # Volunteers per 100,000 Eligible Men						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
		Week FE x Black x Controls (see below)					
	Baseline	Farm size	Value of land in farm	Share of farms with mules or horses	# of horses or mules per farm	Share of farms with tractors	# of tractors per farm
Discrimination x Black x Post	-2.803	-2.850	-2.768	-2.979	-2.849	-3.179	-3.160
	(0.547)	(0.550)	(0.633)	(0.642)	(0.549)	(0.763)	(0.749)
Observations	71,992	71,960	71,960	71,960	71,960	71,960	71,960
Adjusted R-sq	0.579	0.575	0.575	0.575	0.575	0.575	0.575
Mean Y	30.224	30.086	30.086	30.086	30.086	30.086	30.086
Std. Dev. Y	38.525	38.688	38.688	38.688	38.688	38.688	38.688

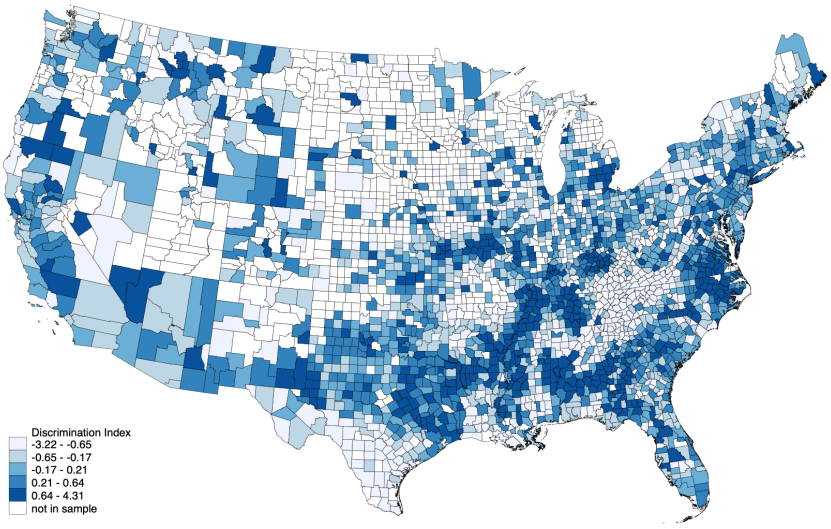
Notes: Observations are at the race, county and week level. Column (1) reports the baseline specification. From column (2) to column (4), we replicate the baseline specification controlling for each county-race control reported at the top of the column, interacted with week fixed effects. From column (5) onwards, we replicate the baseline specification controlling for each county control reported at the top of the column. All regressions include county-week fixed effects, race-week fixed effects, and county-race fixed effects. Regressions are weighed by the 1940 population of eligible men in each county and race. Standard errors are clustered at the county level.

Table A.11: The Effect of Discrimination on Black Volunteer Enlistment – Alternative Specifications

	Dependent Variable: # Volunteers per 100,000 Eligible Men			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Baseline	Discrimination dummy	Log	IHS
Discrimination x Black x Post	-2.803	-10.966	-0.680	-0.270
	(0.547)	(1.888)	(0.188)	(0.077)
	[-0.042]	[-0.063]	[-0.114]	[-0.083]
Observations	71,992	71,992	71,992	71,992
Adjusted R-sq	0.579	0.816	0.869	0.882
Mean Y	30.224	30.224	1.465	3.073
Std. Dev. Y	38.525	38.525	3.444	1.872

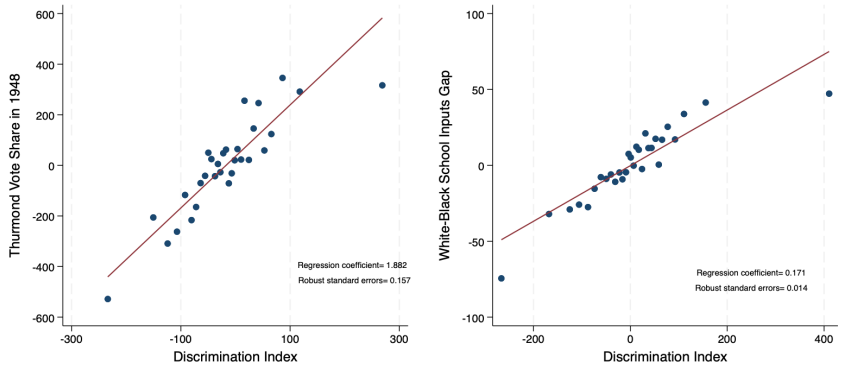
Notes: Observations are at the race, county and week level. Column (1) reports the baseline specification. In column (2), we replace the discrimination continuous variable with a dummy equal to one if the discrimination in the county is above the median. In column (3), we take the log of 0.01+ the volunteer rate. In column (4), we use the IHS transformation. All regressions include county-week fixed effects, race-week fixed effects, and county-race fixed effects. Regressions are weighed by the 1940 population of eligible men in each county and race. Standard errors are clustered at the county level. Standardized coefficients are reported in brackets.

Figure A.1: Discrimination (within State Variation)



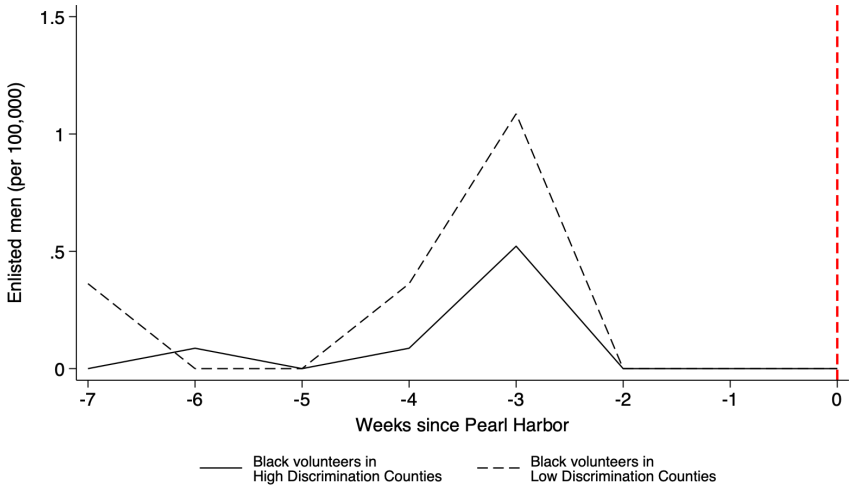
Notes: The figure plots the county-level discrimination index after demeaning state fixed effects.

Figure A.2: Validating Discrimination



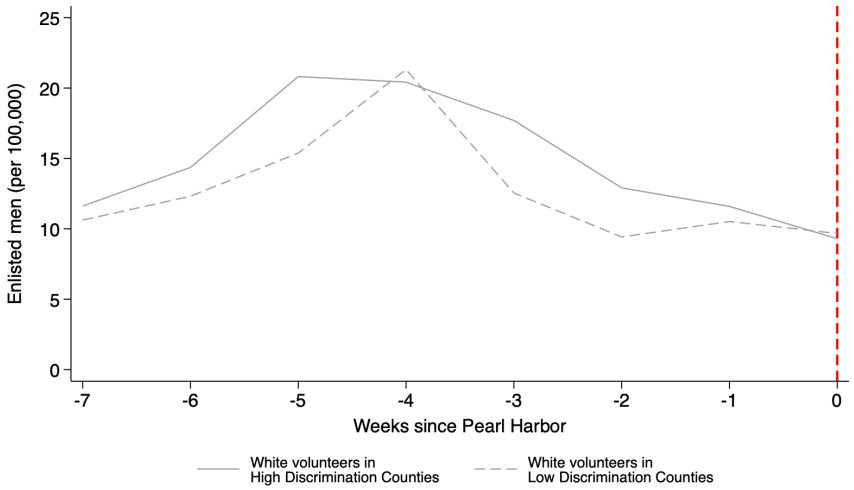
Notes: The figure reports the binned scatterplot (using 30 bins) of the relationship between the discrimination variable and Thurmond's vote share in the 1948 elections (left panel), and White-Black school-inputs gap (right panel). Variables on the x and y-axes represent residual changes, after demeaning state fixed effects. Regressions are weighed by the size of the male population eligible to enlist in each county and estimate robust Huber-White standard errors.

Figure A.3: Black Volunteer Rates before Pearl Harbor



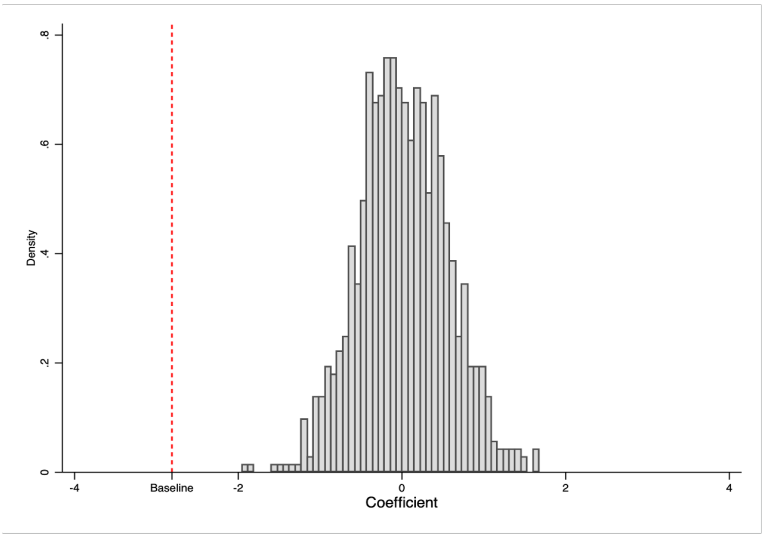
Notes: The figure shows the number of Black volunteers (per 100,000 eligible men) from high and low discrimination counties in the 8 weeks before the attack on Pearl Harbor. Low (High) discrimination counties are those for which discrimination is below (above) the sample median. Week 0 is defined as the week ending on Sunday December 7, 1941.

Figure A.4: White Volunteer Rates before Pearl Harbor



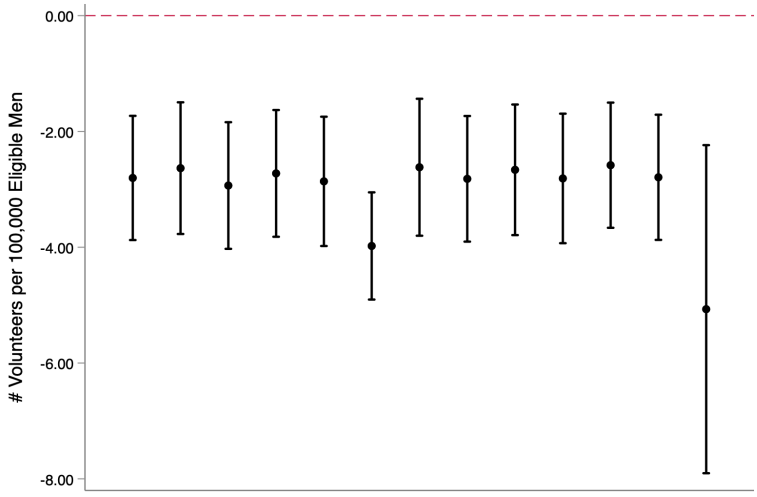
Notes: The figure shows the number of White volunteers (per 100,000 eligible men) from high and low discrimination counties in the 8 weeks before the attack on Pearl Harbor. Low (High) discrimination counties are those for which discrimination is below (above) the sample median. Week 0 is defined as the week ending on Sunday December 7, 1941.

Figure A.5: Randomization Inference



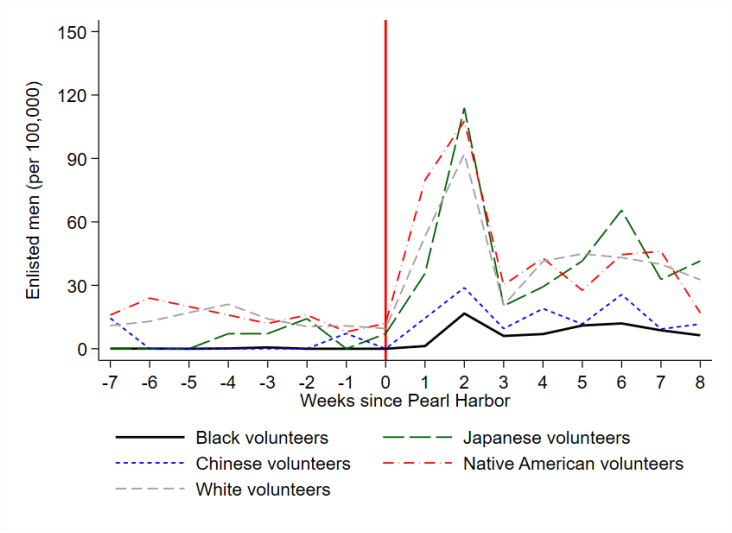
Notes: The figure shows the density plot of the coefficients obtained from randomly assigning the discrimination measure across counties, and re-estimating the baseline specification. This was repeated for 1,000 iterations. The red dashed line shows the value of the coefficient in the baseline specification using actual data.

Figure A.6: Baseline Estimates - Dropping Southern States



Notes: In this figure, the first point represents baseline, and points from the second to the twelfth represent the coefficients with the removal of AL, AR, FL, GA, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, TX, VA, respectively. The last point plots the result of removing all southern states.

Figure A.7: All Races



Notes: The figure shows the number of Black, Chinese, White, Japanese, and Native American volunteers (per 100,000 eligible men) in the 8 weeks before and after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Week 0 is defined as the week ending on Sunday December 7, 1941, and Week 1 is defined as the week starting on Monday December 8, 1941.