

Development and validation of the Abolitionist Ideology Scale with abolitionist-identifying and nationally representative samples

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Abstract

Building upon recent calls for the integration of abolition into psychology, we develop and validate a measure of Abolitionist Ideology. In two studies with abolitionist leaning ($N = 201$, abolitionist-identifying $n = 58$) and nationally representative ($N = 350$) samples, we identify and confirm a three-factor, 26-item measure including subscales of Alternatives to State Violence, Revolutionary Abolitionism, and Abolitionist Identity. The Abolitionist Ideology Scale demonstrates convergent validity with measures including support for Black Lives Matter, critical consciousness, openness to experience, radical imagination, and attribution of violence to the state. The scale demonstrates divergent validity from measures including social dominance orientation (SDO) and political conservatism. Finally, the scale predicted activism tenacity above and beyond a related measure of carceral system justification. The Abolitionist Ideology Scale demonstrates initial reliability and validity and will be useful for those aiming to engage abolition in liberatory theory, research, and practice.

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KEYWORDS

activism, carcerality, police, political psychology, race

Public Significance Statement

Carceral systems (e.g., policing and prisons) reinforce oppressive and violent social dynamics. Despite the acknowledgment of this oppressive nature and resultant calls for the abolition of carceral systems (i.e., divestment from policing and prisons), psychology to date has scarcely engaged with abolition. We develop and validate a measure of abolitionist beliefs that can be utilized in research examining public perceptions of carceral systems and striving to create change in these oppressive systems.

No justice, no peace, no racist ass police

1234 open up the prison doors, 5678 we don't want a prison state

INTRODUCTION

The streets in the United States in the last decade and particularly since 2020 have increasingly echoed these and other anti-police and anti-prison chants from people seeking liberation and justice, especially during Black Lives Matter and pro-Palestine protests. These chants scream the desire to abolish the police and invest in communities to secure people's liberation. Amplifying this community-originated struggle, calls in the social sciences encourage researchers to engage in abolition, specifically the movement of abolishing policing and prisons in favor of community self-governance, in efforts toward social justice (e.g., Alexander et al., 2023; DaViera et al., 2023; Davies et al., 2021; Gampa & Sawyer, 2023; Klukoff et al., 2021; Najdowski & Goff, 2022).

Despite these calls, little empirical psychological work has integrated abolition into theory or practice (see Gampa & Sawyer, 2023). We argue this is, in part, due to lacking instantiation of the construct in the empirical literature. No measures to date assess abolitionist ideologies or beliefs, rendering the construct inaccessible to many forms of research inquiry. Following in the steps of critical theorists, we argue that measuring critical constructs is one step in recognizing and validating these constructs and instantiating knowledge about them into psychological science (e.g., D'Ignazio & Klein, 2023; Guyan, 2022; Seager, 2016). Similarly, Frieze and McHugh (1998) argue measurement scales act as "archival records" (p. 349) of values and attitudes; in the current work, we seek to instantiate contemporary US-based abolitionist movements in these archives.

Policing

Central to our understanding of abolition is people's attitudes and behaviors regarding carceral systems (i.e., systems relating to policing and prisons). On this front, psychological research has

mostly investigated questions related to police and law enforcement (and less so related to prisons) from various perspectives. One line of work, for example, unveils several predictors of willingness to seek help from or cooperate with the police, including beliefs about the legitimacy of police or law enforcement and perceptions of procedural justice (e.g., Bolger & Walters, 2019; McLean et al., 2024; Walters & Bolger, 2019).

Another body of research approaches policing through a critical historical lens, contextualizing police brutality as an exemplar of a colonial logic of control and domination (e.g., Nadal et al., 2017 & Pillay, 2022). This literature demonstrates the broad negative health outcomes Black people, especially those holding multiple oppressed identities, experience as a result of police brutality (e.g., anxiety, hypertension, and stress; Alang et al., 2022 & Hoggard & Lutchman, 2024). This body of work acknowledges policing as a public health issue reinforcing minority health disparities via systemic oppression and violence against marginalized group members (see Alang et al., 2022 & Hoggard & Lutchman, 2024) and as an issue dating back to the US history of enslaving people of African descent and colonizing Indigenous peoples. Yet, this literature proposed what are often referred to in abolitionist contexts as “reformist reforms,” which entrench or increase the reach of carceral systems as opposed to non-reformist (abolitionist) reforms (see Abolitionist Futures, 2020). For example, this literature tends toward recommendations to reform policing, such as making changes to police training and increasing transparency and accountability in policing practice (e.g., McLean et al., 2024 & Walters & Bolger, 2019).

Reflecting this reformist approach, social psychological interventions aiming to confront racism in policing have failed to challenge the broader system of policing itself (Gampa & Sawyer, 2023). Interventions backed by psychologists include reformist reforms such as the use of implicit bias reduction training, the required use of surveillance technologies such as body cameras, and the diversification of police forces (e.g., Giles et al., 2024 & Worden et al., 2020). For instance, the Center for Policing Equity, a prominent organization using psychological research to address policing issues, recognizes the biased nature of policing but aims to develop data-driven interventions to “make policing less racist, less deadly, and less omnipresent” (Center for Police Equity, n.d.), belying the underlying assumption that police and policing can be reformed to become less harmful and racist.

Such reforms, however, have proved ineffective in changing police behavior and reducing racialized police violence (e.g., Lum et al., 2019; Peyton et al., 2019; Worden et al., 2020). As noted by Gampa and Sawyer, 2023, the (in)effectiveness of these reformist reforms is secondary to the fact that these interventions fail to challenge the colonial roots, or the inherently racist purpose, of policing. In sum, rather than directly pushing for the abolition of the police, psychologists have invested in the assumed intractable nature of policing, and in doing so, have contributed to the legitimization of these systems of state violence (Gampa & Sawyer, 2023). That is, by seeking only to improve policing, these efforts signal a belief that the presence of police is inherently necessary or good, even when police continue to cause harm to oppressed people via direct brutality or indirectly via historical legacies of colonial domination.

Abolition

In contrast to reformist responses to police brutality, abolition at its core requires non-reformist responses centering around a full eradication of state violence, including but not limited to the institutions of policing and prisons. Abolition is both a theoretical framework and a political strategy to analyze and resist all interconnected forms of oppression (Kaba, 2021). Abolition

acknowledges that policing and prisons act as major systems of institutionalized racism in the United States. The roots of policing in the United States date back to settler militias and slave patrols that actively oppressed, exploited, and controlled Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC; Acheson, 2022). Because policing was created as a military wing to protect state interests, it is fundamentally designed and encouraged to violently suppress marginalized people's resistance (Kaba, 2021). On this basis, abolitionists argue policing cannot be reformed and must instead be abolished.

Historical roots of abolition

This commitment to police and prison abolition in the United States can be traced back to significant movements in the second half of the 20th century that are connected with struggles against colonialism globally (e.g., Felber, 2020; Kaba et al., 2022; Kaepernick et al., 2021). Demands to end police killings of Black people and divest from police broadly resonated in the 1951 Civil Rights Congress' petition to the United Nations *We Charge Genocide* and the Black Panther Party's 1962 ten-point platform for Black Liberation. Informed by anti-apartheid struggles and global calls for divestment from oppressive regimes, the North Carolina Prisoners' Labor Union demanded an end to the judicial-prison-parole industrial complex in 1974. This occurred within the prison rebellion years that were filled with mass uprisings against police and state violence, domestically and against other countries (e.g., Vietnam War), followed by the incarceration and murder of Black and Brown resisters. Despite such movements, the prison industrial complex grew exponentially, usually at the expense of funding for education. As a result, abolitionist scholar Ruth Wilson Gilmore cofounded the Critical Resistance to organize against imprisonment and policing. Critical Resistance has since become a national network and played a crucial role in educating and shaping local and national projects for abolition (e.g., the No New Jails coalition in Los Angeles). Notably, Project NIA (nia meaning "with purpose" in Swahili) was founded in Chicago to abolish youth incarceration through transformative action. Indeed, Black feminist-oriented organizations like Project NIA and INCITE! led the abolitionist movements using the guiding principle of uprooting violence at its roots.

While important progress was achieved such as the stopping of \$64 million being spent on youth jails through New York City's Prison Moratorium Project, police powers continue to increase (Kaba et al., 2022). In this background, the Movement for Black Lives grassroots organization, founded in the wake of the Ferguson Uprising, made divestment from police and prisons (and investment in Black communities) a central demand of their platform. This divest/invest framework served as a core principle for the BREATHE Act legislation in 2020, which translated into laws to eliminate law enforcement's funding on various levels. 2020 was thus the first time that the calls for defunding the police had entered the mainstream, the national conversation, and resulted in major policy changes (e.g., \$850 million cut from police departments, ending 25 contracts between public schools and police departments).

Abolitionist actors and goals

Critically, throughout history, police abolition demands have been advanced by many communities targeted by state violence such as queer, trans, disabled, and migrant people, and have been leveraged to call for the dismantling of other state institutions such as Immigration and

Customs Enforcement (ICE; Felber, 2020). However, many of the abolition efforts were led by and centered on Black and Brown people. Further, abolitionist politics in the United States were largely shaped by Black feminist radicals such as Mariamme Kaba and Angela Davis. In other words, the abolitionist project is rooted in transformative justice movements led by BIPOC survivors who strive to end all forms of violence, interpersonal and state, and radically transform communities (Kaba, 2021).

As shown through the movement's history, abolition is as much about dismantling violent systems as it is about creating a new world of collective care and safety (e.g., Acheson, 2022 & Kaba, 2021). Abolition is a positive project toward a restructured society where "it is possible to address harm without relying on structural forms or violent systems that increase it" and argues "we have everything we need: food, shelter, education, health, art, beauty, clean water, and more things that are foundational to our personal and community safety." (Kaba, 2021). Abolition is an open, community-led project, in that it does not have a predetermined roadmap and should be adapted to factors of place and time to meet the needs of the people on the ground (e.g., Kaba, 2021 & Ritchie, 2023). Critics of abolition often target this grassroots, flexible nature as a shortcoming, and others who support abolitionist goals may at times still cling to certain aspects of the carceral system (e.g., transformative justice; see Gruber, 2020). Yet, abolition fully rejects reformist reforms that attempt to enact change within existing systems rather than divesting from existing systems (see Bell, 2021 & Ben-Moshe, 2013), because these existing systems are not only ineffective but dangerous, irresponsible, and do not reflect the needs of criminalized communities (#8toabolition, n.d.).

Abolition is an answer to the ample evidence showing the racist, oppressive, and ineffective nature of the current carceral systems (e.g., Acheson, 2022; Kaba, 2021). Psychological research, for the most part, has failed to engage this response, instead naturalizing neoliberal assumptions about law enforcement and prisons as necessary sectors of society (Gampa & Sawyer, 2023). However, psychology must embrace abolition as a central praxis to become as emancipatory as it claims to be (see Gampa & Sawyer, 2023). To that end, we hope to contribute one of the foundational building blocks of an emancipatory psychological science by developing a scale to capture people's abolitionist ideologies and thereby instantiate abolition as a construct in psychological literature.

Measuring abolitionist versus carceral ideologies

Abolitionist ideologies could be captured and measured from myriad perspectives. Since abolition is a grassroots movement, perspectives on abolition are as diverse as their supporters (e.g., Gampa & Sawyer, 2023 & Sudbury, 2009). Relevant to the goals of the current manuscript, Brock-Petroshius, and Keum developed the Carceral Justification Scale (CJS) to better understand carceral logics, or "beliefs people hold about the purpose and effects of carceral institutions" (p. 3) that individuals use to justify carceral institutions. Items in this scale focus on the prison and jail context and assess the extent to which individuals believe that the carceral system is both necessary and effective. Brock-Petroshius and Keum (2024) found that psychological characteristics including racial resentment (a measure of symbolic anti-Black racism), system justification, and conservative political ideology predicted heightened justification of existing carceral systems.

In contrast to the CJS, which captures "the expression of dominant logics to support the status quo maintenance of carceral institutions" (p. 17), we aim to center marginalized perspectives and logics in measure development, specifically abolitionist logics as advanced by Black abolitionist activists. This centering of marginalized logic is in line with both the Black-led nature of

contemporary and historical abolitionist movements and Gampa and Sawyer's (2023) call for psychology to engage abolition through a social psychology in which "the oppressed are seen as the principle agents of change whose experiences and analyses become primary drivers of social psychological research" (p. 2).

Furthermore, the CJS, while hinting at abolitionist-leaning ideas in the inverse, does not capture abolitionist ideologies. First, not seeing the carceral system as working as effective and/or necessary does not equate with support for abolition, many critics of carceral systems are nonetheless invested in maintaining these broader systems while reforming certain components (e.g., Bell, 2021 & Ben-Moshe, 2013). Second, our endeavor to develop a measure of abolitionist ideology extends beyond understanding attitudes against carceral institutions to also consider substitutes for the current oppressive system—care and community-building that is central to abolitionist imaginings (Davis et al., 2022 & Ritchie, 2023). Ultimately, abolition aims to build a society where people have everything for their personal and community safety, and recognizing and divesting from the violent systems is only the first step (Kaba, 2021); our measure aims to capture both this turn away from current carceral systems and the abolitionist turn toward community-based governance. Finally, we aim to capture both endorsement of abolitionist ideologies at an individual level (such as one's self-identity as an abolitionist) and engagement with abolition as a social movement—that is, abolitionist tendencies toward activism, community, and care. Our measure thus provides the capacity to broaden understandings of resistance to and divestment from status quo carceral systems—a necessary step toward emancipatory psychology (e.g., Alexander et al., 2023; DaViera et al., 2023; Davies et al., 2021; Gampa & Sawyer, 2023; Klukoff et al., 2021; Najdowski & Goff, 2022).

Situating the Abolitionist Ideology Scale

As the call to abolish policing and prisons is rooted in the collective desire to promote safety and liberation for various marginalized groups such as Black folx, queer folx, and low-SES folx, and especially BIPOC folx who are subject to multiple axes of oppression (e.g., Kaba, 2021 & Ritchie, 2023), we examined the relationship between our Abolitionist Ideology scale and support for Black Lives Matter and critical consciousness for convergent validity. As the support for Black Lives Matter measure captures not only awareness and action toward anti-Black structures but also an intersectional focus that centers Black folx with multiple marginalized identities (e.g., Black queer folx, Black women; Yoo et al., 2021), we hypothesized a positive relation between abolitionist ideology and support for Black Lives Matter. Similarly, because critical consciousness taps into critical awareness and action regarding various axes of power that underlie the carceral systems (Diemer et al., 2017), we hypothesized a positive correlation between abolitionist ideology and critical consciousness.

As for divergent validity, we examined the relationship of the Abolitionist Ideology scale to measures capturing system-legitimizing beliefs such as social dominance orientation (SDO), system-justification belief, and political conservatism. These system-legitimizing constructs robustly predict various sociopolitical attitudes and intergroup processes that maintain existing hierarchies of power (e.g., Pratto et al., 1994 & Yeung et al., 2014). As abolition opposes the current carceral systems that uphold the power hierarchies allowing high-status people to dominate low-status people (e.g., Kaba, 2021 & Acheson, 2022), we hypothesized that abolitionist ideology would be negatively correlated with SDO, system-justification belief, and self-reported political conservatism.

Current study

Despite increasing calls for integrating abolition into research and practice (e.g., Gampa & Sawyer, 2023), psychological research that addresses the violence enacted by the police, the prison-industrial complex, and the state broadly, has rarely taken an abolitionist perspective. To address this gap and take a first step toward understanding people's abolitionist ideologies (or lack thereof), we created a new measure to capture abolitionist ideologies, going beyond carceral justification beliefs (Brock-Petrossius & Keum, 2024). We developed and validated the Abolitionist Ideology scale in two samples: an abolitionist-leaning sample (Study 1) and a nationally representative sample (Study 2). Across two studies, we examined the relationship of our measure of interest with critical constructs to demonstrate construct validity, convergent validity, divergent validity, and discriminant validity. Data for both studies are openly available (https://osf.io/6fxgd/?view_only=1715444f30e747a1bf346734f6851a97).

Author positionality

We note that we are writing from the perspective of academic social psychologists with programs of research rooted in feminist and critical perspectives. We acknowledge that the abolitionist framework was largely constructed by Black and Indigenous feminist theorists and activists and created with the experiences of Black folx at the center, and believe it important to note that none of the authors are racialized as Black in the United States. We honor the work of all abolitionists who come before us and those who organize on the grounds now, especially those racialized as BIPOC; we are honored to follow in their footsteps. We commit ourselves to taking concrete material and intellectual forms of reparations to the communities that have been directly impacted by policing, the prison-industrial complex, and state violence broadly.

First author

I identify as a queer noncitizen white woman living in the United States, and as a feminist academic and activist. I have experienced both the privilege of sharing space with incarcerated and formerly incarcerated activists and theorists and the violence of surveillance and carceral control in my own life and community—though these experiences were necessarily molded by my racial and other privileges. My commitment to an abolitionist theory and practice of psychology is informed by recognition of historical and ongoing oppression and violence directed from the state and carceral institutions toward marginalized bodies, and recognition that carceral ideologies and their racial-colonial underpinnings permeate contemporary psychological sciences.

Second author

I identify as a Vietnamese cisgender gay man, a nonimmigrant noncitizen, and racialized as Asian in the United States. As a scholar-activist, I have had the privilege to resist and organize with autonomous groups on the ground to abolish systems of violence, and have come to embrace abolitionist, decolonial, and intersectional frameworks in my research and advocacy. My commitment to abolitionism is rooted in the critical recognition that mass incarceration is a global racialized

issue—a tactic the imperialist states employ to oppress marginalized people inside and outside its “borders”: from the American “tiger cages” for Vietnamese political prisoners as a colonial weapon, to the United States over-policing and over-imprisonment of Black and Brown people, to Israeli indiscriminate criminalization and imprisonment of Palestinian people as part of its settler-colonial project.

Third author

I identify as a queer White cis-woman who is a US citizen. My privileged identities have afforded me protection from the carceral system. I have previously conducted research aiming to reform policing in India via training to mitigate police officers’ stereotypes of survivors of gender-based violence. While my formal education never intersected with abolitionist frameworks, my engagement with my students and colleagues has resulted in frequent informal education and engagement with abolitionist frameworks. I recognize the racialized nature of the US police and prison systems and endorse and act in alignment with efforts of abolition; the racialized nature of these systems is often mirrored in celebrated social psychological teachings and theories, undermining efforts to achieve a truly inclusive psychology.

STUDY 1

In Study 1, we generated items to create a measure assessing abolitionist ideologies and analyzed the factor structure to inform item retention. We also collected data on several related measures to examine construct convergent and divergent validity. All study procedures were approved by an institutional review board before data collection.

Method

Participants

Participants were recruited via Prolific and paid ~\$10/h for their participation. On average, participants completed the study in 11.8 min. Our sample included 201 participants, meeting recommendations for an adequate sample size for exploratory factor analysis (EFA; see Sakaluk & Short, 2017).

We used pre-existing Prolific screeners to recruit liberal, Democratic, and politically engaged participants to target abolitionist-identifying individuals. As such, participants’ political orientation skewed liberal ($M = 1.77$, $SD = .825$) on a scale from 1 (*extremely liberal*) to 7 (*extremely conservative*). The average age of participants was 43.09 years ($SD = 14.36$). Most participants were women (55.2%), followed by men (39.8%), and nonbinary/agender/genderqueer individuals (5.0%). A majority of participants were White (66.7%), followed by Black (19.4%), Asian (10.0%), Latinx (5.5%), Native American (2.0%) and multiethnic (3.5%). Most participants were heterosexual (61.2%), followed by bisexual (20.4%), gay (5.0%), queer (4.0%), lesbian (3.0%), asexual (2.0%), pansexual (1.5%), and 3.0% of the sample preferred not to answer. About two-thirds of the sample (61.2%) had been a victim of some type of crime, while 11.4% had been convicted of some type of

crime; the majority of previously convicted participants (9.45% of the total sample) had also been a victim of a crime. Fifty-eight participants (28.9%) explicitly identified as prison abolitionists.

Procedure

The study was advertised as examining police perceptions and political attitudes. Measures following the *Abolitionist Ideology Scale* and *Measure Feedback* were presented in randomized order.

Measures

Abolitionist Ideology Scale

We generated an initial pool of 22 items representing the main principles and goals of abolition. To do so, we examined multiple resources including websites such as 8toabolition.com and abolitionistfutures.com, and books such as *Abolition. Feminism. Now.* (Davis et al., 2022) and *Practicing New Worlds: Abolition and Emergent Strategy* (Ritchie, 2023). We sought to extract the main principles of abolition that could in turn be used as scale items. The first and second authors discussed and revised the items based on our understandings of and engagement with abolition politics (see *Author Positionality*). We did not write items to fit particular factors. We did intentionally include items that specifically reflected a carceral mindset and value placed on punitive approaches, which were reverse-scored. Participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with each scale item on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Table S1 provides all initial items and factor loadings.

Abolitionist self-identification

Participants responded to a single, multiple-choice item, “Do you personally support police abolition and/or identify as an abolitionist?” Those who responded “No” or “Unsure” to this question did not provide feedback on the measure and proceeded to the remaining outcome measures. Those who answered “Yes” were directed to give feedback on the measure, such that we were able to receive feedback on the scale items from individuals engaged with abolitionist politics. These participants first responded to two open-ended items, “The prior questions were intended to assess your perspective on abolition. Is there anything about your abolitionist identity that you feel like these questions failed to capture?” and “The prior questions were intended to assess your perspective on abolition. What would you change about this set of questions if you could?” Next, participants were able to view the full measure again and were given the opportunity to comment on each item with the instruction, “Please feel free to comment on any of the following items with specific changes you feel would improve this measure of abolitionist identity. Please note that some items will be reverse scored (i.e., they capture more carceral belief systems) and you may explicitly disagree with them.”

Social dominance orientation

The SDO₇ Scale (Ho et al., 2015) includes eight items assessing the extent to which one endorses a preference for systems of dominance in which high-status groups oppress lower-status groups (e.g., “Some groups of people are simply inferior to other people”). Participants responded to each item on a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly opposed*) to 7 (*strongly favored*), with higher scores representing a greater endorsement of group-based dominance ($\omega = .886$).

System justification

The System Justification Scale (Kay & Jost, 2003) includes eight items measuring perceptions of the fairness, legitimacy, and justifiability of current social systems (e.g., In general, I find society to be fair). Participants responded to each item on a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*), with higher scores representing greater support for existing systems ($\omega = .845$).

Support for BLM

The Support for Black Lives Matter Scale (Yoo et al., 2021) includes 18 items representing support for BLM, with subscales representing Black liberation values (e.g., Black Lives Matter advocates for dignity, justice, and respect for Black individuals) and intersectional values (e.g., Black Lives Matter is committed to protecting Black women from sexism). Participants responded to each item on a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly oppose*) to 5 (*strongly favor*), with higher scores representing greater support for BLM ($\omega_{\text{Black liberation}} = .926$; $\omega_{\text{intersectional}} = .885$).

Critical consciousness

The Critical Consciousness Scale (Diemer et al., 2017) includes 22 items assessing one's critical analysis of social and political conditions of inequity and actions to change perceived inequities. The scale includes three subscales representing critical consciousness: perceived inequality (e.g., Women have fewer chances to get good jobs"), critical action (e.g., How often have you participated in a civil rights group or organization"), and critical reflection: egalitarianism (e.g., "It would be good if all groups could be equal). Participants responded to each item in the critical reflections subscales ($\omega_{\text{inequality}} = .904$; $\omega_{\text{egalitarianism}} = .812$) on a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*), while response options for the critical action subscale ($\omega = .884$) ranged from 1 (*never did this*) to 5 (*at least once a week*).

Crime-related experiences

Participants responded to one item regarding prior crime victimization (Have you ever been a victim of any type of crime?) and crime perpetration (Have you ever been convicted of any type of crime?), and both responded as yes or no.

Analysis

All analyses were conducted using SPSS version 29.0. There were no missing values in the dataset. We used EFA to examine the factor structure of the initial Abolitionist Ideology Scale. Once a factor structure was established, we used correlational analyses to examine convergent and divergent validity. We expected our measure to be positively related to support for BLM, critical consciousness, and self-reported abolitionist identity. We expected to see negative correlations with more conservative political orientation, SDO, and system justification. As exploratory, we also examined correlations with demographic characteristics.

RESULTS

Abolitionist Ideology Scale

We used a maximum likelihood extraction method, as data were relatively normally distributed (Costello & Osborne, 2005), and employed promax rotation as factors were expected to correlate.

The overall Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure was 0.923, a classification of “marvelous” according to Kaiser (1974). Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity was statistically significant ($\chi^2(231) = 2397.554, p < .001$), indicating that the data were appropriate for factoring.

Visual analysis of the scree plot (Costello & Osborne, 2005) indicated a best-fit three-factor solution, though the suggested factor structure was a four-factor solution based on eigenvalues greater than one. We ran a forced three-factor solution EFA which indicated goodness of fit ($\chi^2(168) = 286.529, p < .001$) and explained 51.29% of total variance. The factors explained 35.57%, 10.56%, and 5.17% of variance, respectively.

In the three-factor solution, all but two items had pattern matrix factor loadings higher than $|0.40|$ on one factor and lower than $|0.30|$ on another, while the four-factor solution indicated issues with cross-loading (Pett et al., 2003). We thus elected to retain the three-factor solution and conducted another EFA with the two cross-loading items removed. The final solution indicated goodness of fit ($\chi^2(133) = 283.310, p < .001$) and explained 54.36% of the total variance. The factors explained 37.43%, 11.31%, and 5.62% of the variance respectively. All variables are loaded as per the criterion above. Initial factors, items, and factor loadings are depicted in [Supplemental Materials](#).

We labeled the factors *alternatives to state violence*, *revolutionary abolitionism*, and *abolitionist identity*. Each factor demonstrated appropriate reliability: alternatives to state violence ($\omega = .924$), revolutionary abolitionism ($\omega = .824$), abolitionist identity ($r = .866, p > .001$). All initial items and factor loadings are displayed in Table 1.

Face, convergent, and divergent validity

Point-biserial correlations indicated that all subscales of the Abolitionist Ideology Scale were positively correlated with abolitionist self-identification, $p < .001$, (alternatives to state violence $r_{pb}(199) = .631$; revolutionary abolitionism $r_{pb}(199) = .450$; abolitionist identity $r_{pb}(199) = .523$). Univariate analyses of variance revealed that those who self-identified as abolitionists scored higher than those who did not on the overall Abolitionist Ideology Scale as well as all subscales (see Table 2), providing initial face validity for the measure.

We used correlational analyses to test the relationship between abolitionist ideology, support for BLM, critical consciousness conservative political orientation, SDO, and system justification (see Table 3).

Demographic characteristics

We conducted exploratory analyses to examine if scores on our measure were related to demographic characteristics. Older adults less strongly endorsed the Alternatives to State Violence ($r(199) = -.341, p < .001$) and Revolutionary Abolitionism ($r(199) = -.165, p = .020$) subscales, but not Abolitionist Identity ($r(199) = .050, p = .482$). There were no differences between crime victims and non-victims on scores across all subscales (all p 's $> .500$). Responses to the Alternatives to State Violence ($p = .199$) and Revolutionary Abolitionism ($p = .805$) subscales did not differ by conviction history, though there was a significant difference between those who had been convicted of a crime ($M = 3.15, SD = 1.36$) and those who had not ($M = 2.61, SD = 1.17$) on Abolitionist Identity, $F(199) = 4.204, p = .042, \eta_p^2 = .021$. Table 4 reports additional demographic analyses.

TABLE 1 Initial Abolition Ideology Scale items and factor loadings.

Item	Alternatives to state violence	Revolutionary abolitionism	Abolitionist identity
The state is a central organizer of violence against marginalized people.	.898	-.109	-.074
The state causes harm to marginalized group members.	.819	-.125	-.097
Police brutality is an expression of racism.	.808	-.163	-.109
People of color's lives would be improved if current systems of policing were abolished.	.807	-.015	.002
Systemic racism can only be addressed by effectively dismantling existing institutions.	.704	-.032	.082
Communities should be empowered to create their safety measures, reducing reliance on traditional forms of law enforcement.	.609	-.061	-.016
The current policing system should be replaced with community-led safety initiatives.	.581	.105	.155
The current system of policing is directly linked to colonialism.	.544	.232	.035
^a The current system of law enforcement should not be abolished.	.513	.159	-.030
The current criminal justice system should be replaced with rehabilitation and community support systems.	.499	.328	-.029
Communities could effectively respond to harm without the use of law enforcement.	.493	.155	.043
Instead of responding to harm with punishment, we need to build infrastructures of support and care.	.470	.280	-.041
I advocate for efforts to abolish the police	.444	.261	.272
^a We need law enforcement systems to punish people who cause harm.	-.070	.843	-.013
^a Prisons are an effective means of keeping communities safe from criminals.	.132	.765	-.169
^a Punitive responses to harm are effective.	-.094	.684	.052
^a Individuals who cause harm through crime should be punished.	-.168	.681	.164
^a Enhancing surveillance is an effective means to reduce crime-related harm.	.016	.628	-.114
Being an abolitionist is a core aspect of my identity.	.054	-.066	.942
Being an abolitionist is important to who I am as a person.	-.093	.002	.961

^aIndicates reverse scored item. Bold values indicate the factor on which each item loaded.

Measure modifications

We solicited feedback on the Abolition Ideology Scale from abolitionist-identifying participants. We treated participants as a source of expert feedback given their identities and lived experiences.

TABLE 2 Comparison of self-identified abolitionists and non-abolitionists on the total scale and all subscale scores, Study 1.

	Abolitionists (M, SD)	Non- abolitionists (M, SD)	F	p	η_p^2
Abolitionist Ideology Scale	4.18 (0.49)	3.12 (0.56)	159.47	<.001	.445
Alternatives to state violence	4.47 (0.52)	3.33 (0.68)	131.72	<.001	.398
Revolutionary abolitionism	3.45 (0.88)	2.57 (0.76)	50.40	<.001	.202
Abolitionist identity	3.66 (1.02)	2.28 (1.02)	74.91	<.001	.273

Note: Degrees of freedom for all tests 1(199).

TABLE 3 Correlational tests of convergent and divergent validity, Study 1.

	Alternatives to state violence	Revolutionary abolitionism	Abolitionist identity
Convergent validity			
BLM—Black Liberation	.334 ^b	.183 ^b	.150 ^a
BLM— Intersectional	.262 ^b	.132	.112
Critical consciousness—inequality	.394 ^b	.308 ^b	.171 ^a
Critical consciousness – egalitarianism	.243 ^b	.222 ^b	.021
Critical consciousness—action	.196 ^b	.087	.269 ^b
Divergent validity			
Conservative political orientation	−.321 ^b	−.243 ^b	−.138 ^a
SDO	−.272 ^b	−.308 ^b	−.057
System justification	−.581 ^a	−.539 ^b	−.180 ^a

^aCorrelation is significant at .05.

^bCorrelation is significant at .01.

We received feedback from a racially, sexually, and gender-diverse group of 58 abolitionist-identifying participants. Overall, feedback on the measure was positive, with many saying they would not make any changes.

However, several participants indicated that they believed there needed to be more space for “gray area”—that is, for reformist ideas that do not rise to the level of total abolition. Based on this feedback, we generated 10 new items that captured participants’ ideas about this gray area. For example, one participant stated, “For me, while I believe in abolition policing for the most part, I do feel like there are instances where I support these forms of punishment i.e. rape, 1st degree murder, etc. (more heinous crimes).” Considering this response, we developed a novel item stating, “There are some instances where incarceration is necessary.” The revised scale consisted of 30 items in total.

Additionally, the wording of three items was modified to address participant concerns about lack of clarity (e.g., three participants indicated that “colonialism” was a confusing or unknown

TABLE 4 Relationship of demographic variables to subscale score means and SDs, Study 1.

Demographic	Alternatives to state violence	Revolutionary abolitionism	Abolitionist Identity
Gender			
Man	3.58 (0.78) _a	2.72 (0.81) _a	2.63 (1.13) _a
Woman	3.62 (0.81) _a	2.80 (0.89) _a	2.59 (1.21) _a
Nonbinary	4.76 (0.31) _b	3.94 (0.76) _b	4.00 (0.78) _b
Sexual orientation			
Heterosexual	3.47 (0.81) _a	2.71 (0.79) _a	2.47 (1.12) _a
Bisexual	3.83 (0.73) _b	2.84 (1.01) _a	2.95 (1.27) _b
Another identity	4.10 (0.75) _b	3.21 (0.97) _b	3.05 (1.23) _b
Race/ethnicity			
White	3.67 (0.88) _a	2.90 (0.90) _a	2.67 (1.22) _a
Black	3.58 (0.61) _a	2.56 (0.86) _b	2.76 (1.23) _a
Asian	3.87 (0.77) _a	2.98 (0.69) _a	2.59 (1.19) _a
Another identity	3.59 (0.86) _a	2.71 (0.97) _a	2.58 (1.04) _a

Note: Differing subscripts denote statistically significant differences within demographics and subscales ($p < .05$). Demographic characteristics were recoded to meet statistical assumptions. Welch tests and Games–Howell post hoc tests were applied for gender analyses due to unequal variance.

term, which we replaced with “slavery”). One item was modified to remove a compound statement that a participant raised concern about.

STUDY 1 DISCUSSION

Study 1 provided initial evidence of the factor structure and validity of the Abolitionist Ideology Scale in a liberal and abolitionist-leaning sample. As expected, the measure was positively associated with explicit abolitionist identity, Support for BLM, and Critical Consciousness, and generally negatively associated with age, conservative political orientation, SDO, and System Justification. We found that nonbinary people and sexual minorities generally endorsed heightened abolitionist ideology compared to those with binary and heterosexual identities, as did those who were convicted of a crime in the past relative to those who had never been convicted. Contrary to the Black feminist roots of abolitionist movements (e.g., Davis et al., 2022), we found that Black participants scored about the same or, in the case of the Revolutionary Abolitionism subscale, lower than their White and Asian counterparts. This finding does align with a recent national experiment showing that Black Americans robustly support increasing funding for police patrols and spendings, even in the absence of crime declines and new policing reforms (Balcarová et al., 2024). We conduct additional demographics analyses in Study 2 in a nationally representative sample to establish the stability of these group differences.

In line with principles of participatory action research (e.g., Brydon-Miller, 1997) and marginalia methods (McClelland, 2016 & McClelland & Holland, 2016), we solicited feedback on the measure from abolitionist-identifying participants. In Study 2, we revised the Abolitionist Ideology Scale using feedback from Study 1 abolitionist participants and performed confirmatory

factor analysis (CFA) on the modified scale. We also sought to provide additional evidence for convergent, divergent, and predictive validity.

As for convergent validity, openness to experience is a major personality measure that has been correlated with critical constructs in political psychology such as left-wing activism (e.g., Blankenship et al., 2017 & Pratto et al., 1994), and the abolitionist project involves “endless imaginative interventions and experiments to create” (p. 41, Kaba, 2021), we hypothesized a positive correlation between the Abolitionist Ideology Scale and openness to experience. We also hypothesized a positive correlation between the Abolitionist Ideology Scale and radical imagination—a commitment to imagining and acting toward a world free of oppression (Hill-Jarrett, 2023).

In addition, at the core of abolition is the recognition that harm and violence are often attributed to individuals stereotyped as “dangerous” rather than institutions with far-reaching power (Acheson, 2022); as such, we hypothesized a positive relationship between the Abolitionist Ideology Scale and attribution of violence to state (vs. individuals). As an extension of Support for BLM, we also included attitudes toward Black people and BLM protestors as additional convergent measures and hypothesized positive correlations. Finally, as the CJS was negatively correlated with support for anti-carceral policies (e.g., decreasing jail population; Brock-Petroshius & Keum, 2024), we added this policy measure to expand the breadth of convergent measures and hypothesized a positive relationship between the Abolitionist Ideology Scale and anti-carceral policy.

About divergent validity, we assessed another major system-legitimizing belief: right-wing authoritarianism (RWA), which is predictive of prejudice and activism outcomes; for example, Blankenship et al., 2017 & Sibley & Duckitt, 2008). We predicted a negative relationship between RWA and the Abolitionist Ideology Scale. Again, as abolition requires experimentation and steps are not universally defined, we expected a negative relationship between the Abolitionist Ideology Scale and discomfort toward ambiguity and lack of order, captured by the need for closure (Roets & van Heil, 2011). In addition, as racial resentment is associated with support for critical policies (e.g., death penalty, affirmative action) and with greater carceral justification (Brock-Petroshius & Keum, 2024 & Sears & Henry, 2005), we hypothesized a negative relationship between racial resentment and the Abolitionist Ideology Scale. Similarly, as abolition directly targets the abolishment of policing and prisons, which is inextricably linked with White supremacy as a major axis of oppression (e.g., Acheson, 2022 & Ritchie, 2023), we hypothesized negative relationships of the Abolitionist Ideology Scale with attitudes toward the police and White people.

Finally, to establish predictive validity, given the central role of abolishing state violence in abolitionist projects (Acheson, 2022), we measured people’s tenacity for activism to resist state violence and hypothesized that the Abolitionist Ideology Scale would predict this activism tenacity above and beyond the effect of Brock-Petroshius and Keum’s (2024) carceral justification scale.

STUDY 2

Study 2 procedures and hypotheses were preregistered (https://aspredicted.org/82C_4FV) and data are openly available (https://osf.io/6fxgd/?view_only=1715444f30e747a1bf346734f6851a97).

Participants

We recruited a nationally representative sample of 355 participants via Prolific, who were paid ~\$12/h for their participation. This sample size meets recommendations for CFA (e.g., Myers et al.,

2011). On average, participants completed the study in 19.2 min. From an initial sample of 355 participants, three participants were removed for failing multiple attention checks.

Our final sample of 352 participants was politically diverse, with a moderate average ($M = 3.49$, $SD = 1.69$) on a scale from 1 (*extremely liberal*) to 7 (*extremely conservative*). The average age of participants was 46.19 years ($SD = 15.87$). Most participants were men (49.1%) followed by women (47.7%), and nonbinary/agender/genderqueer individuals (3.13%). A majority of participants were White (66.8%), followed by Black (15.3%), Latinx (10.5%), Asian (7.1%), Indigenous or Native American (3.7%), Middle Eastern (1.4%), Pacific Islander (0.6%), and multiethnic (5.1%). Most participants were heterosexual (81.3%), followed by bisexual (8.8%), asexual (3.7%), gay (2.0%), queer (2.0%), lesbian (1.4%), and 0.9% of the sample preferred not to answer. About half of the sample (54.8%) had been a victim of some type of crime, while 8.0% had been convicted of some type of crime; the majority of previously convicted participants (7.38% of the total sample) had also been a victim of a crime. Thirty-three participants (9.40%) explicitly identified as abolitionists.

Procedure

The study was approved by an institutional ethical review board before data collection. The study was advertised as examining police perceptions and political attitudes. Measures following the *Abolitionist Ideology Scale* were presented in randomized order.

Measures

We included the same measures of SDO ($\omega = .893$), Support for BLM ($\omega_{\text{Black liberation}} = .964$; $\omega_{\text{intersectional}} = .934$), Critical Consciousness ($\omega_{\text{inequality}} = .936$; $\omega_{\text{egalitarianism}} = .854$; $\omega_{\text{action}} = .913$), System Justification ($\omega = .880$), crime-related experiences, and political orientation as in Study 1. We included additional measures, outlined below, to establish scale validity in our representative sample.

CJS

The CJS (Brock-Petroschius & Keum, 2024) includes six items assessing support for and justification of the current carceral systems. The scale includes two subscales representing the extent to which the current system is believed to be effective (e.g., “In general, the criminal justice system operates as it should,” $\omega = .869$), and the extent to which the system is believed to be necessary (e.g., “Some people are bad,” $\omega = .859$). Participants respond to each item on a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*), with higher scores representing greater justification of the current carceral system.

Carceral policy options

Opinions on carceral policies were assessed using Brock-Petroschius and Keum’s (2024) measure, which includes four items assessing opinions on carceral policies (e.g., “To what extent do you

support decreasing the jail population by reinvesting funds from jail expansion into providing services and alternatives to incarceration?”). Participants respond to each item on a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*), with higher scores indicating greater support for changes to the carceral status quo. Items are analyzed individually.

Need for closure

The Brief Need for Closure Scale (Roets & Van Heil, 2011) includes 15 items assessing one’s distaste for ambiguity and confusion (e.g., “I don’t like situations that are uncertain”). Participants responded to each item on a scale ranging from 1 (*completely disagree*) to 5 (*completely agree*), higher scores indicated a greater need for closure ($\omega = .845$).

Openness to experience

Participants completed the 10-item *Openness to Experience* Subscale of the Big Five Inventory (John & Srivastava, 1999). Participants responded to each item using a scale from 1 (*disagree strongly*) to 5 (*agree strongly*); composite scores were calculated as the average of all items, with higher scores indicating greater openness to experience ($\omega = .861$).

Racial resentment

The Racial Resentment Scale—expanded (Feldman & Huddy, 2005 & Kinder & Sanders, 1996) includes six items assessing resentment toward Black people in America (e.g., “It’s really a matter of some people just not trying hard enough: if Black people would only try harder they could be just as well off as White people”). Participants responded to each item on a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*), positive or sympathetic items were reverse-coded such that higher scores represented greater racial resentment ($\omega = .931$).

Group-based attitudes

Participants responded to four slider-scale items indicating the extent to which they feel extremely negatively (0) to extremely positively (100) about four social groups: BLM protesters, police officers, Black people, and White people. Responses are analyzed individually.

Right-wing authoritarianism (RWA)

The Very Short Authoritarianism Scale (Bizumic & Duckitt, 2018) includes six items assessing submission to and support of traditional authorities (e.g., “What our country needs most is discipline, with everyone following our leaders in unity”). Participants responded to each item on a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*); responses were averaged such that higher scores indicated higher RWA ($\omega = .805$).

Radical imagination

Based on Hill-Jarrett's (2023) conceptualization of radical imagination, we developed three items to assess the extent to which participants were capable of and committed to imagining radical futures (e.g., "I am committed to imagining an "unimaginable" world free of existing systems of oppression."). Participants responded to each item on a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*), responses were averaged to create an overall score with higher scores indicating heightened radical imagination ($\omega = .845$)

Locus of violence

Adapted from Rucker et al., 2019, three items assessed the extent to which participants located violence and criminality at the level of the individual versus the state (e.g., "When it comes to "who is violent" in the United States, which do you think is the bigger problem: individuals or the state (e.g., government, police, military, and agencies like ICE)?"). Participants responded to each item on a scale ranging from 1 (*individuals are definitely the bigger problem*) to 11 (*the state is definitely the bigger problem*), responses were averaged to create an overall score with higher scores indicating greater perceptions of the state as the source of violence ($\omega = .888$).

Activism tenacity

Four items assessed the extent to which participants were steadfast in their activist intentions against state violence (e.g., "I intend to continue to fight against state violence, even if I face backlash for doing so," adapted from Thai & Nylund, 2024). Participants responded to each item on a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*), responses were averaged to create an overall score with higher scores indicating greater activist tenacity ($\omega = .973$)

RESULTS

We conducted CFA again using a maximum likelihood extraction method and promax rotation. The overall KMO measure was 0.959. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was statistically significant, $\chi^2(435) = 7949.129, p < .001$.

Visual analysis of the scree plot on an initial, unconstrained factor analysis again indicated a 3-factor best-fit solution. We constrained the CFA to a 3-factor solution for further analysis, which indicated goodness of fit, $\chi^2(348) = 1032.984, p < .001$, and explained 57.48% of the total variance. Four items indicated crossloading and were removed from analyses.

With those items removed, a final CFA was conducted. The final solution indicated goodness of fit, $\chi^2(250) = 774.294, p < .001$, and explained 62.04% of total variance. The factors explained 48.40%, 6.90%, and 7.04% of the variance, respectively. All variables are loaded as per the criterion above. Factors, items, and factor loadings are depicted in Table 5. Each factor demonstrated strong reliability and mirrored Study 1 factors; alternatives to state violence ($\omega = .939$); revolutionary abolitionism ($\omega = .936$); abolitionist identity ($\omega = .921$).

TABLE 5 Final Abolitionist Ideology Scale items, descriptives, and factor loadings.

Item	Alternatives to state violence	Revolutionary abolitionism	Abolitionist identity	M (SD)
The state causes harm to marginalized group members.	.998	-.256	-.015	3.15 (1.34)
The state (i.e., the government) is a central organizer of violence against marginalized people.	.848	.027	-.132	2.68 (1.40)
Police brutality is an expression of racism.	.821	-.296	.135	3.41 (1.38)
The current system of policing is directly linked to slavery.	.787	.054	.025	2.52 (1.51)
The current criminal justice system should be replaced with rehabilitation and community support systems.	.753	.004	-.038	2.86 (1.34)
Instead of responding to harm with punishment, we need to build infrastructures of support and care.	.737	-.052	-.033	3.11 (1.31)
Systemic racism can only be addressed by effectively dismantling existing institutions.	.726	-.001	.117	2.70 (1.34)
Communities should be empowered to eliminate their reliance on traditional forms of law enforcement.	.717	.132	-.150	2.73 (1.34)
People of color's lives would be improved if current systems of policing were abolished.	.716	.072	.085	2.65 (1.35)
The current policing system should be replaced with community-led safety initiatives.	.666	.142	.036	2.45 (1.29)
Communities could effectively respond to harm without the use of law enforcement.	.554	.263	-.054	2.42 (1.31)
^a There are some instances where incarceration is necessary.	.205	-. 887	.112	4.49 (0.89)
^a Some people cause harm to the extent that they should be incarcerated.	.272	-. 862	.022	4.46 (0.88)
All people should be freed from prisons and jails.	-.125	.749	.167	1.51 (0.97)
^{a1} do not think abolishing policing and prisons is feasible.	-.137	-. 730	.067	4.13 (1.09)
^a Individuals who cause harm through crime should be punished.	.045	-. 689	-.010	4.39 (0.89)
I think abolishing the police is a realistic goal.	.105	.685	.096	1.74 (1.09)
Funding for the police should be eliminated.	.245	.612	.054	1.97 (1.27)
^a We need law enforcement systems to punish people who cause harm.	-.222	-. 572	.084	4.12 (1.07)
Prisons should be abolished completely instead of being replaced with prison-like substitutes.	.255	.564	.031	1.87 (1.15)
The criminal justice system needs to be completely abolished, not just reformed.	.264	.543	.072	1.91 (1.14)

(Continues)

TABLE 5 (Continued)

Item	Alternatives to state violence	Revolutionary abolitionism	Abolitionist identity	<i>M</i> (SD)
I advocate for efforts to abolish the police.	.280	.536	.140	1.89 (1.22)
Being an abolitionist is a core aspect of my identity.	−.116	.020	.990	2.10 (1.22)
Being an abolitionist is important to who I am as a person.	−.021	−.002	.902	2.11 (1.21)
My abolitionist ideology is an important reflection of who I am.	−.042	−.002	.881	2.21 (1.26)
I identify with others who support abolition.	.258	−.046	.673	2.52 (1.33)

^aIndicates reverse-scored item. Bolding indicates factor loading.

TABLE 6 Comparison of self-identified abolitionists and non-abolitionists on the total scale and all subscale scores.

	Abolitionists (<i>M</i> , <i>SD</i>)	Non-abolitionists (<i>M</i> , <i>SD</i>)	<i>F</i> _{Welch}	<i>df</i>	<i>P</i>	η_p^2
Abolitionist Ideology Scale	3.61 (0.31)	2.77 (0.48)	95.55	1, 49.65	<.001	.214
Alternatives to state violence	4.20 (0.86)	2.63 (0.98)	78.84	1, 40.94	<.001	.184
Revolutionary abolitionism	3.13 (1.01)	1.60 (0.65)	143.76	1, 34.80	<.001	.291
Abolitionist identity	3.93 (0.84)	2.04 (0.99)	111.34	1, 41.73	<.001	.241

Note: Welch tests are reported due to violations of the assumption of homogeneity of variance.

Convergent validity

Point-biserial correlations indicated that all subscales of the Abolitionist Ideology Scale were positively correlated with abolitionist self-identification at $p < .001$, (alternatives to state violence $r_{pb}(350) = .717$; revolutionary abolitionism $r_{pb}(350) = .573$; abolitionist identity $r_{pb}(350) = .429$). Univariate analyses of variance again showed that those who self-identified as abolitionists scored higher than those who did not on the overall Abolitionist Ideology Scale as well as all subscales (see Table 6).

We again used correlational analyses to test the relationship between our measure (all subscales) and relevant outcomes. We expected that scores on Alternatives to State Violence, but not Revolutionary Abolitionism or Abolitionist Identity, would be positively correlated with the BLM—Intersectional Values subscale as in Study 1.

Beyond that, we expected that scores on all subscales would be positively correlated with Support for BLM, Critical Consciousness, openness to experience, attribution of violence to the state (vs. individuals), radical imagination, and warmth toward Black people and BLM protestors. We also examined correlations with carceral policy options (i.e., support for changes to the carceral status quo). Correlations are presented in Table 7.

Results generally supported our preregistered hypotheses, though all subscale scores were positively associated with the BLM Intersectional Values scale, unlike in Study 1.

TABLE 7 Correlational tests of convergent validity.

	Alternatives to state violence	Revolutionary abolitionism	Abolitionist identity
BLM—Black Liberation	.580 ^b	.293 ^b	.356 ^b
BLM—intersectional	.545 ^b	.427 ^b	.411 ^b
Critical consciousness—inequality	.622 ^b	.301 ^b	.397 ^b
Critical consciousness—egalitarianism	.446 ^b	.145 ^b	.231 ^b
Critical consciousness—action	.349 ^b	.466 ^b	.364 ^b
Openness to experience	.243 ^b	.122 ^a	.076
Attribution of violence to state	.730 ^b	.602 ^b	.452 ^b
Radical imagination	.587 ^b	.490 ^b	.482 ^b
Warmth—Black people	.290 ^b	.095	.220 ^b
Warmth—BLM protestors	.656 ^b	.421 ^b	.448 ^b
Carceral policy—decrease jail population	.636 ^b	.363 ^b	.316 ^b
Carceral policy—support Police Oversight Commission	.385 ^b	.055	.170 ^b
Carceral policy—reinstate voting rights for parolees	.591 ^b	.348 ^b	.276 ^b
Carceral policy—disallow the death penalty	.424 ^b	.306 ^b	.249 ^b

^aCorrelation is significant at .05.

^bCorrelation is significant at .01.

Divergent validity

We anticipated negative correlations between scores on all subscales of the Abolitionist Ideology Scale and conservative political ideology, social dominance orientation, RWA, system justification, racial resentment, need for closure, and carceral justification. As exploratory, we also examined correlations with warmth toward White people and the police. Correlations are presented in Table 8.

Predictive validity

We anticipated that the Abolitionist Ideology Scale would uniquely predict activism tenacity, above and beyond the inversely related construct of Carceral System Justification. We first confirmed that each subscale of the Abolitionist Ideology Scale independently predicted activism tenacity (see Table 9).

Next, we used a hierarchical regression approach to examine relative predictive capacity. We entered all subscales of the Carceral System Justification scale in Step 1, and all subscales of the Abolitionist Ideology Scale in Step 2. Both models were significant (p 's < .001), but once the Abolitionist Ideology Scale subscales were added into the model, neither of the Carceral System Justification scales remained significant (see Table 10), indicating the Abolitionist Ideology Scale adds predictive value over and above Carceral System Justification, as hypothesized.

TABLE 8 Correlational tests of divergent validity.

	Alternatives to state violence	Revolutionary abolitionism	Abolitionist identity
Conservative political ideology	-.604 ^a	-.365 ^a	-.376 ^a
SDO	-.453 ^a	-.157 ^a	-.252 ^a
RWA	-.508 ^a	-.345 ^a	-.261 ^a
System justification	-.584 ^a	-.334 ^a	-.259 ^a
Racial resentment	-.713 ^a	-.382 ^a	-.388 ^a
Need for closure	-.118	-.196 ^a	.012
Carceral justification—the system works	-.565 ^a	-.277 ^a	-.236 ^a
Carceral justification—system necessary	-.666*	-.682 ^a	-.449 ^a
Warmth—White people	-.170 ^a	-.187 ^a	-.024
Warmth—police	-.618 ^a	-.505 ^a	-.294 ^a

^a* = Correlation is significant at .01.

TABLE 9 Abolitionist Ideology Scale subscales independently predicting activism tenacity.

Independent Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	95% CI <i>B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>F</i>
Alternatives to state violence	.905	.070	[.768, 1.042]	.570	12.98	<.001	.325	168.53
Revolutionary abolitionism	.926	.098	[.732, 1.119]	.450	9.42	<.001	.202	88.71
Abolitionist identity	.696	.072	[.555, .837]	.461	9.72	<.001	.213	94.55

TABLE 10 Hierarchical regression predicting activism tenacity.

Independent variables	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	95% CI <i>B</i>	β	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>F</i>
Step 1							.155	32.12
CJS system works	-.114	.066	[-.243, .016]	-.105	-1.73	.085		
CJS system necessary	-.410	.077	[-.561, -.259]	-.324	-5.33	<.001		
Step 2							.352	37.64
CJS system works	.008	.067	[-.123, .139]	.008	.124	.902		
CJS system necessary	.021	.091	[-.158, .200]	.017	.236	.814		
Alternatives to state violence	.735	.122	[.496, .974]	.463	6.045	<.001		
Revolutionary abolitionism	.028	.158	[-.283, .339]	.013	.174	.862		
Abolitionist identity	.298	.084	[.132, .464]	.197	3.528	<.001		

The Alternatives to State Violence and Abolitionist Identity subscales remained significant predictors when highly correlated control variables (racial resentment, attribution of violence to state, warmth toward BLM protestors) were added to the model (see Table S1). We conducted additional, exploratory analyses to examine the unique predictive ability of our measure relative to other, highly correlated measures (see Tables 7–8) for Radical Imagination. The Abolition Ideology Scale uniquely predicted Radical Imagination relative to the Carceral Justification Scale, Racial Resentment, Attribution of Violence to the State, and Warmth toward BLM Protestors (see Table S2).

TABLE 11 Relationship of demographic variables to subscale score means and SDs, Study 2.

Demographic	Alternatives to state violence	Revolutionary abolitionism	Abolitionist identity
Gender			
Man	2.69(1.00) _a	1.74(0.80) _a	2.11(1.08) _a
Woman	2.79(1.01) _a	1.69(0.80) _a	2.30(1.16) _a
Nonbinary	4.01(0.99) _b	2.67(1.10) _b	2.75(1.10) _a
Sexual orientation			
Heterosexual	2.61(1.02) _a	1.63(0.73) _a	2.10(1.05) _a
Bisexual	3.55(0.90) _b	2.47(0.95) _b	3.18(1.29) _b
Another identity	3.53(1.01) _b	2.10(0.98) _b	2.38(1.14) _a
Race/ethnicity			
White	2.62(1.08) _a	1.64(0.79) _a	2.19(1.16) _a
Asian	2.69(0.89) _a	1.68(0.80) _{a,b}	1.92(1.02) _a
Black	3.38(0.69) _b	2.07(0.75) _b	2.42(0.85) _a
Latinx	2.97(1.26) _{a,b}	2.03(0.99) _{a,b}	2.62(1.24) _a
Another identity	2.95(1.09) _{a,b}	1.81(0.86) _{a,b}	2.04(1.09) _a

Note: Differing subscripts denote statistically significant differences within demographic and subscale ($p < .05$). Demographic characteristics were recoded to meet statistical assumptions. Welch tests and Games–Howell post hoc tests were applied for sexual orientation and race/ethnicity analyses due to unequal variance.

Demographic characteristics

We conducted preregistered exploratory analyses to examine if scores on our measure were related to demographic characteristics. Older adults were less strong endorsers of the Alternatives to State Violence, $r(350) = -.323$, $p < .001$, and Revolutionary Abolitionism, $r(350) = -.302$, $p = .020$, and Abolitionist Identity subscales, $r(350) = -.110$, $p = .039$. There were no differences between crime victims and non-victims or between those who had been convicted of a crime and those who had not, on scores across all subscales (all p 's $> .100$).

Comparing White participants to participants of color overall, we found that White participants ($M = 2.62$, $SD = 1.08$) scored significantly lower than participants of color ($M = 3.05$, $SD = 1.00$) on Alternatives to State Violence ($F(1, 350) = 14.40$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .040$). White participants ($M = 1.64$, $SD = 0.79$) also scored significantly lower than participants of color ($M = 1.92$, $SD = 0.85$) on Revolutionary Abolitionism ($F(1, 350) = 9.63$, $p = .002$, $\eta_p^2 = .027$), though there were no group differences on Abolitionist Identity ($p = .562$). We also tested whether the number of marginalized identities held by participants in terms of race/ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation predicted Abolitionist Ideology scores.¹ Holding a greater number of marginalized identities significantly predicted scores on Alternatives to State Violence ($\beta = .327$ [.293, .550], $t(350) = 6.47$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .107$), Revolutionary Abolitionism ($\beta = .243$ [.140, .343], $t(350) = 4.69$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .059$), and Abolitionist Identity ($\beta = .184$ [.109, .390], $t(350) = 3.50$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .034$). Table 11 reports additional demographic analyses.

¹ We recoded race/ethnicity such that White = 0 and POC = 1. We recoded gender such that cisgender man = 0 and all other identities = 1. Sexual orientation was recoded such that heterosexual = 0 and all LGBTQ+ identities = 1. We then created a summary score such that participants scores increased one point for each marginalized identity based on these three demographics (see also Pham et al., 2023).

STUDY 2 DISCUSSION

Study 2 provided additional evidence of the 3-factor structure and validity of the Abolitionist Ideology Scale in a nationally representative sample. Convergent and divergent associations tested in Study 1 were replicated, and additional measures were correlated with the Abolitionist Ideology Scale as hypothesized. The Abolitionist Ideology Scale—particularly the Alternatives to State Violence and Abolitionist Identity subscales—uniquely predicted activism tenacity and radical imagination above the CJS and highly correlated control variables, indicating unique predictive validity. While the Revolutionary Abolition subscale did not significantly predict activism tenacity in the full model, we suspect that this subscale will be uniquely predictive of outcomes relating to the extent of change desired to carceral systems (with those higher in Revolutionary Abolitionism endorsing more significant changes to or divestment from existing systems). This is perhaps supported by the finding that the Revolutionary Abolitionism subscale was uncorrelated with support for the reformist carceral policy option item of adding a police oversight commission, and most highly negatively correlated with the System Necessary CJS subscale.

We replicated findings from Study 1 indicating that younger people more highly endorse Alternatives to State Violence and Revolutionary Abolitionism, and additionally found a similar effect for Abolitionist Identity which was not observed in Study 1, which had a more constrained age range among participants. We found that participants of color and, as in Study 1, nonheterosexual participants, generally more highly endorsed Abolitionist Ideology. Finally, in line with abolitionist alignments with intersectionality (e.g., Kaba, 2021 & Ritchie, 2023) we demonstrate that holding a greater number of marginalized identities (in terms of race/ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation) significantly predicted higher scores on all subscales of the Abolitionist Ideology Scale.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

In two studies, first with an abolitionist-leaning and second with a nationally representative American sample, we demonstrate the psychometric validity of the Abolitionist Ideology Scale. The Abolitionist Ideology Scale demonstrates strong internal validity across its three subscales, demonstrates convergent and divergent validity with relevant measures as hypothesized, and shows unique predictive value above and beyond the related construct of Carceral Justification.

The Abolitionist Ideology Scale demonstrated a three-factor structure, and we labeled the factors as alternatives to state violence, revolutionary abolitionism, and abolitionist identity. These factors collectively encompass the breadth of (US) abolitionist ideologies. The Alternatives to State Violence subscale captures both the underlying abolitionist consciousness of state violence and the imagined alternatives to reduce harm, including structures of community self-governance (see Davis et al., 2022 & Ritchie, 2023). The Revolutionary Abolitionism scale captures the extent to which one endorses what is often called non-reformist reforms, or reforms that move beyond existing systems (as opposed to reformist reforms, which attempt to enact change within existing systems; see Bell, 2021 & Ben-Moshe, 2013). Finally, the Abolitionist Identity subscale, in line with similar measures of social identity (e.g., feminist identity, Siegel & Calogero, 2021; fat identity, Lindly et al., 2014), assesses the extent to which one personally identifies with abolition and the abolitionist community.

Abolitionist Ideology Scale validity

Across two studies, we demonstrated robust evidence of convergent, divergent, and predictive validity with critical and well-known constructs in social and political psychology. As expected, our Abolition Ideology Scale was positively correlated with greater critical consciousness and greater attribution of violence to state (vs. individuals), radical imagination for an oppression-free state, support for BLM, opposition to the carceral state, openness to experience, and more positive attitudes toward BLM protestors and Black people. On the contrary, the Abolition Ideology Scale was negatively correlated with several measures of system-legitimizing beliefs: SDO, system-justification belief, RWA, and conservatism. Our newly developed scale was also associated with other major personality and political measures: lower need for closure, lower racial resentment, and less positive attitudes toward police officers and White people. We suspect that a number of these variables facilitate an abolitionist ideology—for example, being lower in RWA is associated with heightened questioning of the legitimacy of authorities, including police (e.g., Gerber & Jackson, 2017), and in tandem with other characteristics such as political liberalism may lead to heightened engagement with activities or communities that are abolitionist-leaning. Future research should examine developmental pathways toward abolition to better understand networks of characteristics that may facilitate abolitionist ideologies and distinguish between facilitators and outcomes of these ideologies.

We found that the Abolition Ideology Scale predicted anti-state activism tenacity and radical imagination, above and beyond carceral system justification and other highly correlated measures. All subscales, and especially the Revolutionary Abolitionism subscale, were strongly negatively correlated with the System Necessary subscale of the Carceral Justification Scale, indicating the Abolitionist Ideology Scale strongly taps the underlying abolitionist belief that carceral systems are unnecessary. Abolitionist Identity, unlike the other two subscales of the Abolitionist Ideology Scale, was not related to openness to experience, need for closure, or warmth toward White people, and was generally less strongly correlated with ideological variables. We believe this reflects the qualitatively different nature of this subscale, which uniquely assesses the notion of embracing abolitionism as a social identity. We suspect that this subscale might uniquely predict outcomes such as feelings of solidarity with other liberatory activists and may for some participants reflect an aspirational or even performative identity more so than specific enacted political or activist engagement (see also Kutlaca & Radke, 2023).

Demographic and intersectional considerations

In each study, we provide preliminary, exploratory examinations of subsample differences in Abolitionist Ideology scores. We did not find consistent patterns for racial/ethnic differences; in the nationally representative sample (Study 2), Black participants scored higher than White participants on Revolutionary Abolitionism, but Black participants scored lower than every other racial group in Study 1, perhaps partly due to the effects of a liberal-leaning sample. Black participants also endorsed Alternatives to State Violence to a greater extent than White and Asian participants in Study 2, in line with the history of abolitionist movements rooted in the experiences of Black people and often led by Black and Brown thinkers and activists. We speculate that Black participants recognize the harm of police and thus support community-based initiatives in place of carceral systems, but they are less inclined to support completely removing police and prisons from society, possibly due to concerns about increased crime rates and the internalized role of

police as safety keepers (M4LB, 2023). While future research should further explore this idea, our findings help explain the mixed findings on Black Americans' support for divestment from police (e.g., Balcarová et al., 2024 & Parker & Hurst, 2021).

Further, we consistently found that nonbinary and sexual minority participants tended to score higher than participants with dominant gender and sexual identities. We caution against strong interpretation of these findings given relatively small subsample sizes, yet also note that gender and sexual minorities have long been involved in efforts to abolish oppressive structures, including gender binaries, the heteropatriarchy, and the carceral state (e.g., Battle, 2022 & Hereth & Bouris, 2020).

Our findings may thus reflect intersectional engagement in abolitionist politics along the lines of gender and sexuality, in addition to race/ethnicity. Furthermore, in Study 2 we found that participants who held a higher number of marginalized identities (racial/ethnic, gender, and sexual minorities) were higher endorsers of all subscales of the Abolitionist Ideology Scale. In line with additional research suggesting that those with multiple marginalized identities are more likely to endorse intraminority coalitions and work toward shared goals of liberation than those with singular or no marginalized identities (Pham et al., 2023), these findings support the notion of abolition as an intersectional politic (e.g., Davis et al., 2022). We suspect that experiences of multiple marginalization facilitate the perception of policing and prisons as harmful, and encourage future researchers to further attend to intersectional dynamics as they relate to Abolitionist ideology.

Implications: Research and policy relevance

The Abolitionist Ideology Scale provides a validated, community-based measure for assessing abolitionist ideologies in a continuous fashion. In line with the critical participatory action research methodology that is instrumental to emancipatory psychology (Gampa & Sawyer, 2023), this scale was constructed with the consultation of abolitionists from various backgrounds. This inclusion of diverse abolitionists is particularly important given that abolition is an ever-changing project that requires those involved to constantly experiment with novel ideas adapted to the needs of marginalized peoples locally (e.g., Kaba, 2021 & Ritchie, 2023).

Against the backdrop of the predominant reformist approach to police and state violence in psychological research (see Gampa & Sawyer, 2023), the current work affords a language for future research to investigate people's support for, resistance to, or indifference toward abolitionist goals and policies. With this scale, researchers and policymakers can investigate the baseline levels of abolitionist ideology among community members, and identify factors associated with this ideology to develop future strategies and policies that align with abolitionist goals. Specifically, our nationally representative sample indicated their abolitionist ideology below the average point, with the endorsement of Revolutionary Abolitionism particularly low. Though Black participants may endorse abolition more strongly, our participants overall felt hesitant about getting rid of police and prisons altogether. Abolitionist organizers thus need to work on concrete ways to explicitly connect a world without police with recognition of police as an oppressive regime and need to turn to other alternative community measures. For instance, more efforts can be dedicated to educating community members about specific alternatives to policing as a safety measure (e.g., healthcare, housing, education, and M4BL). At the same time, organizers can target potential barriers to abolitionist policy measures identified in this research such as system-justification beliefs, SDO, or racial resentment, potentially by either directly reducing such beliefs or taking a higher-level route cultivating critical consciousness of the public (e.g., providing lessons on the abolitionist lineage within the US history and liberation movements globally).

Items from this scale could be integrated into nationally representative surveys to track abolitionist ideology over time, across different demographic groups, and corresponding to various sociopolitical developments. Such insights can help disentangle, for example, the inconsistency between the popular anti-police, anti-carceral chants of the people on the streets and the increasing support for police funding in the general public survey during the height of 2020 BLM protests (Parker & Hurst, 2021). On the practical side, data from such surveys could provide support for increasing calls to divest from police and carceral policies broadly and invest in community self-governance.

We anticipate that our measure of Abolitionist Ideology will be useful for those studying contemporary social movements (e.g., Black Lives Matter) as well as related social psychological constructs including activism, solidarity, and allyship. We also anticipate that the measure will be of interest to those doing work in critical criminology and criminal policy; for example, we anticipate that the measure may be predictive of the victim-survivors' desired responses in the wake of criminalized harm (see e.g., Eaton et al., 2024 & Oswald & Pham, [accepted](#)). Further, we hope that future research may also apply the abolitionist ideology measure as an outcome variable, and we anticipate that researchers may identify novel experimental methods to heighten support for abolition, which may produce useful knowledge for organizers and advocates (see also Bonilla & Tillery, 2020).

Limitations and future directions

While abolition is an open political project with varying and ever-developing ideas from people of diverse backgrounds (Kaba, 2021), this Abolitionist Ideology Scale was developed based on the most prominent goals and principles among abolitionist scholars and activists. That is, this scale cannot capture the perspective of every abolitionist-identifying individual but rather aims to center as many perspectives as possible, especially the multiply marginalized. We, however, recognize some major limitations in our conceptualization of abolition below.

First, we did not provide participants with a definition of abolition. Though we provided participants with some context for our approach to abolition, asking whether participants “personally support police abolition and/or identify as an abolitionist?” we did not explicitly create a shared understanding of the concept of abolition. While only two participants in Study 1 suggested that definitional clarity may be an issue, it is possible that participants who differentially identify with abolitionist principles may not have self-identified with abolitionism in the current studies as a result of this lack of definitional clarity. Future research may wish to attend to participants' self-definitions of abolition (e.g., through a qualitative paradigm) to better understand variability in public perceptions and understandings of abolitionist ideologies. In doing so, we would be able to identify points of convergence and contention among abolitionists, such as support for the use of violence in advancing abolitionist goals.

Second, while our measure attempted to assess ideas about state violence broadly, many of the items specifically address police and prisons. In this way, the scale taps into the dominant perception of abolition as a project striving to end structures of violence largely internal to the state: eliminate police brutality, the prison-industrial complex, and other state-sanctioned violence against Black and Brown people in the U.S. However, the scale does not capture borders as a structure of violence that displaces, exploits and criminalizes migrants and refugees (e.g., does not specifically detention jails and violent state agencies such as ICE), whose struggles critically inform abolitionist movements (Walia, 2021). Relatedly, the scale does not specifically mention

capitalism, militarism, and settler-colonialism, which play a critical role in abolitionist analyses (e.g., Acheson, 2022 & Herzing & Piché, 2024). Specifically by not including such structures of oppression, the current scale also does not capture waves of the abolitionist project that aim to abolish bombs and nuclear weapons as global manifestations of state violence, which are used by imperialist states to terrorize communities of color around the world (Acheson, 2022).

Indeed, abolition is a global issue. While the current scale was contextualized in the US political landscape, the question of abolishing the carceral state is not limited to the US Police and prisons serve as protectors of their nation-states everywhere and hence work to exploit, criminalize, and oppress marginalized communities (e.g., Acheson, 2022 & Kaba, 2021). Take the extreme example of Palestine: “Palestine under Israel’s occupation is the worst possible example of a carceral society,” as Angela Davis (2017) stated. Palestine shows us that the liberation of the Palestinian people and all oppressed peoples globally is an abolitionist issue. Police across different nation-states work tightly with each other to develop and transfer oppression and suppression tactics, and so must we, collectively eliminate state violence, domestically and internationally.

These additional considerations, however, do not invalidate our measure of Abolitionist Ideology. We stand by the abolitionist principle of prioritizing adaptability over generalizability in constructing this scale (Ritchie, 2023). That is, the developed items are specific to the thinking of the abolitionist movement in the United States. At the time of scale development, which may or may not generalize to other temporal and geographical contexts. However, we believe it is more important to reflect the ideology of one context well than to (inadequately) reflect a generalized ideology for all contexts. We believe this scale is an important starting point for the development of abolitionist scales and encourage future work to adapt this scale for their specific cultural, political, geographical, and temporal contexts.

CONCLUSION



As noted by van Anders and colleagues (2023), “Science builds the world as it measures and studies it” (p. 3). In the current work, we seek to engage in abolitionist world-building projects by introducing a validated measure of Abolitionist Ideology to the psychological literature. In doing so, we hope to contribute to an abolitionist toolkit that will encourage more researchers to engage in abolition both in theory and practice (see Gampa & Sawyer, 2023). We demonstrate the validity of the Abolitionist Ideology Scale across two studies with both abolitionist-leaning (and identifying) and nationally representative samples. The Abolitionist Ideology Scale demonstrates positive relationships with constructs such as activism and support for activist movements, openness, imagination, and critical consciousness, and negative relationships with status-quo hierarchy-maintaining constructs.

As abolition is a grassroots movement that begins with the struggle of those at the margins of the margins on the ground, centering abolitionist perspectives bridges the gap between academia and the material realities of people, providing a counternarrative in the academy and nudging the field toward a critical study of state violence and liberation. This scale, though, is not meant to serve a symbolic move that only centers abolition in an abstract manner. Establishing a method to understand people’s abolitionist tendencies like this promises to be one of the foundational steps of a liberatory praxis that ultimately informs interventions to mobilize resistance efforts on the ground to collectively dismantle all forms of state violence.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Data are openly available (https://osf.io/6fxgd/?view_only=1715444f30e747a1bf346734f6851a97).

OPEN RESEARCH BADGES

  This article has earned Open Data and preRegistered badges. Data are available at https://osf.io/6fxgd/?view_only=1715444f30e747a1bf346734f6851a97 and preRegistered are available at https://aspredicted.org/82C_4FV.

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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Additional supporting information can be found online in the Supporting Information section at the end of this article.

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Kimberly E. Chaney is an assistant professor in the Department of Psychology at the University at Buffalo, SUNY. Chaney's research areas include lay theories of prejudice, prejudice confrontations, and perceptions of allyship, examined via an array of methodologies (e.g., behavioral, physiological, and implicit cognition), to elucidate the interpersonal and cognitive (e.g., attentional bias) mechanisms of stigma and prejudice. By examining both basic and applied questions about how people perceive, experience, and combat prejudice in their day-to-day lives, Chaney's research broadens our understanding of prejudice and stigma, especially as it relates to cognitive, health, and behavioral outcomes.