

Racism and involuntary psychiatric commitments in the US

Parvati Singh, PhD

Division of Epidemiology, College of Public Health

The Ohio State University

9/15/2023



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. About Mental Health. What is mental health?

National Institute of Mental Health. URL: <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/mental-illness>



Committed

THE BATTLE
OVER
INVOLUNTARY
PSYCHIATRIC
CARE

- *Danger to self*
- *Danger to others*
- *Gravely disabled*

Nothing says "I love you" like an involuntary commitment.



your  cards
someecards.com

[Home](#) » [American Journal of Public Health \(AJPH\)](#) » **February 2003**

Bias in Mental Health Assessment and Intervention: Theory and Evidence

Lonnie R. Snowden PhD

[+] [Author affiliations, information, and correspondence details](#)

Articles

Racial and Ethnic Inequities in Inpatient Psychiatric Civil Commitment

Timothy Shea , M.D., Samuel Dotson, M.D., Griffin Tyree, M.D., M.A.S., Lucy Ogbu-Nwobodo, M.D., M.S., Stuart Beck, M.D., Derri Shtasel, M.D., M.P.H.

Published Online: 12 Aug 2022 | <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ps.202100342>

Vol. 18 | Spring 2019



> [Aggress Behav. 2007 May-Jun;33\(3\):272-80. doi: 10.1002/ab.20188.](#)

Unemployment and civil commitment: a test of the intolerance hypothesis

Ralph Catalano ¹, Lonnie Snowden, Martha Shumway, Eric Kessell

HENRY NORTH

The

Involuntary Civil Commitment

Marvin S. Swartz , M.D.

Published Online: 1 Dec 2020 | <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ps.711202>

5x[†]

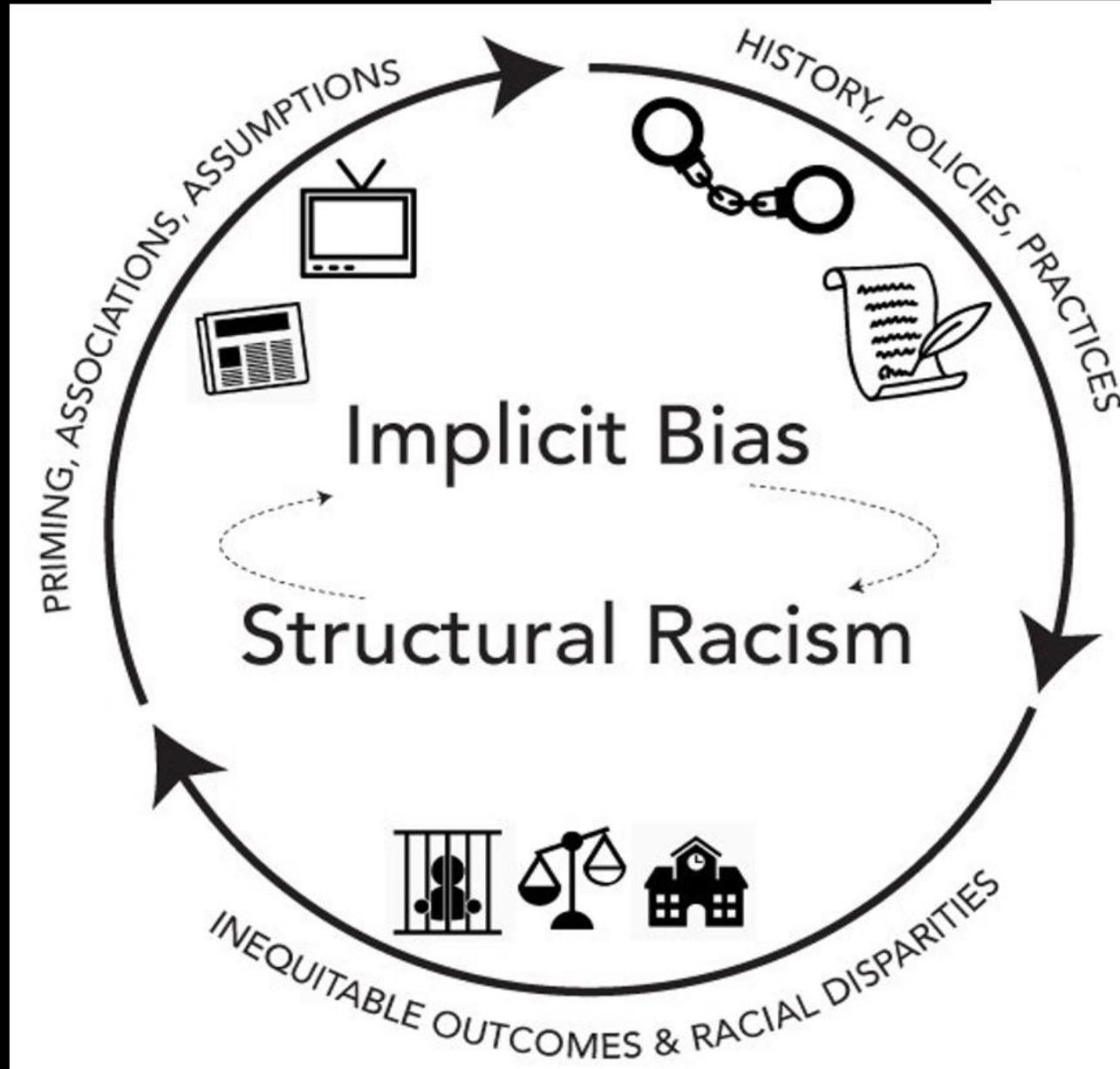


6x^{*}



* Nellis, A. (2016). The color of justice: Racial and ethnic disparity in state prisons. *The Sentencing Project*.

† Singh, P. (2020). Macroeconomic antecedents of psychiatric emergencies and inpatient admissions in the US. *eScholarship, University of California*.



Source: The National Equity Project. (2019).

RESEARCH ARTICLE

[HEALTH AFFAIRS](#) > [VOL. 28, NO. 3](#): MENTAL HEALTH CARE: BETTER, NOT BEST

Racial Disparities In Involuntary Outpatient Commitment: Are They Real?

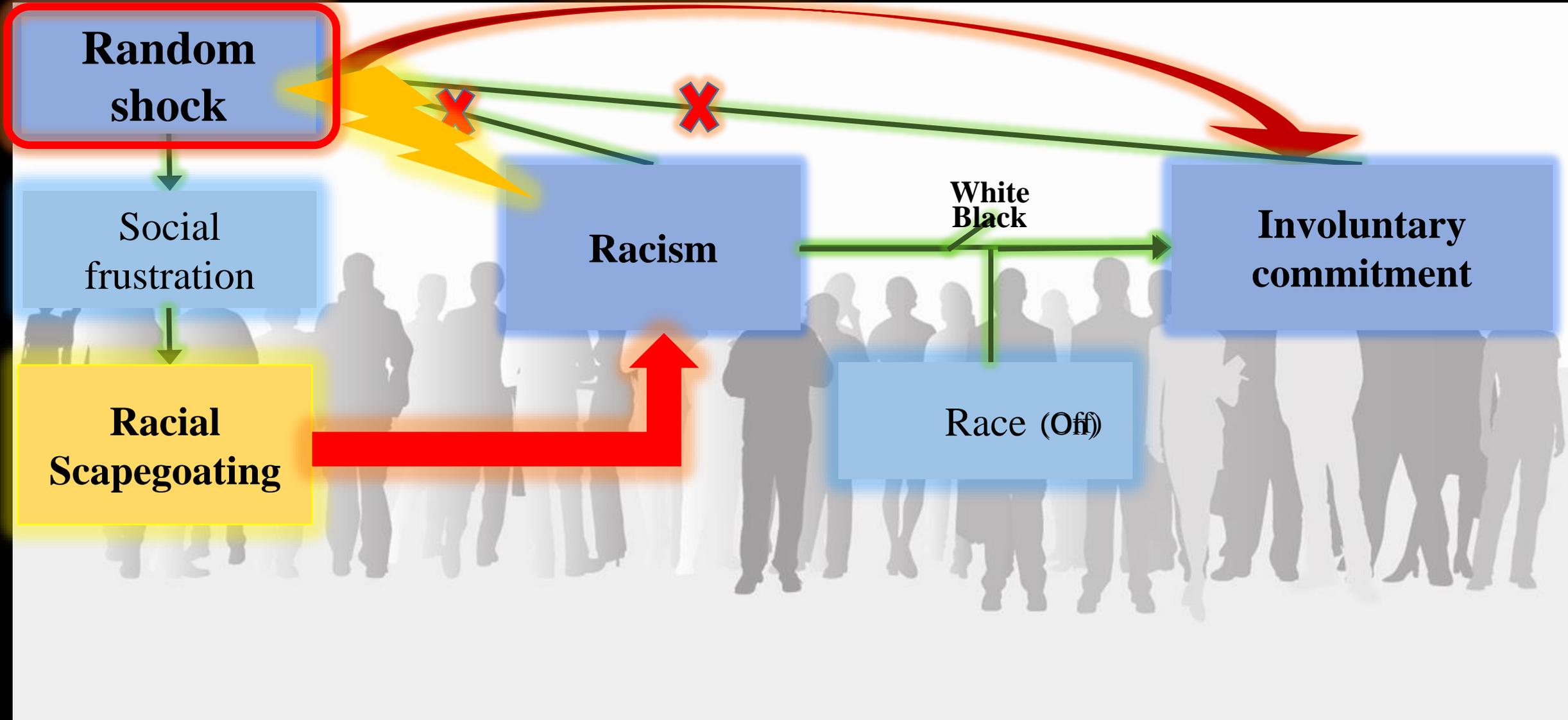
[Jeffrey Swanson](#), [Marvin Swartz](#), [Richard A. Van Dorn](#), [John Monahan](#), [Thomas G. McGuire](#),
[Henry J. Steadman](#), and [Pamela Clark Robbins](#)

CORRELATION

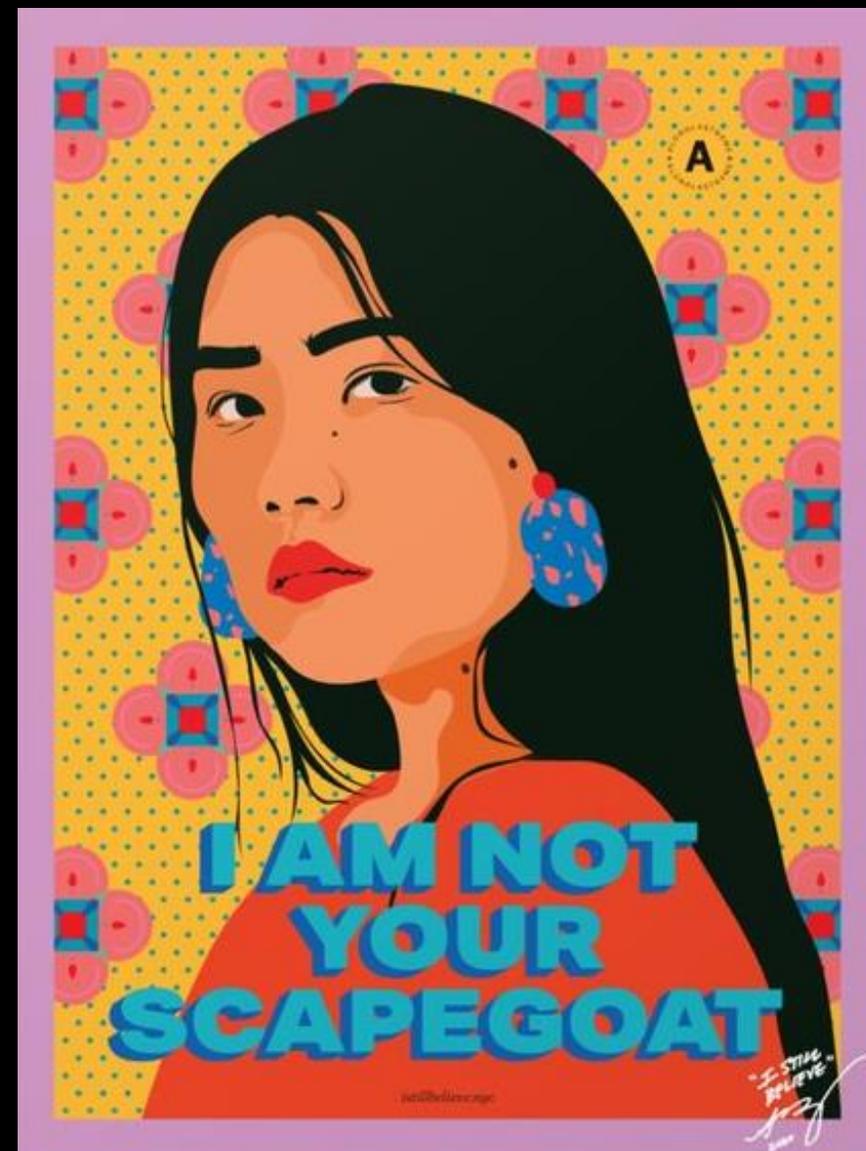


CAUSATION

“Random” shocks → Causality







Frustration- Aggression- Displacement Hypothesis

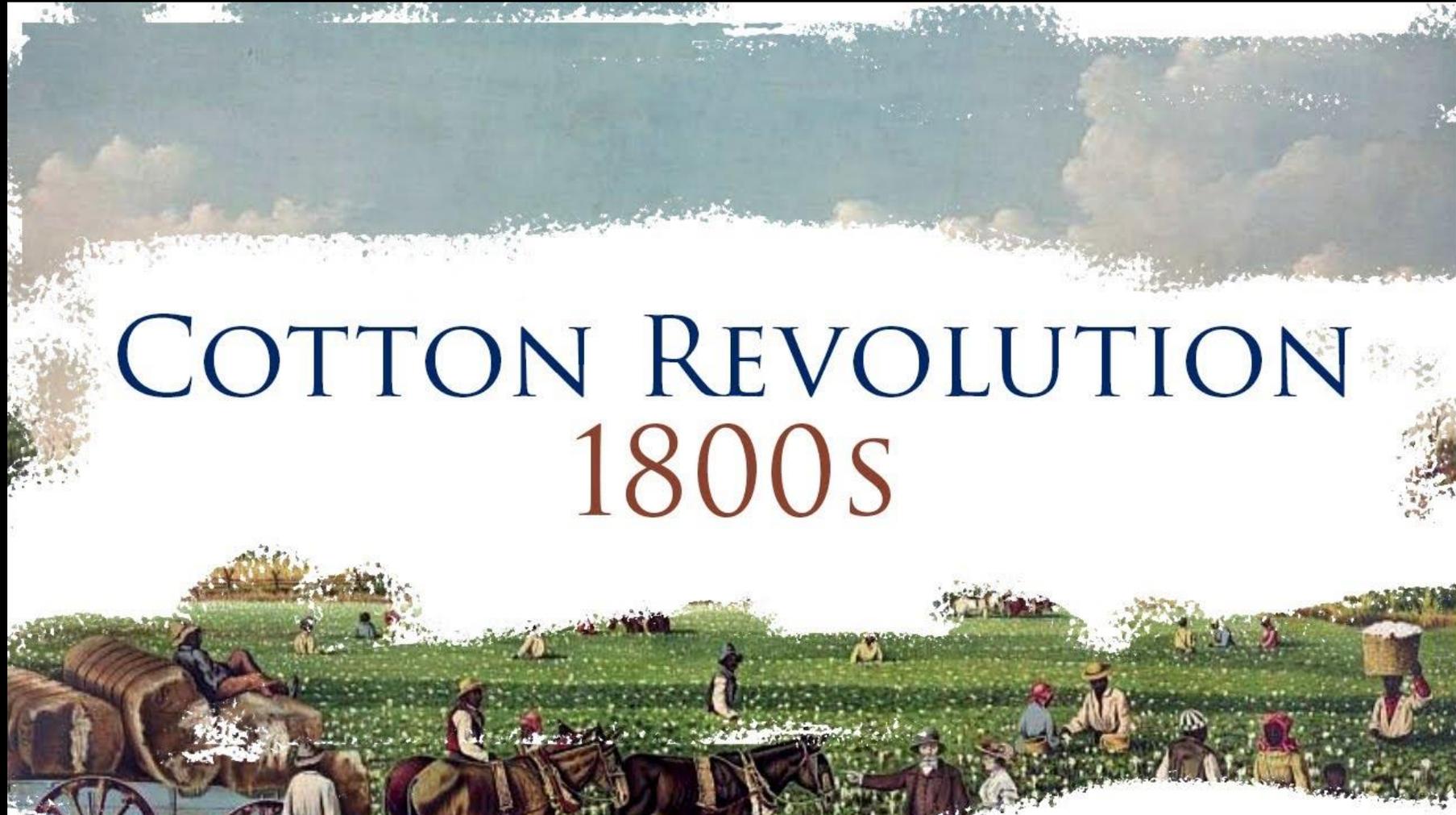
Dollard et al, 1939; Berkowitz, 1989



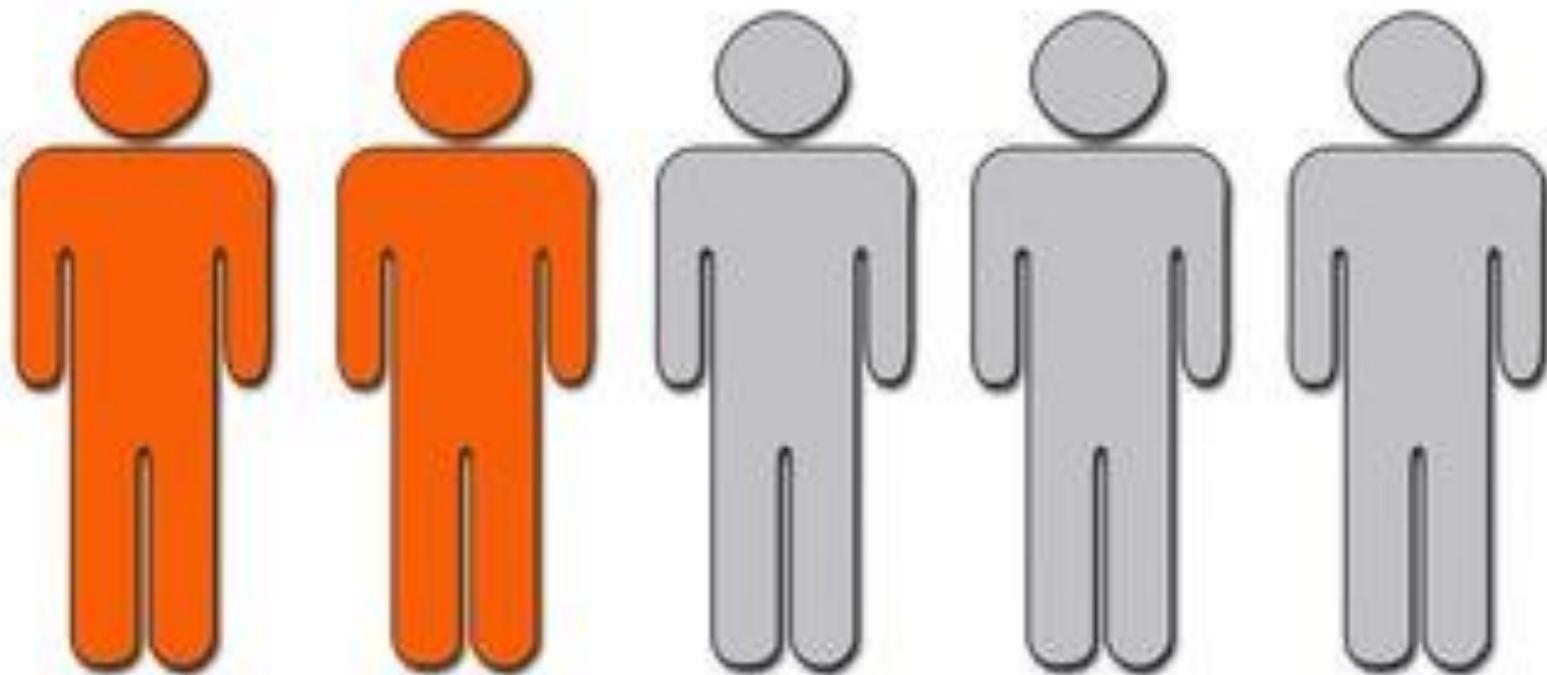
Psychiatric Services

Involuntary Psychiatric Examinations for Danger to Others in Florida After the Attacks of September 11, 2001

Ralph A. Catalano, Ph.D., Eric Kessell, M.P.H., Annette Christy, Ph.D., and John Monahan, Ph.D.



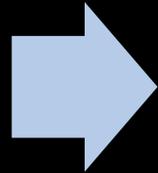
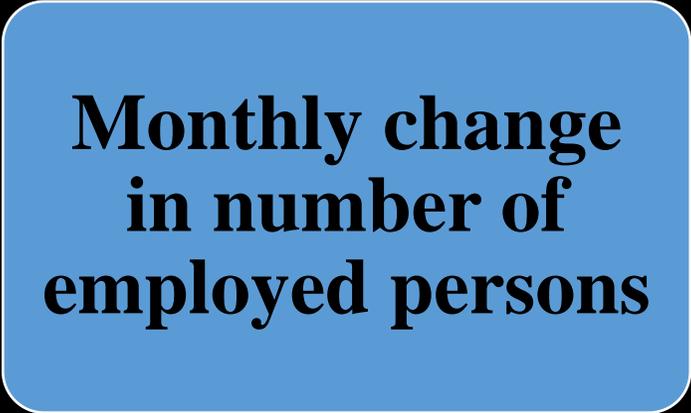
Hovland, C. I., & Sears, R. R. (1940). Minor studies of aggression: VI. Correlation of lynchings with economic indices. *The Journal of Psychology*, 9(2), 301-310.



Did involuntary psychiatric admissions increase among Black Americans during the 2008 recession?

Did involuntary psychiatric admissions increase among Black Americans during the 2008 recession?

**Monthly change
in number of
employed persons**

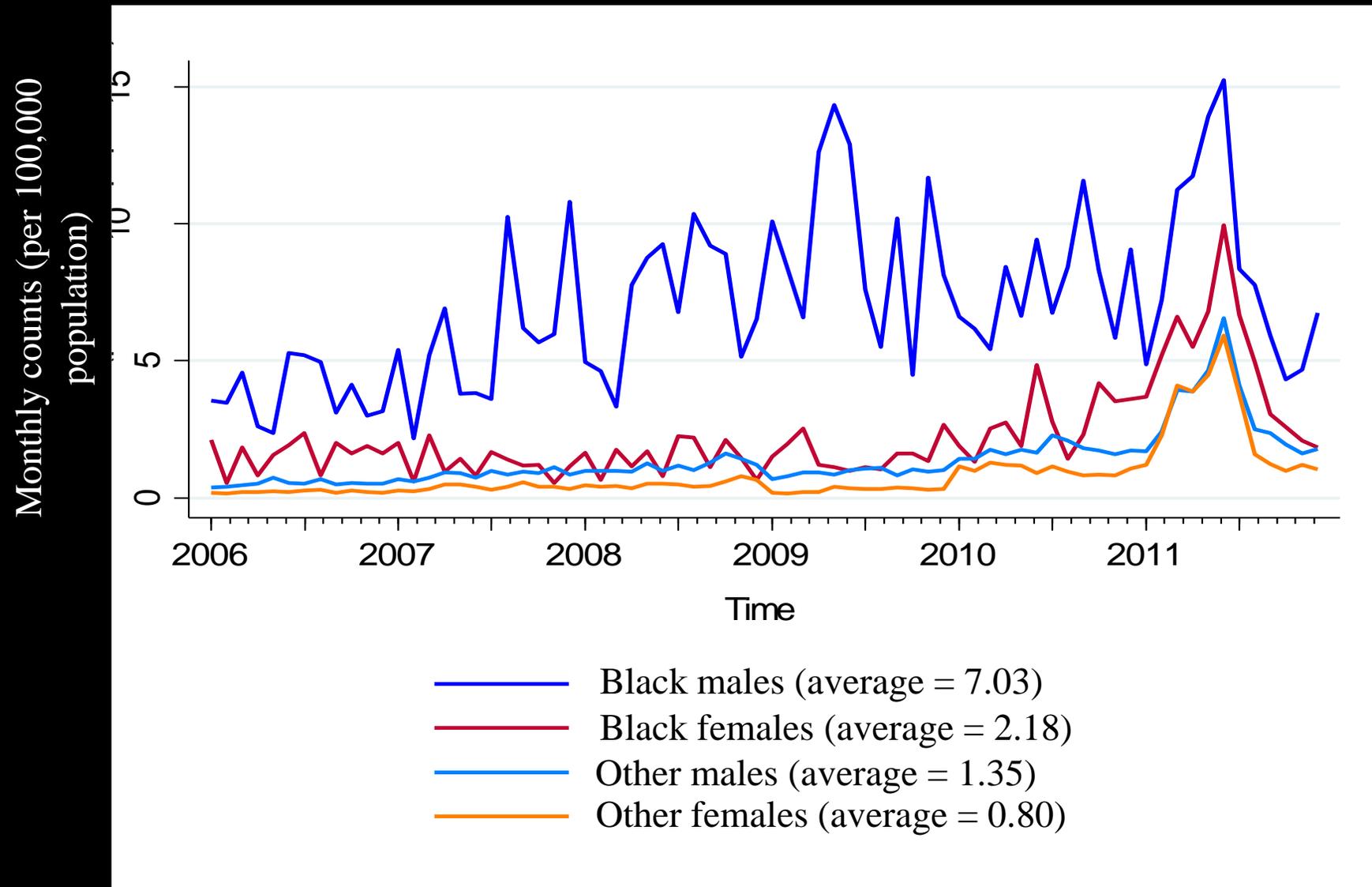


**Monthly change in involuntary
psychiatric admissions among Black
Americans**



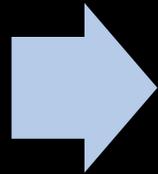
4 US States (AZ, CA, NY, NJ); 2006 to 2011; 13 million psychiatric admissions

Involuntary psychiatric inpatient admissions (per 100,000 popn)



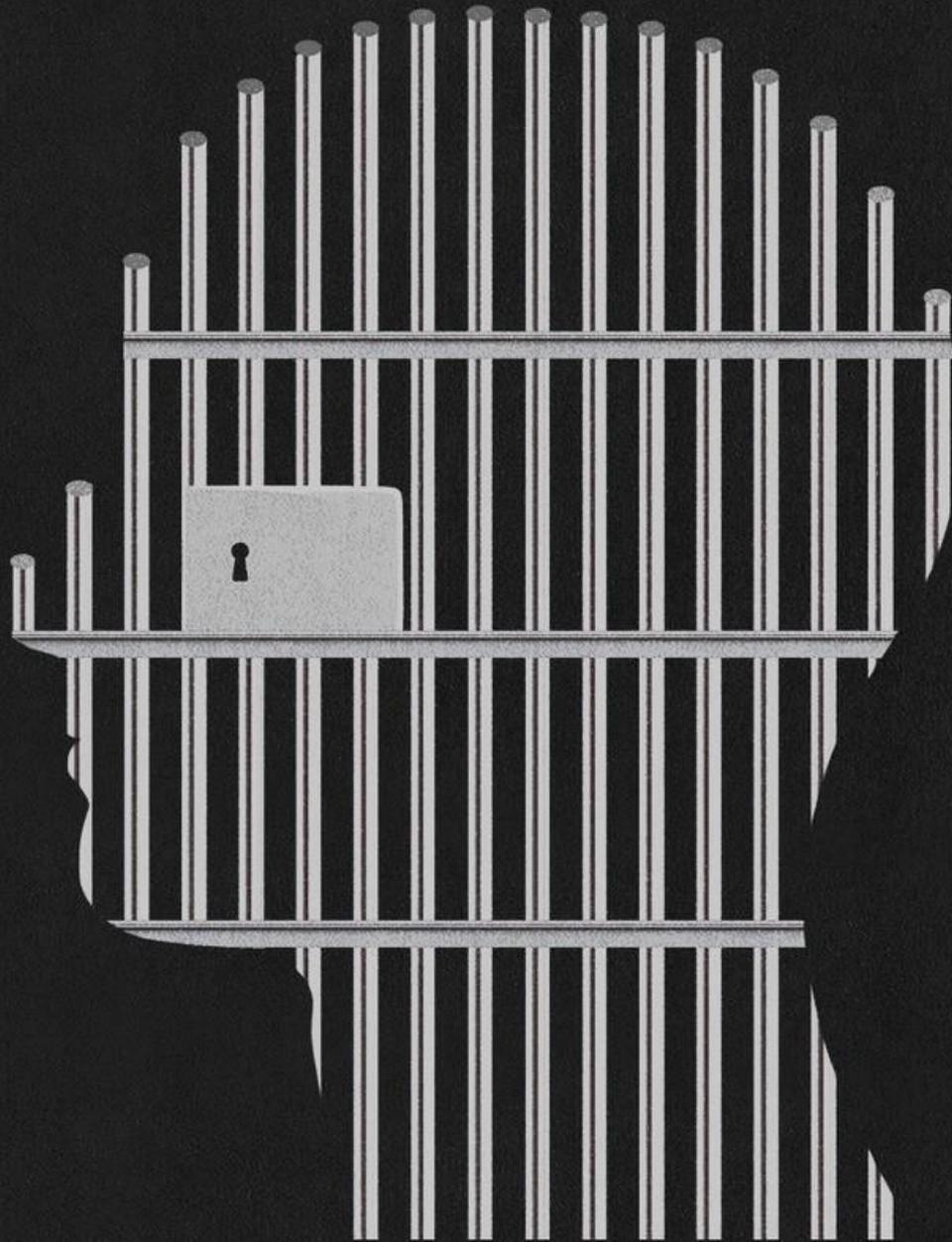
Did involuntary psychiatric admissions increase among Black Americans during the 2008 recession?

**Decline in
number of
employed persons**



**Increase in involuntary psychiatric
admissions among Black Males**

- 3% increase per unit decline in monthly employment change
- 995 additional commitments among Black males over study period
- No statistical detection among other race/sex categories



PBS
NEWS
HOUR

☰ Menu

▶ Full Episodes

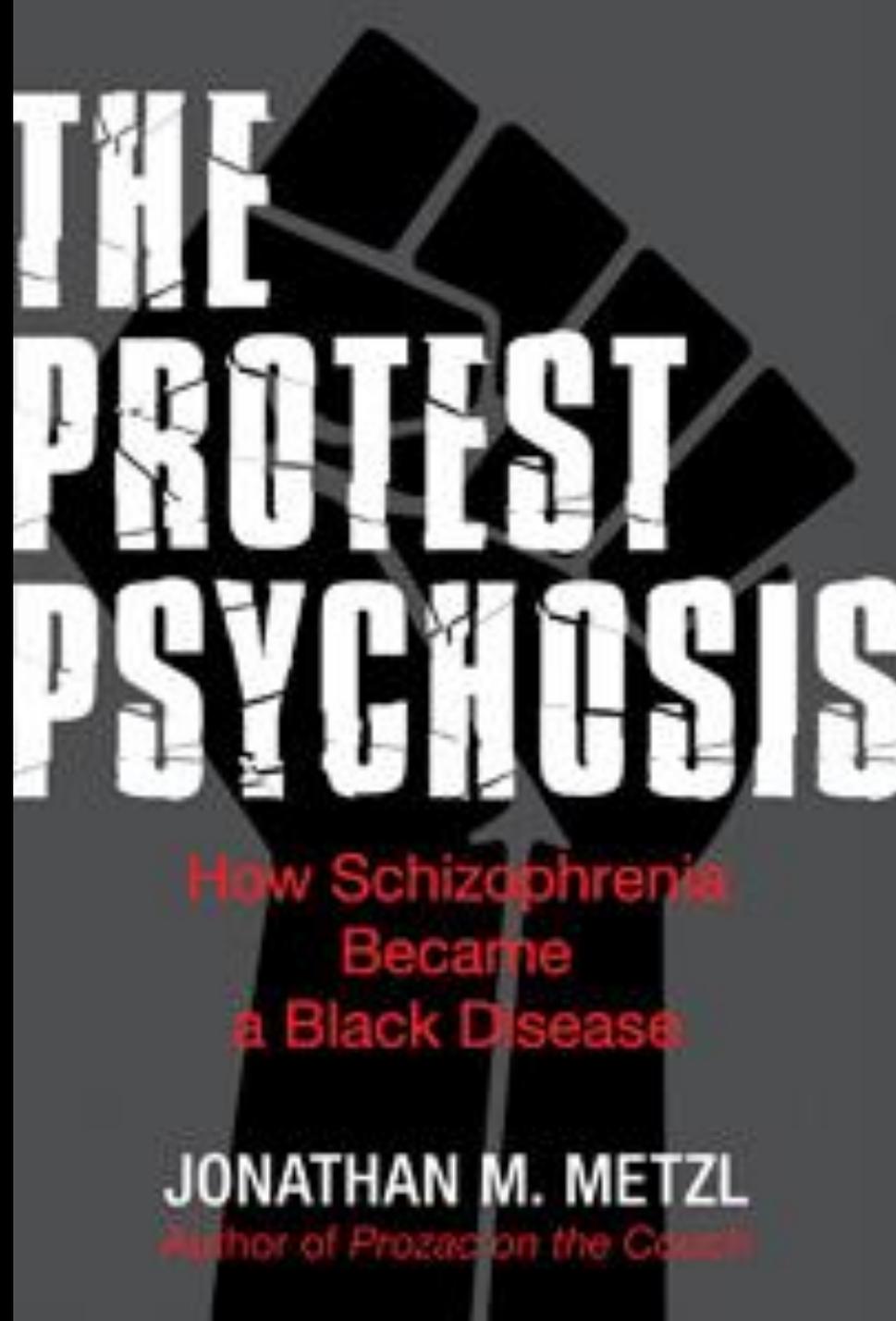
📻 Podcasts

✉ Newsletters

Live

New York mayor orders some homeless people involuntarily hospitalized for mental illness

Dec 1, 2022 6:35 PM EST



THE PROTEST PSYCHOSIS

How Schizophrenia
Became
a Black Disease

JONATHAN M. METZL

Author of Prozac on the Couch





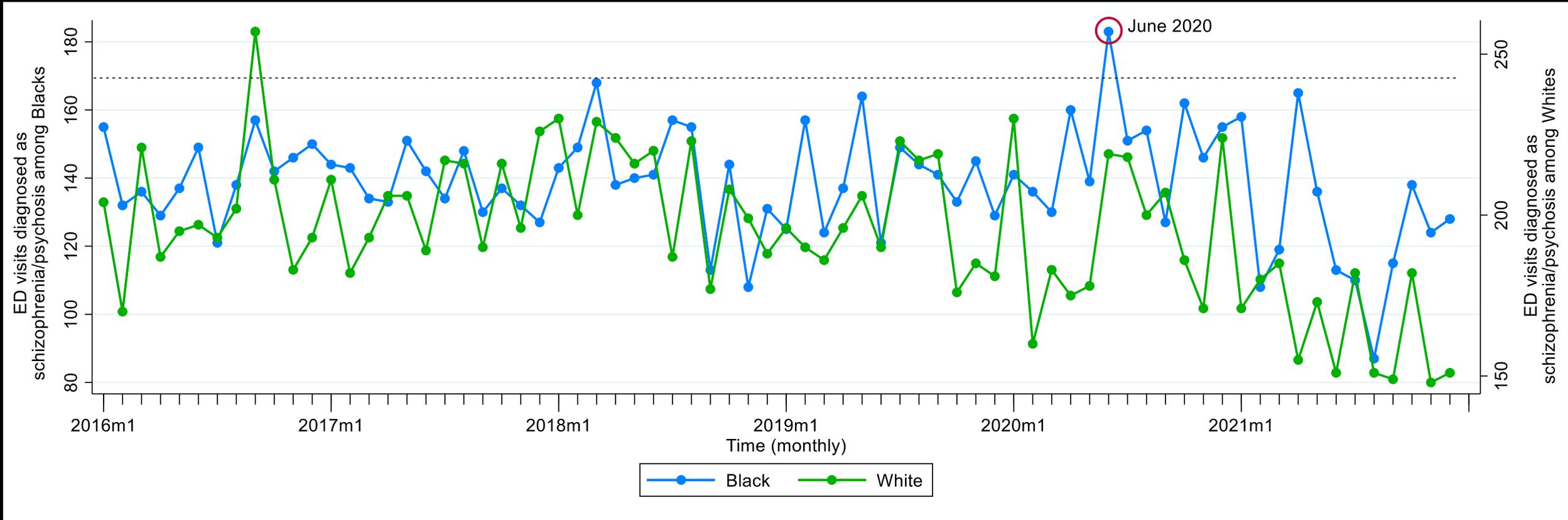
HOW WE RISE

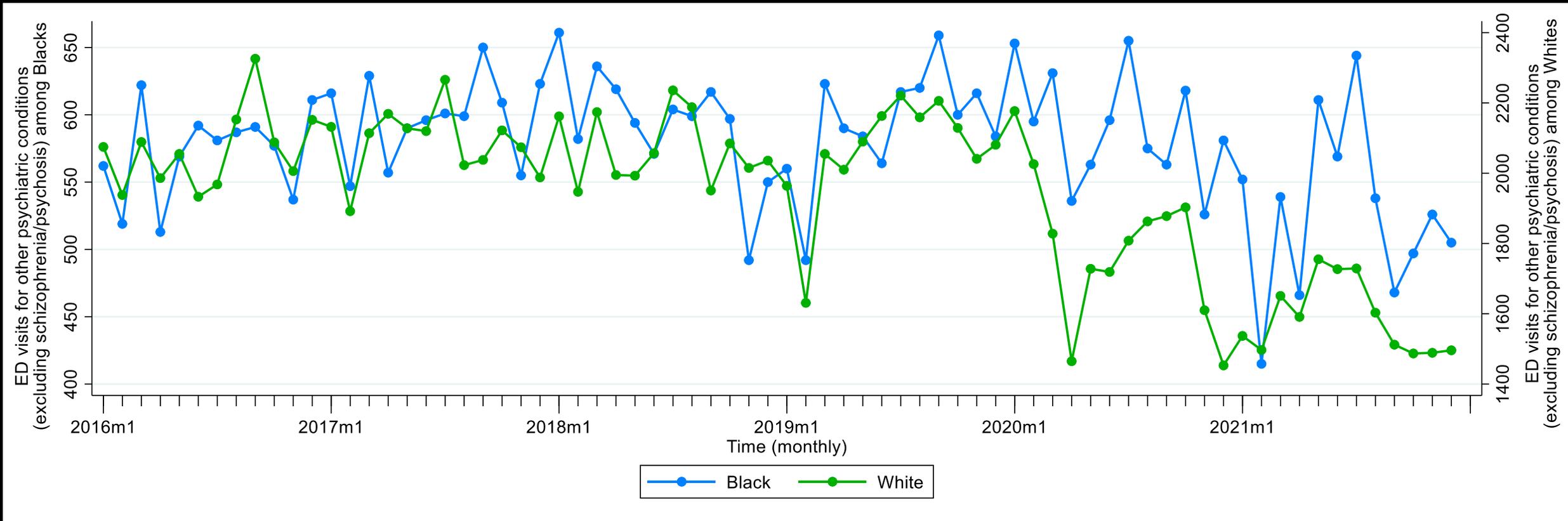
How “excited delirium” is misused to justify police brutality

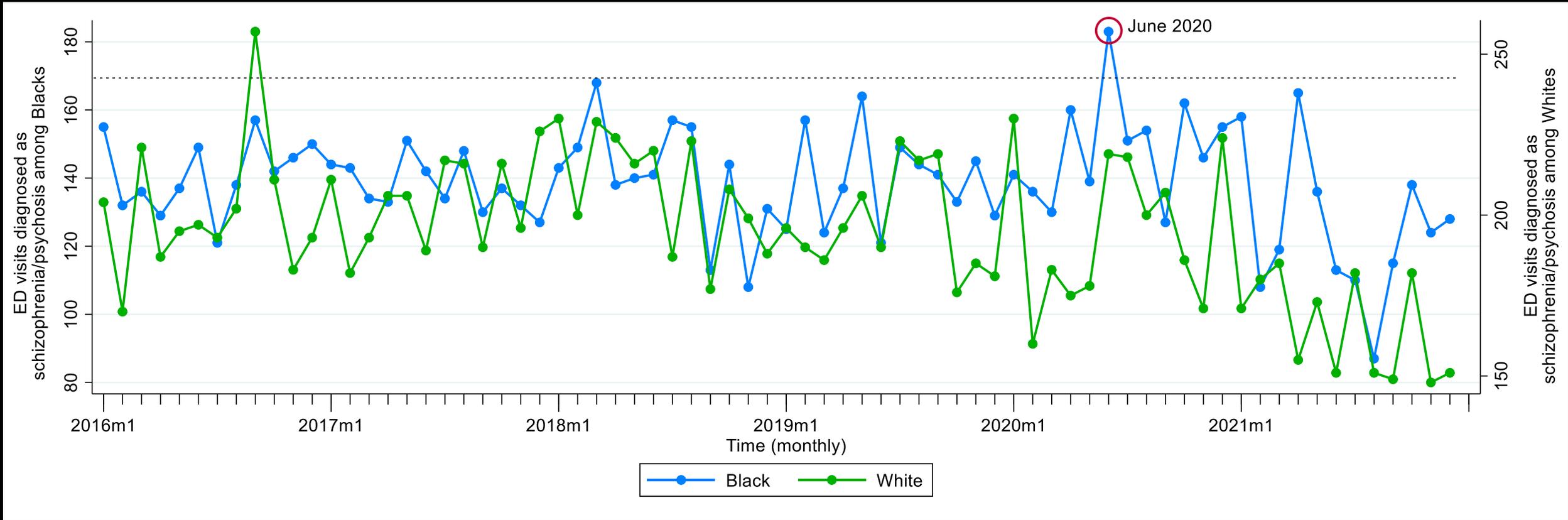
Joshua Budhu, Méabh O’Hare, and Altaf Saadi - Monday, August 10, 2020

HOW WE RISE









What we don't measure, we can't change.

Thank you!