

# Slanted Media Does not Increase Police Killings\*

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## Abstract

To what extent do slanted media influence police perceptions and thereby their use of violent forces? We know that media bias affects many aspects of American life, such as perceptions of facts and views of politicians and policies. In this paper, we show that there is little evidence that slanted media influences police violence. To assess this relationship, we employ instrument variable estimation using the quasi-random positioning of FNC in the cable lineup as a source of exogenous variation in viewership. The evidence shows that increased exposure to FNC does not lead to more frequent police killings of Black people *or* people of other races. Our results suggest that slanted media coverage of crimes does not necessarily lead to fatal racial discrimination by police officers.

**JEL Codes:** J15, K42, L82, Z13

**Keywords:** media bias, racial bias, racial discrimination, police killings.

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On July 17, 2014, a police officer in Staten Island, New York put Eric Garner, a 33-year-old, unarmed Black man who was selling untaxed cigarettes, into a deadly choke hold. Less than a month later, a law enforcement officer in Ferguson, Missouri fatally shot Michael Brown, an 18-year-old, unarmed Black man. Garner and Brown’s deaths ignited a series of protests and an ongoing national debate about racial biases in policing, along with propelling the Black Lives Matter movement to political prominence. Despite the administrative and legislative reforms that followed from these incidents and the public reaction to them, police killings of racial and ethnic minorities<sup>1</sup> continue to make the news with alarming frequency, as evidenced by the March 13, 2020 shooting of Breonna Taylor in Louisville, KY, the murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020 in Minneapolis, MN, and many other killings of unarmed Black people at the hands of the police (Block Jr. and Morse, 2020). While these killings have been frequently attributed to racist attitudes among police officers, an open question is whether such attitudes can be exacerbated by the media, given its important role in transmitting information and ideas.

In this paper we study the causal impact of slanted news media viewership on an extreme manifestation of racial discrimination — police killings. Our focus here is on Fox News Channel (FNC), the leading cable news network in the U.S. with a well-documented conservative bias in its programming (Martin and Yurukoglu, 2017). Previous work by Ash and Poyker (2021) has shown that FNC has affected viewers’ attitudes toward drug crimes, and that elected judges respond by giving harsher sentences to Black offenders. We explore the related question of whether conservative messaging, coupled with vivid descriptions of Black crimes, could shape the attitudes of police officers toward Black suspects and potentially increase the use of lethal force against them.

To this end, we compile data on zip-code-level viewership shares of FNC relative to other major cable channels (CNN and MSNBC), along with police killing data from FatalEncounters.org, a database of all geo-coded, named police killings for the years 2000 through 2017. Next, we apply the automated method outline in Imai and Khanna (2016) to infer

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<sup>1</sup>By police, we refer here to domestic security forces broadly conceived. This definition encompasses police, militia, para-police, and other agents of the state authorized to use force in the pursuit of crime or social control. We refer to “bias” and “discrimination” interchangeably (Butler, 2014). Following Sen and Wasow (2016), we use the term “race” as a shorthand for both race and ethnicity.

the race of the victim based on the name. We combine these data sources to construct zip-code-year-level of killings by race. Overall, our data is uniquely suitable for studying this question. First, our results are not confounded by the county-year-level changes in policing and economic conditions affecting crime rates because our design allows us to use identifying variation within counties. Second, using variation from the areas where policemen, who conduct the killings we observed in our data, serve and live rather than from the whole county or larger geographical areas, allows us to potentially pinpoint exposure to media as the main mechanism.

In our main specification, we regress the number of police killings by race on Fox News viewership. Our hypothesis is that in areas where policemen watch more FNC they are also more likely to disproportionately shoot Black persons. To address the fact that the locations where police is more racist also consume more of the conservative FNC relative to centrist CNN and left-leaning MSNBC, we employ instrumental variable (IV) estimation where we use relative channel position of FNC as the instrument. Following [Martin and Yurukoglu \(2017\)](#), we exploit the exogeneity of this position, which has been shown to be (i) unrelated to the socioeconomic, demographic, and political conditions prior to the introduction of FNC, and (ii) strongly predictive of actual FNC viewership.

Contrary to our theory, we find that that zip-codes with a higher share of FNC viewership do not have more police killings of Black persons. We also find no effect of FNC on killings of White or Hispanic persons. In these specifications, the effect of FNC is substantively small and precisely estimated. These results are robust to a wide range of additional empirical tests. In short, there appears little evidence that slanted media exposure influences either the rate at which the police engage in lethal violence, or the racial groups that they target with it.

Taken together, these results inform the literature on racial discrimination by police. Until the last several years, there has been relatively little research that focuses specifically on racial discrimination by the police. This is surprising since the police are an important state actor. Nearly all modern definitions of the modern state emphasize its reliance on coercion and its monopoly on violence ([Weber, 1965](#)), which in the domestic arena is primarily enacted by the police. Since the police have the capacity to restrict and violate the physical integrity

of others, we might be particularly concerned about whether law enforcement personnel exhibit discrimination. What research there is on the police tends to focus on identifying whether racial discrimination exists (Bowling, 1990; Bigo and Guild, 2005; Gelman, Fagan and Kiss, 2007; Cashmore and McLaughlin, 2013; Sun, Wu and Hu, 2013; Epp, Maynard-Moody and Haider-Markel, 2014, 2017; Ross, 2015; Baumgartner et al., 2017<sup>a,b</sup>; Edwards, Esposito and Lee, 2018; Ray, Ortiz and Nash, 2018). A handful of studies have begun to go further and look at whether certain behavioral interventions, such as implicit bias trainings (Smith, 2015; Fridell, 2016; Spencer, Charbonneau and Glaser, 2016; Nix et al., 2017), or specific institutions, such as oversight boards and the courts (Kennedy et al., 2017), can reduce racial discrimination in the police. While these new studies have produced important insights, notably that racial discrimination in the police is common in many settings, this work has one significant limitation. It does not isolate the mechanisms driving any observed discrimination. In other words, the empirical literature has largely focused on identifying where and when discriminatory policing occurs, rather than on investigating *why* it occurs. Without a better understanding of the factors that drive police discrimination it is hard to determine the most appropriate ways to reduce it. According to the existing literature, the primary explanation for racial discrimination in policing is that officers are bad agents. This could be because individuals prone to implicit or even explicit biases against racial groups choose to enter into policing (James, Vila and Daratha, 2013) or because bad institutional environments and poor training might instill or reinforce racially biased views in law enforcement officers (Smith and Alpert, 2007).

We contribute to this discussion by arguing that agents can be affected by media transmitting (biased) information and shaping their beliefs and perception of threat. Scholars have shown that media bias influences voting and political preferences (DellaVigna and Kaplan, 2007; Enikolopov, Petrova and Zhuravskaya, 2011; Adena et al., 2015; Martin and Yurukoglu, 2017), collective action (Zernike, 2010), political polarization (Prior, 2007; Martin and Yurukoglu, 2017), investment decisions (Friebel and Heinz, 2014), judicial decisions (Ash and Poyker, 2021), crime clearance rates (Mastorocco and Ornaghi, 2021), public-health behaviour (Ash et al., 2020; Ananyev, Poyker and Tian, 2021) city budgets (Galletta and Ash, 2019), and candidate entry (Arceneaux et al., 2020). We investigate whether media

slant influences who the police target with violence. Our null result has important implications for how we think about changing policing behavior by identifying one potential cause not driving the tremendous racial disparities observed in police killings.

## 1 Background

Police killings of civilians occur regularly in the United States. According to perhaps the best publicly available data, American law enforcement officers took the lives of more than 1,000 people in 2019, or about three people every day.<sup>2</sup> The use of fatal violence among law enforcement is so prevalent that it counts as one of the leading causes of death for young people in America. In line with this, while police repress people in the communities that they serve throughout the world, the level of violence exhibited by American police stands out globally. Among developed democracies, America ranks first in police killings, taking the lives of 33.5 people per million, a staggering number in comparison to other similar countries, such as Canada (9.8), Germany (1.3), or England (0.5).

While the magnitude of police violence in America has attracted both considerable attention and attempts to explain it, perhaps even more attention has been focused on the fact that United States law enforcement kills members of some groups more than others. [Edwards, Lee and Esposito \(2019\)](#) show, for instance, that “American Indian men are between 1.2 and 1.7 times more likely to be killed by police than are white men, and American Indian women are between 1.1 and 2.1 times more likely to be killed by police than are white women. Latino men are between 1.3 and 1.4 times more likely to be killed by police than are white men.” Among minorities, Black people are targeted the most in America. According to [Edwards, Lee and Esposito \(2019\)](#), “Black men are 2.5 times more likely than white men to be killed by police during their life time” and Black women are about 1.4 times more likely than white women to experience the same. Despite growing concern about these large disparities and increased community-based and political efforts at the local and national level to reduce them, there is little evidence that fatal police shootings against minorities

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<sup>2</sup>Unfortunately, there is no central governmental source for police killings in America. One reason for this is that there are nearly 18,000 law enforcement jurisdictions throughout the United States, each of which keeps their own statistics, and makes them publicly available to varying degrees. See [www.cnbc.com/2020/06/01/george-floyd-death-police-violence-in-the-us-in-4-charts.html](http://www.cnbc.com/2020/06/01/george-floyd-death-police-violence-in-the-us-in-4-charts.html).

have decreased over the last five years (Lett et al., 2021). While many explanations exist for the continuing gap between police killings of white and minorities in America, many center on racial biases.

Such biases are often associated with conservative views. A large, growing literature on the racial attitudes of white Americans consistently finds that conservatives and Republicans are more likely to exhibit negative attitudes to Black people and other minorities (e.g., Sidanius, Pratto and Bobo, 1996; Engelhardt, 2021). They are also more likely to express racial resentment, a mix of animus fused with particular moral attitudes about work ethic Peyton and Huber (2021), against Black folks. These findings about the link between conservatism and negative racial attitudes are mirrored in the expansive experimental literature that documents evidence of racist behavior, where individuals who hold conservative views or vote for the Republican party are consistently more likely to discriminate against Blacks.

One possible reason for why conservatives might hold these views is because of the elite rhetoric that they consume from right-leaning politicians and the media (Engelhardt, 2019). A particularly notable voice in this context is FNC. Ostensibly fair-and-balanced, FNC is known as a loudspeaker for (increasingly) conservative views about every aspect of American life.<sup>3</sup> They not only broadcast these views but persuade their viewership to adopt them, or cling more tightly to them. A growing line of research shows that viewing Fox News leads to more conservative attitudes (among many others, DellaVigna and Kaplan, 2007; Martin and Yurukoglu, 2017).<sup>4</sup> Conservative media like can Fox News influence racial attitudes in several ways. As Engelhardt (2019) shows, left-leaning media discuss how race shapes life course and outcomes in America. In contrast, right-leaning media tend to deny this idea and instead only focus on race when they can use it to produce spectacle or highlight cultural differences.

Liberal and conservative media also diverge in their coverage of crime. In general, American media tend to portray Black people as criminals. A canonical example of this comes from Hurricane Katrina coverage. Referring to those left displaced by the 2005 disaster, the media termed White people as “evacuees” and Black people as “refugees.” Similar differences

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<sup>3</sup>See [www.allsides.com/news-source/fox-news-media-bias](http://www.allsides.com/news-source/fox-news-media-bias).

<sup>4</sup>Data on viewership support this claim. For example, according to Pew Research, Fox News broadcasts are watched by individuals considerably to the right of the average American adult (Jurkowitz et al., 2020).

appear in how the media described images of Black and White people fleeing floodwaters with groceries and other goods. These individuals were described as “finding food” if White, but “looting” if Black (Sommers et al., 2006).

These racial differences are even more pronounced in conservative coverage of criminality. To illustrate this, Appendix Figure A.1 plots the word-cloud of words most similar to word “crime” constructed from transcripts of FNC shows in Panel A, as well as a similar word-cloud of MSNBC transcripts in Panel B. We see that the most common word in MSNBC coverage are not racially biased (e.g., “burglarizing” and “blotters”), while for the Fox News, most common words are “black-on-white” and “white-on-black.” Moreover, Fox News wording is over-emphasizing severe crimes (“molest,” “high crime,” or “priors”) and drug offences (“drugging,” “intoxication,” or “abuses”).

Summarizing, in line with the literature of the persuasive effect of media on peoples’ behaviour, Fox News messages influence conservatism (expressing itself in votes for Republican party, e.g., Martin and Yurukoglu, 2017), attitudes toward crime (Ash and Poyker, 2021), and compliance with safety measures (Ash et al., 2020; Ananyev, Poyker and Tian, 2021). We hypothesize, that, while unintentionally, Fox News strong language about crime and their over-emphasise of Black crimes can reify racism among its viewers. As a result, police officers carrying guns and watching FNC may be more likely to use them against Blacks people.

## 2 Data and Measurement: FNC Exposure and Police Killings

### 2.1 Data on Police Killings

The data for police killing come from FatalEncounters.org.<sup>5</sup> It contains all geo-coded police killings with the name of a victim from 2000 to 2017. We restrict our sample to

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<sup>5</sup>Accessible at <https://fatalencounters.org/>. Fatalencounters.org is run by D. Brian Burghart, a journalist and affiliated researcher at the University of Southern California. The data are compiled through three sources: (i) paid researcher submissions, (ii) public records requests, and (iii) crowdsourced submissions. All submissions are verified using media reports. This means that one potential weakness of the dataset is that a killing has to appear in the media to be counted. While all datasets on police killings in America have some biases — the end-result of there being no national, government-backed data collection efforts — the data from Fatalencounters.org are widely used and generally praised for their completeness (e.g., Ozkan, Worrall and Zettler, 2018; Conner et al., 2019).

killings committed between 2005 and 2008 to match the spell of our viewership data. Then we assign zip-code for each incident.

The data also contain the race and the name of the victim. Because the race variable contains numerous missing observations, we infer the race using first and last names of the victim. Following [Imai and Khanna \(2016\)](#), we use Census Bureau’s surname list to construct the race of the victims via Bayesian prediction.<sup>6</sup> We then create a panel dataset of killings with zip-code-year-level cells by race.

Each zip-code-year has at most three police killings of Black persons. With an average of 0.007 and standard deviation of 0.09 over 15,790 zip-codes in 2005–2008. Overall, we have 445 killings of Black persons in 416 zip-code-years for that period across the United States.<sup>7</sup> For comparison, we have 335 Hispanic and 511 White persons killed by police over the same period.

## 2.2 Data on Media Consumption and Exogenous Variation in Fox News Exposure

The data on media viewership and channel positions come from Nielsen and represent the same dataset as used in [Martin and Yurukoglu \(2017\)](#). We first construct a measure of zip-code exposure to FNC. Our main explanatory  $FNCv_{it}$  is Fox viewership in zip-code  $i$  and year  $t$  minus the average of CNN and MSNBC viewership. Because we expect that people may receive information from several sources, areas where people receive news from multiple sources may be less affected by FNC’s messaging than those receiving information only from Fox News.

FNC viewership is correlated with political preferences and racism, which can potentially bias our estimate of the effect of FNC viewership on police shootings. For example, since many of FNC hosts are conservative, its viewers might be inherently more likely to consider Black people as violent criminals, which might increase the that police viewers would shoot Black individuals. Also, given the well-documented gun-ownership divide in the U.S., it is

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<sup>6</sup>Our predicted race is almost identical to imputed race on the sample of observations without missing race.

<sup>7</sup>389 observations with one killing, 25 observations with two killings, and 2 observations with three killings of Black persons by police in a zip-code-year.

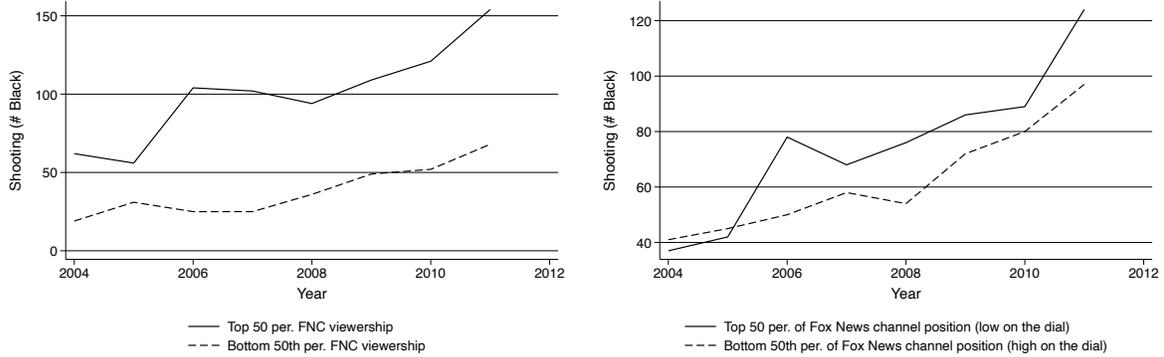
likely the police from pro-gun ownership zip-codes watch FNC more and are more likely to use it while on duty.

To deal with these (and potentially other) threats to inferences, we employ instrumental variable analysis, and instrument actual FNC viewership with a measure of exogenous variation in exposure to FNC: the position of FNC in the cable lineup relative to two other major channels, CNN and MSNBC. FNC was launched in 1996 and quickly expanded its geographic coverage through bilateral negotiations with local cable providers. As a result of those negotiations, those providers started offering FNC as a part of their packages, usually replacing one of their channels with the goal to minimize the change in the existing lineup and not to disrupt the experience of the viewers. This process created quasi-experimental variation in FNC exposure. When FNC has a larger number in the cable lineup position, people are less likely to watch it because it takes more effort to move to this channel. See detailed discussions in [Martin and Yurukoglu \(2017\)](#).

As a preview of our main results, we present a visual evidence on how exposure to FNC affected police killings of Blacks. Panel A of Figure 1 plots number of killings of Black persons in the zip-codes that were at the top half of the FNC viewership in 2005 (solid line) and at the bottom half of the FNC viewership (dashed line). We can see that zip-codes that watched more FNC in 2005 already had higher number of shootings of Black than zip-codes in the bottom half of FNC viewership. This observation is inline with our understanding of the endogenous nature of media consumption. Panel B shows the number of shootings of Black persons for the top half (low on the dial, solid line) and bottom half (high on the dial, dashed line). We can see that both groups of zip-codes had similar trends and levels of police killings of Blacks before 2005, but after 2005 zip-codes with lower channel position of Fox News experienced larger increase in the number of Black police killings.

Panel A of Figure 2 demonstrates that FNC position predicts well FNC viewership share (replicating first-stage regression from the [Martin and Yurukoglu, 2017](#)). Panel B shows the reduced form relationship between Fox News channel and number of police killings of Black persons; zip-codes with lower position of FNC on the dial have more killings.

**Figure 1:** Police Killings of Black and Exposure to Fox News



(a) Pol. Killings of Blacks & Fox Viewership      (b) Pol. Killings of Blacks & Fox Channel Position

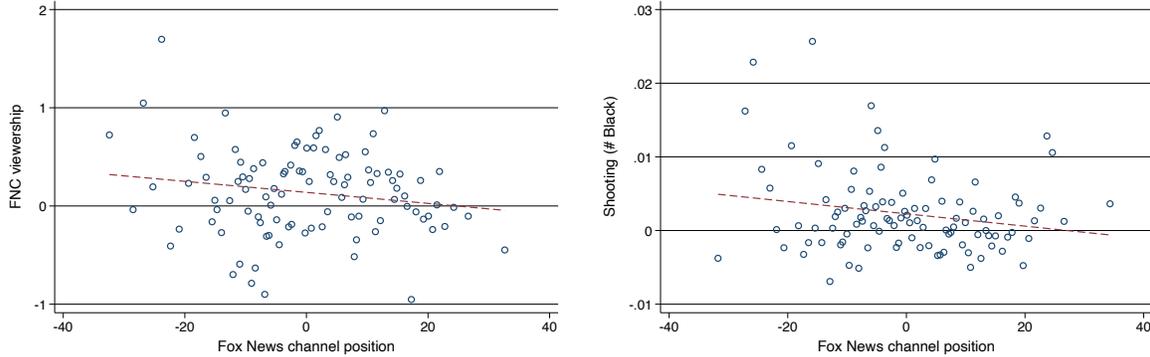
*Notes:* Panel A correlates Fox News viewership and total number of police killings of Black persons in the top 50% and bottom 50% of zip-codes by Fox News consumption. Panel B correlates Fox News channel position in cable line-up and total number of police killings of Black persons in the top 50% and bottom 50% of zip-codes by Fox’s channel position.

Because many rural location have fewer channels than urban locations, instead of just using FNC channel position relative to the channel positions of MSNBC and CNN ( $FNCpos_i = FNCp_i - (CNNp_i + MSNBP_i)/2$ ).<sup>8</sup> As channel position does not change much over time in our years of study, the instrument is essentially time-invariant and the identifying variation that we use is cross-sectional.

We obtain zip-code-level viewership and the average positions of FNC, CNN, and MSNBC from Nielsen. FNC viewership share varies from 0% to 42% and FNC channel positions varies from #1 in cable lineup to #95, and its standard deviation is about 15 channels. [Martin and Yurukoglu \(2017\)](#) using an identical dataset demonstrated that FNC channel position is not predicted by 1996 Republican voting share or electoral contributions and is not explained predicted voting outcomes and viewership using the 2010 demographics.

<sup>8</sup>Hence, the instrument is constructed in the similar way as the endogenous variable. Note, that MSNBC’s channel position is as exogenous as FNC, as it was launched the same year, in July 1996. CNN’s channel position is less exogenous, but [Martin and Yurukoglu \(2017\)](#) shows that it is also uncorrelated to the 1996 voting shares.

**Figure 2:** First-Stage and Reduced-Form Residual Plots



(a) Binscatter of the First Stage

(b) Binscatter of the Reduced Form

*Notes:* Panel A is a binscatter for the correlation between number of Fox News viewership and Fox’s channel position in cable line-up. Panel A is a binscatter for the correlation between number of killings of Black persons and Fox News channel position in cable line-up.

### 2.3 Other Factors Affecting Police Killings

There are several factors other than media viewership that could potentially affect the extent of police shooting. Importantly, as we cannot control for zip-code fixed effects due to our time invariant instrument, and since residential racism can be very local, we control for zip-code level population, land area, number of housing units, and median income using 2010 census data. We also use FNC transcripts from LexisNexis to construct word counts of Black-crime-related words.

## 3 Empirical Specification and Results

### 3.1 Empirical Specification and Identification Strategy

The objective of the empirical exercise is to identify the effect of consumption of FNC on police shootings. We start by constructing a zip-code-year panel for 2005–2008. We estimate

a 2SLS specification, where our first-stage is as follows:

$$FNCv_{it} = \phi \cdot FNCpos_i + X_i\Gamma + \mu_s + \lambda_t + \varepsilon_{it}, \quad (1)$$

and the second stage is

$$\text{Killing}_{irt} = \beta \cdot \widehat{FNCv}_{it} + X_i\Gamma + \mu_s + \lambda_t + \epsilon_{irt}. \quad (2)$$

$\text{Killing}_{it}$  is the number of shootings of a race  $r$  that happened in area  $i$  located in year  $t$ ,  $FNCv_{it}$  is the share of audience watching FNC relative to the audience watching CNN and MSNBC, and  $FNCpos_{it}$  is the FNC position relative to the position of CNN and MSNBC measured in 2005. Note, that the instrument is cross-sectional because channel position almost do not change over time. Thus, we can't use zip-code-level fixed effects and our identification is essentially *cross-sectional*. We control for state ( $\mu_s$ ) and year ( $\lambda_t$ ) fixed effects. Vector  $X_{i(s)}$  includes a set of additional fixed effects and zip-code-level demographic and economic controls. Standard errors are clustered at the treatment (zip-code) level.<sup>9</sup>

The coefficient of interest  $\beta$  captures the effect of FNC viewership on police killing of race  $r$ . We expect it to be positive for Black people and Hispanic individuals and have non-negative effect on the shootings of whites.

Additionally, we add primary county ( $\mu_c$ ) fixed effects to control for time-invariant county-level factors, such as conservatism.<sup>10</sup> We add state-year ( $\mu_{st}$ ) fixed effects to absorb changes in state-level legislation that may affect shooting and demand for Fox News. We also use county-year ( $\mu_{ct}$ ) fixed effects to absorb even more local changes in public goods provision and counties' police force composition. Finally, to control for local demographic and socio-economic that may affect FNC viewership and police shootings, we include controls for zip-code-level population, land area, and number of housing units.

Because, police shootings are measured at the zip-code level of event, but policemen may live outside of the zip-code where shooting happened we allow out treatment ( $FNCv_{it}$ ) and

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<sup>9</sup>Results hold if we cluster by county's largest service provider; however, as zip-codes have several service providers and our viewership data is on the zip-code level we prefer more aggregated zip-code-level clustering.

<sup>10</sup>For each zip-code we assign a county based on its population: county where most of the zip-code's population lives is a primary county.

instrument ( $FNCpos_i$ ) to be measured not just on the killing-incident-level but on the larger area around that zip-code.

$$\text{Killing}_{i(a)rt} = \beta \cdot \widehat{FNC}v_{at} + X_i\Gamma + \mu_s + \lambda_t + \epsilon_{i(a)rt}, \quad (3)$$

where, subscript  $i(a)$  defines zip-code of shooting  $i$  located in an area  $a$  and the explanatory variable is measured on the area  $a$  that includes zip-code  $i$  and all zip-codes in a radius from the  $i$ 's centroid. Here, we will consider 15, 30, and 45 miles radii. Importantly, we will present our results on two samples — with and without Florida — because inclusion of this state actually matters and deserves separate discussion.

### 3.2 Main Results

Table 1 shows the effect of FNC viewership on police killing using various specifications without the state of Florida. For the sake of interpretability, we normalize our explanatory variable to have mean zero and standard deviation of one. In Panel A Column I, we estimate specification in Equation 2 without any controls or fixed effects. The point estimate of interest  $\hat{\beta}$  is positive and significant.

In Columns II–VI, we sequentially add a set of fixed effects and controls for demographic and socio-economic variables. The coefficient of interest remains virtually unchanged when we add state and year fixed effects in Column II. However, when in Column III, we add zip-code level controls for population, number of housing units, and zip-code's area, the coefficient of interest is halved and become *statistically insignificant*. The coefficient remains insignificant in Columns IV–VI, when we include state-year fixed effects, zip-code's primary county fixed effect, or county-year fixed effects. Note, that the first stage remains strong, and the F-statistics of excluded instrument is equal to 15 in the most conservative specification in Column VI. The evidence then suggests that slanted conservative media does not influence police killings.

The coefficient indicates that a one-standard-deviation increase in FNC viewership relative to CNN and MSNBC led to a 0.026 killings of Black persons or 0.27-standard-deviation larger increase in average number of police killings of Blacks in a zip-code. While this coef-

**Table 1:** Exposure to Fox News Increases Number of Police Killings of Black Persons (2005–2008)

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
<i>Panel A:</i>						
	Dependent variable: Killing (# Black)					
Fox News	0.043** (0.0176)	0.043** (0.0173)	0.023 (0.0140)	0.021 (0.0140)	0.024 (0.0178)	0.026 (0.0179)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	25.5	24.5	28.4	27.6	16.5	15.0
Observations	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576
<i>Panel B:</i>						
Fox News, 15m radius	0.009 (0.0054)	0.010 (0.0064)	0.007 (0.0062)	0.006 (0.0060)	0.007 (0.0078)	0.003 (0.0048)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	120.5	84.7	88.1	89.2	48.0	39.2
Observations	114,744	114,744	114,744	114,744	114,744	114,744
<i>Panel C:</i>						
Fox News, 30m radius	0.005 (0.0041)	0.007 (0.0061)	0.003 (0.0055)	0.002 (0.0054)	0.006 (0.0122)	-0.000 (0.0033)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	167.9	87.7	107.3	107.1	18.3	41.7
Observations	124,596	124,596	124,596	124,596	124,596	124,596
<i>Panel D:</i>						
Fox News, 45m radius	0.004 (0.0045)	0.010 (0.0112)	-0.000 (0.0082)	-0.002 (0.0083)	0.231 (0.8179)	0.005 (0.0046)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	128.1	31.0	57.7	56.8	18.8	18.8
Observations	126,092	126,092	126,092	126,092	126,092	126,092
<i>Panel E:</i>						
CNN	0.003 (0.0112)	0.003 (0.0112)	0.004 (0.0113)	0.006 (0.0112)	-0.026 (0.0164)	-0.029 (0.0192)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	84.0	74.0	71.9	73.7	0.1	24.3
Observations	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576
<i>Panel F:</i>						
MSNBC	-0.001 (0.0030)	-0.003 (0.0039)	-0.016*** (0.0048)	-0.015*** (0.0047)	-0.007 (0.0062)	-0.008 (0.0066)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	307.3	157.5	132.2	135.3	65.5	56.1
Observations	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576
FEs: state & year		✓	✓			
Zip-code controls			✓	✓	✓	✓
FEs: state x year				✓	✓	
FEs: primary county					✓	
FEs: county x year						✓

*Notes:* The dependent variable is the total number of Black persons killed in a zip-code-year. The explanatory variable is normalized to have mean 0 and standard deviation of 1. Zip-code-level controls include: log population, log area, and log number of housing units. We define primary county as a county where the largest share of the zip-code's population dwells. In this Table we omit the state of Florida; we replicate this Table with Florida in Table A4. Each Panel uses different endogenous variable and instrument. In Panel A, we use zip-code's *i* FNC viewership and channel position. In Panels B–D, we use endogenous variable and channel position computed as population-weighted average of all zip-codes with centroids within 15, 30, or 45 miles. Panels E and F replicate Panel A but uses viewership and channel position of CNN and MSNBC, respectively. Standard errors are clustered on zip-code level. \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$

ficient is meaningful in standard deviation terms, it suggests that a zip-code needs to have 38 standard deviations larger exposure to Fox News to explain one killing per year. So this effect is substantively small, perhaps even trivial.

In Panel B we allow our treatment and instrument to be computed on the area larger than the zip-code. There, we use the zip-code of killing and all zip-codes within 15-miles radius to compute their average FNC viewership and channel position.<sup>11</sup> Another benefit of counting nearby zip-codes as part of the treatment area is because not all zip-codes had Fox News. As a result, Panel A would drop them because while Fox viewership is 0, the channel position is not available to include these observations in the first stage. By expanding the treatment area, we now include additional zip-codes that may not have Fox themselves but may be still affected by police living in nearby zip-codes with Fox News.

The coefficient of interest remains positive throughout all columns. However, the coefficient is now insignificant in *all specifications*, and its magnitude becomes even smaller: one-standard-deviation increase in FNC viewership relative to CNN and MSNBC led to a 0.026 killings of Black persons or 0.03-standard-deviation larger increase in average number of police killings of Blacks in a zip-code. Our results hold if we use alternative thresholds of 30 or 45 miles in Panels C and D, respectively. The point-estimate even becomes a precisely estimated zero in Column VI of Panel C, and all coefficients remain insignificant.<sup>12</sup>

We also want to test the extent to which other media have effects on police shooting. CNN is a centrist channel, while MSNBC is a left-leaning channel that may promote some level of awareness of the racial injustice. Panels E and F replicate Panel A but use the relative viewership shares and channel positions of CNN and MSNBC, respectively. CNN has no effect on police killings of Black. MSNBC, at the other hand has negative effect on the killings of Black (consistent with the left-bias of the channel). The coefficient appears significant in specifications with zip-code-level controls and state-year fixed effects in Columns III–IV,

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<sup>11</sup>Appendix Table A1 contains results for similar specification but where we exclude the exact zip-code of the killing. This may be important if one think that the effect is driven not by police but by the victims; e.g., after watching FNC they may more likely to own guns and thus more likely to be shot. While this is unlikely, because the Black population constitutes almost 0% of the FNC viewers, we find that our results hold when we exclude the zip-code of killing and our results are likely to be driven by police.

<sup>12</sup>Inclusion of 45-miles radius in Panel D eventually weakens the first stage, suggesting, that 30 miles radius may be the optimal threshold. The first stage in Column V of Panel D is failing due to the combination of controls and causes gigantic IV bias.

but the significance fades away when we start controlling for county fixed effects in Columns V–VI.

Surprisingly, Table 1 looks quite different when we include Florida. Table A4 reports these results. The coefficient for the effect of Fox News on police killings of Blacks is significant in most of the specifications, including those with zip-codes controls and state-year fixed effects in Columns III–IV. In Panel A it becomes marginally insignificant when we add county fixed effects, but even in Column VI with county-year fixed effects, the p-value is 0.15. Similarly, we see the opposite effect of other slanted media — MSNBC. Its negative effect become significant in Columns I–V.

These patterns appear, though, only with Florida. Figure A.2 shows that dropping any state but Florida results in a very stable magnitude of the coefficient but dropping Florida kills the significance of the positive effect of Fox News on police killings of Blacks. Why is this so? We hypothesize this is because our effect is the local average treatment effect (LATE) of people who are indifferent between watching Fox, CNN, or MSNBC when browsing channels. That means for us to identify an effect of Fox on police behavior, there should be enough policemen to be such indifferent people. Florida has many police, so we see some positive effect of Fox on police killings. However, in the rest of the U.S., policemen are not affected by the Fox exposure. This finding is in line with the previous literature, because when [Martin and Yurukoglu \(2017\)](#) find its effect of voters behaviour, they use indifferent compliers from the whole US population rather than just from the police. Similarly, [Ash and Poyker \(2021\)](#) find that Fox affects (all) peoples’ perception of crime but at the same time finds no effect on the number of offenses in each sentencing case. The later outcome is strongly influenced by police. As a result, we conclude that while Fox affects general population, when it comes to a small subset of the population (e.g., police force), the effect may not manifest itself in most of the states for the exception of quite unique in its demographic composition Florida.

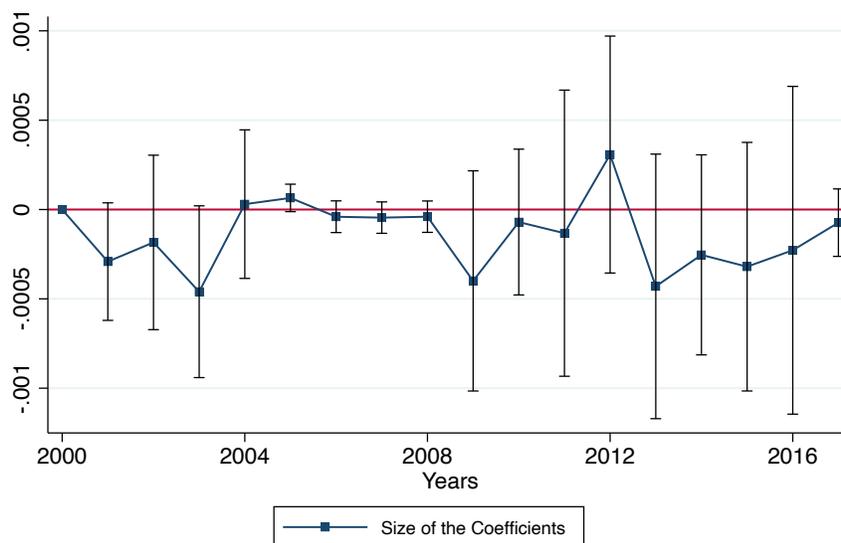
Because most of the zip-codes with killings have at most one killing per year we replicate and show in the Appendix Tables A2 our baseline results with a dummy for a killed Black person instead of the number of killed Black persons. The resulting coefficients can be interpreted as probabilities: a one-standard-deviation increase in FNC viewership relative to CNN and MSNBC led to a very modest 1.9-percentage-point larger increase in probability

of police killing a Black person in a zip-code. However, after controlling for the zip-codes' population in Columns III, all estimates become insignificant.

Because we essentially imputed the race of the killed persons with the help of machine learning, Table A3 show that our null-result holds when we only use those killings for which the race is known with certainty. However, the coefficient of interest remains insignificant.

We also test a hypothesis about whether exposure to FNC has effect on killings of Hispanic and white persons. From our reading of FNC transcripts, we expect that if there is an effect it should be smaller than that for Black persons. Appendix Table A5 replicates our baseline results for the number of killed Hispanic and white persons in Panels A and B and for the dummies in Panels C and D. None of the coefficient demonstrate robust significance and all coefficients are substantively close to zero. This suggests that FNC viewership has no meaningful effect on police killings of victims of any race.

**Figure 3:** Reduced-Form Effect of Fox News on Police Killings by Years



*Notes:* Reduced-form regressions for effect on police killings of Black persons of cross-sectional variation in Fox News channel position in 2005, interacted with time-period dummies. This figure replicates Column I of Table A6 and can be viewed as a repeated cross section providing yearly coefficients. Fox News was established in October 1996 but we do not have data on police killings before 2000. Year 2000 is chosen as a reference year. Error spikes give 95% confidence intervals.

Table A6 report the reduced form for the baseline sample. While we saw the effect of interest in the raw data (see Figure 2), with the full set of controls, reduced form estimates are all insignificant and are, essentially, zeroes. While we only have zip-code level viewership data for 2005–2008, we can use our cross-sectional variation in FNC position to estimate the reduced form effect on killings of Black people for all available at Fatalencounters.org years. Hence, in Figure 3 we estimate the reduced form of the Equation 3 but for the sample of 2000–2017, and find no effect of Fox channel position on killings of Blacks even in later years.

### 3.3 Mechanisms

How does FNC affect police shootings of Blacks? Maybe by adding interactions with the messages of racism and conservatism broadcasted by Fox, the estimates may become more pronounced? FNC exposure can affect the degree of racism and conservatism, which can directly affect the behavior of police if conservative and racist population has different preferences, and indirectly, through the *interpretation* of the crime-related messages conveyed by FNC. These effects are on top of direct information feeds by FNC that may affect all of its audience, irrespective of their ideology. To separate (1) racism/conservatism, (2) information, and (3) the interaction of the two, we introduce the following specification with the interaction:

$$\text{Killing}_{i(a)rt} = \beta_1 \cdot FNCv_{at} + \beta_2 \cdot FNCv_{it} \times \text{FNC Message}_t + X_i\Gamma + \mu_s + \lambda_t + \epsilon_{irt}, \quad (4)$$

where  $\text{FNC Message}_t$  is the measure of FNC’s interpretation of Black crimes at year  $t$ . Similar to Equation (3), here we also use 2SLS estimation, where the interaction of  $FNCv_{at} \times \text{FNC Message}_t$  is instrumented with  $FNCpos_{at} \times \text{FNC Message}_t$ .<sup>13</sup>

As county-year fixed effects allow us to absorb away local trends in conservatism, we can’t entirely address local (zip-code-level) trends in residential racism and crime rates. Coefficient  $\beta_1$  helps to identify the effect of FNC on built-up racism while the coefficient  $\beta_2$  of the interaction allows us to separate the remaining effect of FNC on police shooting coming through the information feed or through the interaction of information and racism.

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<sup>13</sup>Note, that  $\text{FNC Message}_t$  is absorbed by time fixed effects.

**Table 2:** Mentioning of Crimes, Drugs, and Blacks in FNC’s Transcripts and Police Killings

	I	II	III	IV
	Dependent variable: Killing (# Black)			
Fox News	-0.090 (0.1013)	-0.063 (0.0772)	-0.149 (0.1767)	-0.007 (0.0357)
Fox News x Log # crime mentioning	-0.015 (0.0167)			
Fox News x Log # crime & black mentioning		-0.006 (0.0079)		
Fox News x Log # crack mentioning			-0.019 (0.0227)	
Proximity to election x Log # drugs & black mentioning				-0.001 (0.0034)
F-stat of ex. inst. (channel position)	23.76	25.09	24.76	23.74
Observations	124,596	124,596	124,596	124,596

*Notes:* The dependent variable is the total number of Black persons killed in a zip-code-year. All Columns use the baseline specification from Column VI of Table 1 but interacts Fox’s viewership with a measure of mentioning crime and black-related words in Fox’s transcripts. In each column we add a second instrument — interaction of Fox’s channel position with that measure of crime and black-related words in Fox’s transcripts. Column-specific measure of crime and black-related words in Fox’s transcripts is absorbed by time fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the zip-code level. \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$

Table 2 presents results using FNC messaging based on the number of times it mentions crime-related words in the transcripts of their programs. Columns I to IV reports results for different measures: number of times it mention word “crime,” “crime” and “black,” any word for drugs, and any word for drugs and “black.” Adding interactions did not meaningfully affect the significance of the estimates.

Overall, the results of this Section suggest that Fox message does not have any effect on the police killings.

## 4 Discussion and Conclusion

Much of the focus on reducing racial discrimination in police killings has centered on police officers themselves, and their characteristics. As we show here, the messages conveyed by the media do not seem to shape officer attributes or decision making when it comes to

the use of lethal force. We estimate the effect of exposure to one of the most popular media source (FNC) — that has used controversial, problematic language related to the fear of Black crimes — on police shooting, the extreme manifestation of racism by police force. Using zip-code-level police shooting data in 2005–2008 and the position of FNC relative to CNN and MSNBC in the cable lineup, we show that increased exposure to FNC does not have any effect on the number of police shooting of Blacks, Hispanics, and Whites. This result suggests that while slanted media influence many attitudes and behaviors in American life, these effects also have their limits, particularly when it comes to lethal acitons.

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**Online Appendix**  
**to**  
**“Slanted Media Does not Increase**  
**Police Killings”**

## A Additional Results

Appendix Figure A.1: Fox’s Discourse on Crime is Racialized

*Panel A. Most Similar Words to “Crime”: Fox News*



*Panel B. Most Similar Words to “Crime”: MSNBC*



Notes: Most closely related terms to “crime,” in FNC and MSNBC, respectively. Similarities computed from word2vec models trained separately on the transcript corpora for each network. Larger words mean the word has higher similarity for the indicated network and lower similarity for the other two networks.

**Appendix Table A1:** Robustness for Table 1: Doughnut Specification

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
<i>Panel A:</i>						
	Dependent variable: Killing (# Black)					
Fox News	0.088*** (0.0262)	0.078*** (0.0229)	0.059*** (0.0192)	0.058*** (0.0192)	0.028 (0.0175)	0.025 (0.0178)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	25.5	24.5	28.4	27.6	16.5	15.0
Observations	67,756	67,756	67,756	67,756	67,756	67,756
<i>Panel B:</i>						
Fox News, 15m radius	0.033*** (0.0086)	0.033*** (0.0094)	0.031*** (0.0092)	0.030*** (0.0090)	0.012 (0.0074)	0.003 (0.0050)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	120.5	84.7	88.1	89.2	48.0	39.2
Observations	118,424	118,424	118,424	118,424	118,424	118,424
<i>Panel C:</i>						
Fox News, 30m radius	0.024*** (0.0066)	0.026*** (0.0079)	0.023*** (0.0074)	0.022*** (0.0073)	0.020* (0.0108)	-0.000 (0.0034)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	167.9	87.7	107.3	107.1	18.3	41.7
Observations	128,528	128,528	128,528	128,528	128,528	128,528
<i>Panel D:</i>						
Fox News, 45m radius	0.026*** (0.0077)	0.031*** (0.0099)	0.023*** (0.0084)	0.022*** (0.0083)	0.062* (0.0366)	0.004 (0.0047)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	128.1	31.0	57.7	56.8	18.8	18.8
Observations	130,024	130,024	130,024	130,024	130,024	130,024
<i>Panel E:</i>						
CNN	0.014 (0.0126)	0.016 (0.0125)	0.018 (0.0126)	0.020 (0.0125)	-0.017 (0.0167)	-0.029 (0.0199)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	84.0	74.0	71.9	73.7	30.4	24.3
Observations	67,756	67,756	67,756	67,756	67,756	67,756
<i>Panel F:</i>						
MSNBC	-0.012*** (0.0043)	-0.018*** (0.0062)	-0.034*** (0.0076)	-0.033*** (0.0074)	-0.013* (0.0068)	-0.009 (0.0070)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	307.3	157.5	132.2	135.3	65.5	56.1
Observations	67,756	67,756	67,756	67,756	67,756	67,756
FEs: state & year		✓	✓			
Zip-code controls			✓	✓	✓	✓
FEs: state x year				✓	✓	
FEs: primary county					✓	
FEs: county x year						✓

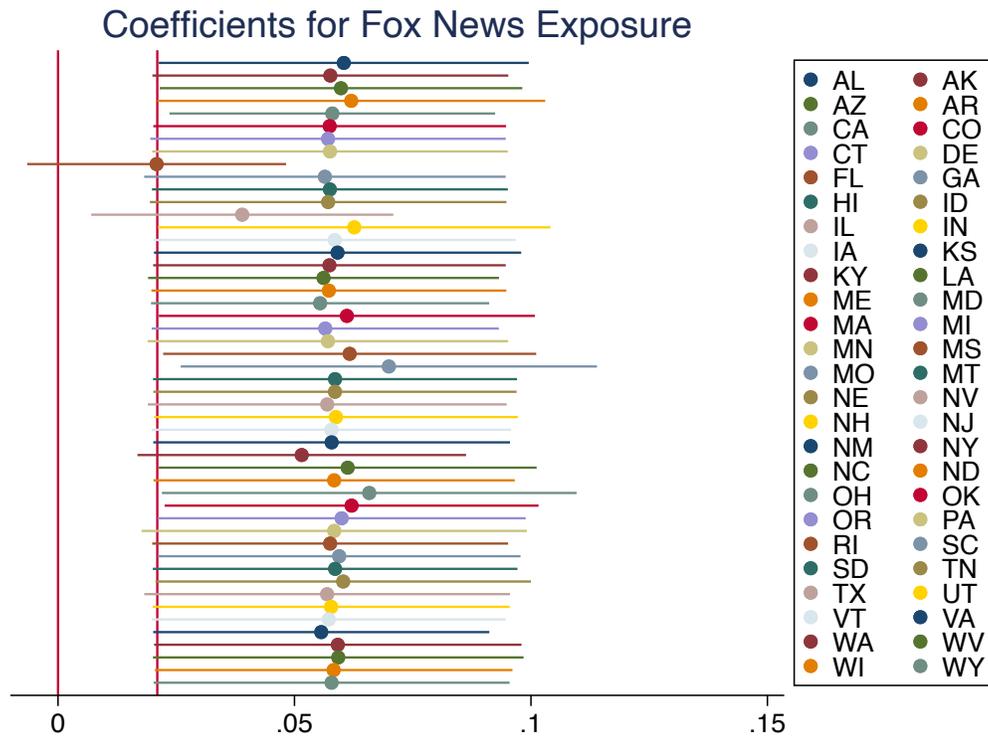
*Notes:* This Table replicates Panels B, C, and D of Table 1 but omits the zip-code of killing when computing the FNC's viewership and channel position. Standard errors are clustered at the zip-code level. \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

**Appendix Table A2:** Robustness for Table 1: Specification with Dummies for Killings

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
<i>Panel A:</i>						
	Dependent variable: 1(Black person is killed)					
Fox News	0.037** (0.0158)	0.037** (0.0153)	0.019 (0.0126)	0.017 (0.0125)	0.017 (0.0157)	0.019 (0.0157)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	25.5	24.5	28.4	27.6	16.5	15.0
Observations	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576
<i>Panel B:</i>						
Fox News, 15m radius	0.008 (0.0050)	0.009 (0.0060)	0.007 (0.0058)	0.006 (0.0057)	0.005 (0.0074)	0.002 (0.0045)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	120.5	84.7	88.1	89.2	48.0	39.2
Observations	114,744	114,744	114,744	114,744	114,744	114,744
<i>Panel C:</i>						
Fox News, 30m radius	0.005 (0.0038)	0.006 (0.0057)	0.002 (0.0052)	0.002 (0.0051)	0.004 (0.0113)	-0.001 (0.0030)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	167.9	87.7	107.3	107.1	18.3	41.7
Observations	124,596	124,596	124,596	124,596	124,596	124,596
<i>Panel D:</i>						
Fox News, 45m radius	0.004 (0.0041)	0.009 (0.0102)	-0.000 (0.0075)	-0.001 (0.0075)	0.185 (0.6628)	0.004 (0.0043)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	128.1	31.0	57.7	56.8	18.8	18.8
Observations	126,092	126,092	126,092	126,092	126,092	126,092
<i>Panel E:</i>						
CNN	0.007 (0.0102)	0.007 (0.0101)	0.008 (0.0102)	0.009 (0.0100)	-0.016 (0.0139)	-0.017 (0.0160)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	84.0	74.0	71.9	73.7	30.4	24.3
Observations	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576
<i>Panel F:</i>						
MSNBC	-0.002 (0.0028)	-0.003 (0.0036)	-0.015*** (0.0044)	-0.014*** (0.0044)	-0.007 (0.0059)	-0.008 (0.0063)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	307.3	157.5	132.2	135.3	65.5	56.1
Observations	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576
FEs: state & year		✓	✓			
Zip-code controls			✓	✓	✓	✓
FEs: state x year				✓	✓	
FEs: primary county					✓	
FEs: county x year						✓

*Notes:* The dependent variable is the total number of Black persons killed in a zip-code-year. This Table replicates Table 1 but instead of the total number of Black persons killed in a zip-code-year uses dummy for any killing of Black person as the dependent variable. Standard errors are clustered at the zip-code level. \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Appendix Figure A.2: Dropping Florida vs. Dropping any Other State



*Notes:* This figure reports on the point-estimate and 95th-percent confidence band that results when re-estimating the specification in Column IV of Panel A of Table A4, dropping one state at a time. The (red) vertical line is the baseline point estimate from Column IV of Panel A of Table 1. The results are sorted top-to-bottom in alphabetical order, i.e., omit AL, then AK, then AZ, etc. Dropping Montana increases the coefficient the most. Dropping Florida decreases the point-estimate the most.

**Appendix Table A3:** Robustness for Table 1: Specification without Imputation of Race when the Race of Killed Person is Missing

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
<i>Panel A:</i>						
	Dependent variable: Killing (# Black w/o imputations)					
Fox News	0.099** (0.0403)	0.181** (0.0811)	0.167** (0.0762)	0.163** (0.0768)	0.281 (0.3414)	0.191 (0.2010)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	25.5	24.5	28.4	27.6	16.5	15.0
Observations	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576
<i>Panel B:</i>						
Fox News, 15m radius	0.032** (0.0131)	0.076*** (0.0247)	0.060*** (0.0208)	0.056*** (0.0204)	0.033 (0.0346)	0.017 (0.0149)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	120.5	84.7	88.1	89.2	48.0	39.2
Observations	114,744	114,744	114,744	114,744	114,744	114,744
<i>Panel C:</i>						
Fox News, 30m radius	0.030** (0.0135)	0.217* (0.1299)	0.106** (0.0484)	0.122* (0.0653)	-0.151 (0.2594)	0.017 (0.0165)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	167.9	87.7	107.3	107.1	18.3	41.7
Observations	124,596	124,596	124,596	124,596	124,596	124,596
<i>Panel D:</i>						
Fox News, 45m radius	0.030* (0.0176)	-0.731 (1.4504)	0.155 (0.1185)	0.257 (0.3352)	-0.085 (0.0743)	0.141 (0.1074)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	128.1	31.0	57.7	56.8	0.1	18.8
Observations	126,092	126,092	126,092	126,092	126,092	126,092
<i>Panel E:</i>						
CNN	-0.002 (0.0146)	-0.013 (0.0147)	-0.010 (0.0146)	-0.008 (0.0145)	-0.020 (0.0266)	-0.015 (0.0279)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	84.0	74.0	71.9	73.7	30.4	24.3
Observations	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576
<i>Panel F:</i>						
MSNBC	-0.036*** (0.0113)	-0.063*** (0.0190)	-0.059*** (0.0184)	-0.058*** (0.0180)	-0.038* (0.0224)	-0.035 (0.0232)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	307.3	157.5	132.2	135.3	65.5	56.1
Observations	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576	64,576
FEs: state & year		✓	✓			
Zip-code controls			✓	✓	✓	✓
FEs: state x year				✓	✓	
FEs: primary county					✓	
FEs: county x year						✓

*Notes:* The dependent variable is the total number of Black persons killed in a zip-code-year. This Table replicates Table 1 but omits those killings where race is not defined by the Fatalencounters.org. Standard errors are clustered at the zip-code level. \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

**Appendix Table A5:** Exposure to Fox News and Police Killings of Hispanic and White Persons

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
<i>Panel A:</i>						
	<u>Dependent variable: Shooting (# Hispanic)</u>					
Fox News	-0.028** (0.0138)	-0.030** (0.0140)	-0.036*** (0.0134)	-0.036*** (0.0138)	-0.019 (0.0161)	-0.012 (0.0160)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	12.572	11.246	11.423	10.921	11.518	11.704
Observations	61,260	61,120	61,117	61,117	60,953	60,953
<i>Panel B:</i>						
	<u>Dependent variable: Shooting (# White)</u>					
Fox News	0.002 (0.0148)	0.004 (0.0144)	0.004 (0.0134)	0.007 (0.0135)	0.002 (0.0183)	-0.008 (0.0176)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	12.572	11.246	11.423	10.921	11.518	11.704
Observations	61,260	61,120	61,117	61,117	60,953	60,953
<i>Panel C:</i>						
	<u>Dependent variable: Dummy if Hispanic person killed</u>					
Fox News	-0.027** (0.0125)	-0.029** (0.0128)	-0.034*** (0.0122)	-0.034*** (0.0124)	-0.020 (0.0148)	-0.016 (0.0148)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	12.572	11.246	11.423	10.921	11.518	11.704
Observations	61,260	61,120	61,117	61,117	60,953	60,953
<i>Panel D:</i>						
	<u>Dependent variable: Dummy if White person killed</u>					
Fox News	0.000 (0.0141)	0.003 (0.0133)	0.002 (0.0124)	0.005 (0.0125)	-0.008 (0.0168)	-0.017 (0.0169)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	12.572	11.246	11.423	10.921	11.518	11.704
Observations	61,260	61,120	61,117	61,117	60,953	60,953
FEs: state & year		✓	✓			
Zip-code controls			✓	✓	✓	✓
FEs: state x year				✓	✓	
FEs: primary county					✓	
FEs: county x year						✓

*Notes:* This Table replicates Panel A of Table 1 but uses different dependent variable. The dependent variable in Panel A is the number of Hispanic persons, in Panel B — number of White persons, in Panel C — dummy for any killed Hispanic person, and Panel D — dummy for any killed White person. Standard errors are clustered at the zip-code level. \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

**Appendix Table A4:** Exposure to Fox News Increases Number of Police Killings of Black Persons (2005–2008), with Florida

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
<i>Panel A:</i>						
	Dependent variable: Killing (# Black)					
Fox News	0.088*** (0.0262)	0.078*** (0.0229)	0.059*** (0.0192)	0.058*** (0.0192)	0.028 (0.0175)	0.025 (0.0178)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	25.5	24.5	28.4	27.6	16.5	15.0
Observations	67,756	67,756	67,756	67,756	67,756	67,756
<i>Panel B:</i>						
Fox News, 15m radius	0.033*** (0.0086)	0.033*** (0.0094)	0.031*** (0.0092)	0.030*** (0.0090)	0.012 (0.0074)	0.003 (0.0050)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	120.5	84.7	88.1	89.2	48.0	39.2
Observations	118,424	118,424	118,424	118,424	118,424	118,424
<i>Panel C:</i>						
Fox News, 30m radius	0.024*** (0.0066)	0.026*** (0.0079)	0.023*** (0.0074)	0.022*** (0.0073)	0.020* (0.0108)	-0.000 (0.0034)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	167.9	87.7	107.3	107.1	18.3	41.7
Observations	128,528	128,528	128,528	128,528	128,528	128,528
<i>Panel D:</i>						
Fox News, 45m radius	0.026*** (0.0077)	0.031*** (0.0099)	0.023*** (0.0084)	0.022*** (0.0083)	0.062* (0.0366)	0.004 (0.0047)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	128.1	31.0	57.7	56.8	1.3	18.8
Observations	130,024	130,024	130,024	130,024	130,024	130,024
<i>Panel E:</i>						
CNN	0.014 (0.0126)	0.016 (0.0125)	0.018 (0.0126)	0.020 (0.0125)	-0.017 (0.0167)	-0.029 (0.0199)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	84.0	74.0	71.9	73.7	30.4	24.3
Observations	67,756	67,756	67,756	67,756	67,756	67,756
<i>Panel F:</i>						
MSNBC	-0.012*** (0.0043)	-0.018*** (0.0062)	-0.034*** (0.0076)	-0.033*** (0.0074)	-0.013* (0.0068)	-0.009 (0.0070)
F-stat. of excl. inst.	307.3	157.5	132.2	135.3	65.5	56.1
Observations	67,756	67,756	67,756	67,756	67,756	67,756
FEs: state & year		✓	✓			
Zip-code controls			✓	✓	✓	✓
FEs: state x year				✓	✓	
FEs: primary county					✓	
FEs: county x year						✓

*Notes:* The dependent variable is the total number of Black persons killed in a zip-code-year. Zip-code-level controls include: log population, log area, and log number of housing units. We define primary county as a county where the largest share of the zip-code's population dwells. Each Panel uses different endogenous variable and instrument. In Panel A, we use zip-code's *i* FNC viewership and channel position. In Panels B–D, we use endogenous variable and channel position computed as population-weighted average of all zip-codes with centroids within 15, 30, or 45 miles. Panels E and F replicate Panel A but uses viewership and channel position of CNN and MSNBC, respectively. Standard errors are clustered on zip-code level. \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

**Appendix Table A6:** Higher Position of Fox News in Channel Line-Up Increases Number of Police Killings of Blacks (2005–2008)

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
	Dependent variable: Killing (# Black)					
Fox News channel position	-0.0007 (0.0005)					
Fox News channel position, 15m radius		-0.0002 (0.0003)				
Fox News channel position, 30m radius			0.0000 (0.0004)			
Fox News channel position, 45m radius				-0.0004 (0.0003)		
CNN channel position					0.0011 (0.0007)	
MSNBC channel position						0.0005 (0.0004)
R-squared	0.064	0.063	0.062	0.062	0.064	0.064
Observations	64,576	114,744	124,596	126,092	64,576	64,576

*Notes:* The dependent variable is the total number of Black persons killed in a zip-code-year. The explanatory variable is normalized to have mean 0 and standard deviation of 1. All Columns use the baseline specification from Column VI of Table 1. This Table shows reduced-form relation between Fox channel position and number of killed Black persons. It uses only cross-sectional variation in earliest FNC's position (for Columns I–IV) and CNN's and MSNBS's channel positions for Columns V–VI. Standard errors are clustered at the zip-code level. \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1