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THE ROLE OF WHITENESS IN PERSISTING RACISM

by

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Abstract

Whiteness research has found popularity in a number of academic spheres. However, due to the nature of the topic, the concept of Whiteness has primarily been explored qualitatively. This work seeks an innovative approach to exploring the topic of Whiteness through quantitative methodology. The idea for this study design was built on the foundation of existing racial attitudes and symbolic racism models. After delineating Whiteness from symbolic racism, proxy variables for Whiteness are identified for analysis. This study uses data from the year 2000 General Social Survey and examines data for a sub-sample of white Americans. A series of multivariate multiple regression analyses are performed using Whiteness as an independent variable used to predict both old and new forms of racism. Measures of Whiteness prove to be significant predictors of both old ("Jim Crow") and new ("symbolic") racism. These results suggest the need for further studies of Whiteness that include specific measures constructed to examine Whiteness directly. Considering the very recent election of our first African American president, this study provides a timely and socially relevant call to research as our nation looks to a progressive future.
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INTRODUCTION

This work expands on previous research on whiteness and its relationship to present day racism. Building on symbolic racism and racial attitudes research, I add whiteness to the study of both to explain persisting racism. Since most whiteness studies have studied the concept qualitatively, this work uses a quantitative method to explore the relationship of whiteness to racism. It is my argument that the lack of measuring whiteness as an independent variable is missing from current models used to explain persisting racism. My work attempts to address this gap by operationalizing the concept of whiteness. It does so by drawing from both recent and classic ideas from the whiteness literature. I test my model a set of regression models to explore the role of whiteness in both “old” and “new” racism.

EXPLORING WHITENESS

The racial category ‘white’ brings to the table a number of underlying images, meanings and symbols that saturate modern western culture. Recently, race research has come to focus on this phenomenon of whiteness and its role in the maintenance of a hierarchical social system in which people of other skin colors are measured against a ‘white’ dominant worldview (Keating, 1995). While we currently lack a standard classification of how whiteness is experienced and enacted, the sociological relevance of whiteness is inarguable as it centers on racial power structures, boundary
maintenance and cultural capital. Although it is easy to equate ‘white’ people with whiteness, I will argue that whiteness has become a very separate and powerful force in society, regardless of its relationship to ‘white’ skin.

Whiteness encompasses a schema that not only calls to mind ‘white’ skin, but also a collection of symbols including ‘normal,’ ‘plain,’ ‘American,’ ‘ordinary,’ ‘human’ and the like. In an attempt to deconstruct whiteness, many scholars have heard accounts of whiteness described as a formless void, lacking in culture (Hyde, 1995; Keating, 1995; Duster, 1992; Frankenberg, 1993; Shore, 1997). However, whiteness is a distinct collection of privileges and markers that function as a sort of universal VIP race card. This ‘race’ card is not merely contained in the epidermal reality of skin color but is also maintained by a set of practices and beliefs that perpetuate the traditions of the dominant culture.

The perks of holding a universal VIP race card are many. Although it may be impossible to provide an exhaustive list, research has noted quite a number. Examples of this rarely recognized privilege include, but are not limited to, not worrying about being harassed in stores while shopping, being taught that our civilization was built by whites, never being asked to speak as a representative of the white race, assurance that race will not work against opportunities in the work place, finding pictures, posters, dolls and magazines featuring white people (McIntosh,
Most, if not all, of these privileges go unnoticed by whites as does whiteness itself.

The power and influence of whiteness can be attributed at least in part to its unremarkable or invisible nature. This blind spot has its consequences for racial stratification. If whites are left unaccountable for whiteness, there is little motivation on their part to deconstruct racial hierarchy and begin moving towards racial equality. Some have gone further to suggest that the eradication of whiteness as a power structure may be essential to the true freedom of humankind (Kelley, 1997; Ignatiev & Garvey 1996, Roediger 1994). The US census uses the term ‘white’ to describe people that are descendents of European and Middle Eastern immigrants. The notion of being white has not been immutable in the United States. During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, a less inclusive definition of ‘white’ was employed, one that did not consider as white southern Europeans ‘white’ the Irish, the Italians, and Jews (Keating, 1995). The appellation of whites was so extensive that many of these “non-whites” were forced to attend all black schools in the South. However some scholars assert that the category will continue to expand and will continue to allow whites a statistical majority in the country that in turn will continue to legitimate white control of popular culture, media, power and presence (Warren and Twine, 1997). These scholars have good reason to suspect this given how engrained Whiteness has become in our society.
Whiteness as a cultural ‘norm’ in our society is infused through our social institutions. As such, Whiteness is visually represented in and perpetuated by our schools, media and work places, which work to infuse Whiteness it as an unexamined a way of life. Comford offers a brilliant illustration of how white culture penetrates society by the qualities instilled by it:

“All these institutions teach possessive individualism; anxious competitiveness; rigid emotional control through ‘niceness’; narrow or instrumental rationality; ready acceptance of isolation, boredom, and meaninglessness; the sacrifice of a lifetime for merchandise and security. Most of them also implicitly associate these qualities and attitudes with white or light skin, and with success and self-esteem” (Comford, 1997).

Although some of these qualities are presented as simply ‘American,’ it is they are a product of Whiteness. Indeed, the conflation of ‘American’ qualities with white cultural norms is proof that the two are inseparable. Whiteness is portrayed as beautiful, intelligent, authoritative, superior and desirable (Chennault, 1998) and this is reflected through the values of our social institutions.

Interest in the role of Whiteness is not confined to the social alone. American historians and scholars in related disciplines from sociology and law to cultural studies and education are writing books and articles about Whiteness. Similarly, Whiteness and white racial identity have been studied by a number of academics. I consider this below.
Whiteness Studies in the Academy

In his literary work, Henry Louis Gates' work explores Whiteness as a system of racial domination over blacks. As such he challenges the Eurocentric institution of “American" literature and shows how it purposefully excludes the “black voice” (Gates, 1985). Similarly, Toni Morrison interrogates the concept of “American” as being synonymous with “White.” She lays bare the notion that “American literature” stands in contrast to “African-American Literature, Chicano Literature, Asian-American Literature, etc.” In essence, she makes the point that these hyphenated “others” are deployed to suggest difference and exclusion thereby constructing a white racial identity through difference.

Historian David Roediger’s Wages of Whiteness also explores the development of a white racial identity and its development among European-American workers and makes a similar argument. His fundamental point is that because the white working class in the United States emerged in a slaveholding nation, its members came to define themselves by what they were not: slaves and blacks. Because of this Roediger’s work suggests the parallel development of American industrialization and a “white” culture in the United States. Stemming from the logic of W.E.B Du Bois’ theory of ‘public and psychological wage,’ Roediger argues that white identity and the formation of the working class go hand in
hand and that white workers receive not only a monetary wage for their labor, but also a psychological wage of Whiteness as well.

Some educational studies have touched upon the influence of Whiteness as it relates to pedagogy. In an article exploring Whiteness as a pedagogical concept, Leda Cooks defines Whiteness as, “a set of rhetorical strategies employed to construct and maintain a dominant White culture and identities…” (Cooks, 2003, p.247) and uses classroom studies of Whiteness provide to explore how Whiteness is “performed” within the institution of education. In conclusion, she argues, “To begin to mark White bodies is to speak them into discourse and call attention to their performance” (Crooks, 2003, p.250). Defining through discourse is a crucial step in the process of understanding the role of Whiteness.

The most typical discourse of Whiteness is one of guilt (Penny, 2002; Dyer, 1997; Keating 1995; Tatum, 1994). However, guilt is a blocking emotion and may lead to a narrow vision of Whiteness and prevent self-critical assessment of white privilege (Dyer, 1997). When made to feel guilty, people are likely to shy away from the issue because they feel defensive and try to protect themselves with denial, passiveness, or develop excuses that blame-the-victim (Bonila-Silva, 2004). As Feagin (1995) develops, White people generally think of themselves as non-racist, good people, and uncovering the privilege of their Whiteness contradicts that (Feagin, 1995). One result is to once again render Whiteness invisible and prevent its critical
examination. If we cannot succeed in examining the construction of Whiteness, then we cannot successfully deconstruct and disempower it. The point of deconstructing Whiteness is not to make ‘white’ people feel guilty about the history of Whiteness but to bring it to the forefront of consciousness so that we can come to terms with what must be done to dismantle it.

**Developing a Quantitative Model of Whiteness**

There are several recent examples of white opposition towards positive change in race relations or symbolic racism found in sociological literature. Bobo’s 1988 work on residential integration explores a number of theoretical explanations for white opposition to black-benefiting policy changes in general, and, the right to open housing in particular. Results from his analysis show that the common thread of antiblack sentiment or prejudice was a reoccurring theme. In their attempt to test symbolic racism as a measurable construct in race relations, Tarman and Sears analyzed “data from three surveys that contained an adequate number of symbolic racism items plus the other necessary variables: the 1986 and 2000 National Election Studies (NES) and the 1997 Los Angeles Country Social Survey (LACSS)” (Tarman and Sears, 2005). Their work offered a comprehensive definition of symbolic racism that I employ in this study:

“Most current writings consistently define symbolic racism as a belief system whose manifest content embodies four specific themes: that (1) racial discrimination is no longer a serious obstacle to blacks’
prospects for a good life, so that (2) blacks' continuing disadvantages are largely due to their unwillingness to work hard enough. As a result, both their (3) continuing demands and (4) increased advantages are unwarranted (see Henry and Sears 2002; Sears and Henry 2003; Sears, Henry and Kosterman 2000)” (Sears and Tarman, 2005).

The study concludes with strong support for symbolic racism as a “consistent belief system” (Sears and Tarman, 2005).

In a similar work, exploring attitudes towards the black political movement, Bobo focuses on group conflict theory and the influence of prejudice on people’s attitudes. In an attempt to weed out the dominant influences of negative attitudes towards the black political movement, data from the National Election Studies (years 1964, 1966, 1968, 1970, 1972, 1976 and 1980) and the Fall Omnibus Survey (1974) were combined and analyzed, each using a multi-stage area probability sample of adults. He finds support for group conflict theory. In particular he finds that, “A person’s attitudes towards the black political movement involve a large element of racial prejudice and a degree of conflict-based concern with group position” (Bobo, 1988, p.299). These studies suggest that although whites may pay lip service to improved conditions for blacks, when it comes down to implementation, they oppose public policy to do so.
Theoretical Perspective

Simply stated, critical race theory suggests that we must view issues of inequality within our social institutions from a lens of racial dynamics. Presupposed in critical race theory is the fact that racism is ingrained in all aspects of our daily life. “As a form of oppositional scholarship, Critical Race Theory challenges the experience of whites as the normative standard and grounds its conceptual framework in the distinctive experiences of people of color” (Taylor, 1998, p. 123). Critical Race Theory is a vehicle that seeks to expose Whiteness and white superiority as problematic while highlighting racial structural inequality and oppression. In other words, although White supremacy is a prime focus, critical race theory also focuses on continued racial inequality and the role that racism continues to play in structuring both.

The term symbolic racism has been used to describe this idea of “new” or “modern” racism that has arguably replaced “old fashioned” or “Jim Crow” racism. I assert that Whiteness plays a key role in structuring symbolic racism and how it is manifested in contemporary U.S. society. To this end, I adopt the widely accepted definition of symbolic racism as outlined by Sears: “The manifest content of the items used in the most recent work on symbolic racism has been formalized in terms of four specific themes: (1) “work ethic and responsibility for outcomes,” “the sense that blacks’ failure to progress results from their unwillingness to work hard enough; (2)
“excessive demands,” the sense that blacks are demanding too much; (3) “denial of continuing racial discrimination,” the belief that blacks no longer face much prejudice in the society today; and (4) “undeserved advantage,” the sense that blacks have gotten more than they deserve (see Sears et al., 2001)” (Henry and Sears, 2002, p. 256) and show how it is related to continued racial inequality. In short, I show how symbolic racism is embedded in Whiteness. I show this embedded relationship through example below.

Firstly, “the sense that blacks’ failure to progress results from their unwillingness to work hard enough” (Henry and Sears, 2002) refers to a ‘possessive individualism,’ that is identified as a tenant of Whiteness (Cornford, 1997). Second, “the sense that blacks are demanding too much” (Henry and Sears, 2002) also supports an assumption of Whiteness that classifies racial difference as unentitled to be an “American,” that is, to be white. This positioning of who is entitled to what is part and parcel of a loose definition of white supremacy as “a political, economic, and cultural system in which whites overwhelmingly control power and material resources, conscious and unconscious ideas of white superiority and entitlement are widespread, and relations of white dominance and non-white subordination are daily reenacted across a broad array of institutions and social settings” (Harris, 1993, p. 1736). Third, the “denial of continuing racial discrimination” (Henry and Sears, 2002) points to the oblivious nature of Whiteness as well as its advantageous
invisibility (from the standpoint of its possessor specifically). Denying white privilege goes hand in hand with denying continued racial discrimination and lastly, “the sense that blacks have gotten more than they deserve” (Henry and Sears, 2002) is a color-blindness that disallows Black Voice.

METHODS

Many constructs that are of interest to social scientists can not be observed directly. Examples are preferences, attitudes, behavioral intentions, and personality traits. Whiteness falls into this category as well. Because the constructs of Whiteness have yet to be explored directly, I will seek to explore Whiteness through imperfect though plausible observable indicators. I choose to do this by exploring those factors associated with symbolic racism as it captures to some degree the invisibility of Whiteness and its manifestations of white privilege, cultural Whiteness (notions of success), and anti-black sentiment. Additionally, I have reviewed a number of works focused on white racial attitudes that support the notion that whites are opposed to policies and programs that aid blacks. Although some may suggest that we’ve moved away from Jim Crow racism, there is growing chorus that a new symbolic racism has taken its place and therefore, Whiteness is still present.
SAMPLE

The data used for this analysis comes from the General Social Survey (GSS) 2000 Cumulative file data set. In-person interviews were conducted with a national, full probability sample of 2,817 English-speaking persons 18 years of age or over, living in non-institutional arrangements within the United States. The interviews were conducted during February, March, and April of 2000. The response rate was approximately 71 percent (Davis and Smith, 2007).

The GSS is an almost bi-annual, “compilation,” personal interview survey of U.S. households conducted by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC). The first survey took place in 1972 and since then more than 38,000 respondents have answered over 3,260 different questions. The benefits of using GSS data are that the results are generalizable to the adult population of the United States. The GSS touts the “highest survey standards in design, sampling, interviewing, processing, and documentation” (Davis and Smith, 2007). For all these reasons, the GSS is a reliable source for statistics that offers quality data for analysis.

One of the weaknesses of the GSS is that the data available were not collected with the purpose of exploring Whiteness and symbolic racism. Since it is a secondary source of data, we will not find all of the variables that we’d prefer to examine.
In the year 2000, the GSS included a variable group called, “Topical Module Multi-Ethnic United States: 2000.” Several of the variables used in my analysis come from this variable group. It is because of this that I chose to use the 2000 GSS.

RESEARCH STRATEGY

My goal is to reveal whether Whiteness helps to explain the persistence of racism in the forms of old racism and negative regard for blacks or the perception of adherence to white cultural norms. My final data model is the end product of a statistical roadmap of work that begins with a conceptual model based on the available literature. After selecting measures for my dependent, independent and control variables, I started with a univariate analysis of the variables chosen for my study. After looking at the basic features of the data in my study, I transformed a number of variables to prepare them for further analysis. This involved a number of procedures used to “clean up” the data that will be described in detail later.

For purposes of cross validation, my analysis was first run using a 50% sample of cases from this subset of year 2000 GSS data. Results found using this sub-set of data gave me an idea of how well methods would perform when the entire sample was used. Furthermore, replication of findings between predicted and observed values offers assurance of the validity of the sample population.
I ran a correlation on all variables to uncover possible relationships between variables and as an initial test of my hypotheses. I then used principle components analysis to detect the structure of possible relationships between variables. From the results of the factor analysis, I created a scale that was used in further analysis. In order to check the reliability of the created scale, I ran a reliability test to obtain the Cronbac’s alpha of the measure.

From the initial clusters of interest uncovered by the correlations matrix, I moved to linear regression analyses to further examine possible relationships. I was interested in more than one dependent variable. I performed hierarchical multiple multivariate linear regression analysis to examine potential changes in variance as blocks of predictors were added to explain the dependent variable(s). By adding blocks of predictors, I was able to examine model improvement as each was added.

As displayed in the conceptual model below (see Figure 1), first, I use the racial attitude concepts to predict for Whiteness, and then I use racial attitudes to predict for old racism. Finally I use racial attitudes to predict for new racism. Later, I add Whiteness as a block to racial attitudes in order to predict for both old racism and new racism.
Figure 1: Conceptual Data Model

**Controls**
- Age
- Sex
- Region (South)
- Education

**Racial Attitudes**
- Differences due to discrimination
- Differences due to inborn disability
- Differences due to lack of education
- Differences due to lack of will

**Whiteness**
- Blacks overcome prejudice without favors
- How close feel to blacks

**Old Racism**
- Opposition to close relative marrying a black person

**New Racism**
- Negative Black Regard Scale
MEASURES

*Dependent Variables*

The two dependent variables used to represent the concept of Whiteness are (1) the idea that blacks should overcome prejudice without favors and (2) perceived closeness to blacks. Opposition to a close relative or friend marrying a black person is the dependent variable used to represent the notion of old racism. A constructed scale of Negative Black Regard is used as the last dependent variable used in analysis as a measure of new racism. Items used to compose the constructed scale are described in detail in the discussion of operationalization below. I attempt to predict for the dependent variables within my data models using a number of independent variables that are listed below.

*Independent Variables*

Four of the predictors used in analysis represent the concept of racial attitudes. Prefacing the items is the following statement, “On the average blacks have worse jobs, income, and housing than white people. Respondents were asked if the differences are due to (1) discrimination, (2) inborn disability, (3) lack of education and lastly they are asked if the differences are due to (4) lack of will. The four racial attitudes items are the first block of independent variables used in analysis. In addition to these four items, the two Whiteness items – (1) the idea that blacks should overcome prejudice without favors and (2) perceived closeness to blacks – are later added as independent variables to attempt to better predict for some of the dependent
variables. In addition to my dependent and independent measures, a number of socio-
demographic variables were used in analysis.

**Control Variables**

I used a number of controls for this study including respondent's age (reported in single years), sex (female = 1; male = 0), education (years of education completed), and region (dummy coded to reflect southern and non-southern). As you may have noticed, race is not used as a control in this design. Race was dummy coded into black and white (black = 0; white = 1) and used to split the file for analysis. There were 429 Black respondents and 2213 White respondents with data reported on in the year 2000. Given the small number of Black respondents, I chose to exclude them from analysis and only examine whites. Although the inclusion of only white respondents for the year 2000 data reduces the sample size, the final sample provides a sufficient number of observations for analysis. As you can see in the table below, Whites make up over 83% of the sample for the Year 2000 data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Race of Respondents for Year 2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OPERATIONALIZATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Whiteness

Although previously unexplored by quantitative models, the literature on Whiteness gives us several queues as to the components of Whiteness. In an attempt to create a model that includes these notions of Whiteness, I have elected a number of proxy variables from the available measures. As dictated by Whiteness rhetoric, a denial of the persistence of racism is represented by a notion that conditions for blacks have improved in the past few years. This variable was recoded, so that the higher the perceived improvement, the higher the response code.

Another aspect of Whiteness is its separate and privileged spot at the top of the racial hierarchy (Harris, 1993, p. 1736). This concept of white’s position is explored by how close the respondent feels to Blacks. This item was asked on a scale of one to nine (1 = not at all 5 = neither one nor the other; 9 = very close). Since Whiteness seeks to “other” racial minorities in order to maintain its position at the top of the hierarchy, Whiteness dictates less closeness to Blacks. Therefore, the measure was recoded, so that the closer respondent felt to blacks, the lower the value of the response category (1 = very close; 5 = neither one nor the other; 9 = not at all close – this is a reverse code of the original variable). In other words, the higher the code, the less close one feels to blacks.
The idea of possessive individualism and a belief that hard work results in success not only relates to Whiteness but some would argue that these values have become synonymous with "white" (Conford, 1997). The idea that Blacks should work their way up and overcome prejudice without favors was measured on an ordinal scale. Since the ideals of Whiteness would support agreement with that sentiment, the variable was reconditioned so that the stronger agreement, the higher the response code. As attested to in history books and American literature, Whiteness governs that whites have made the most important contributions to our society (Gates, 1985). An illustration of this is the perceived positive contribution of Blacks. To keep consistent with the direction of the other variables, this item was recoded so that the higher the perceived contribution, the lower the response code.

To test the existence of racism in the face of these concepts (racial attitudes, Whiteness and black regard), the dependent variable agree to a close friend or relative marrying a black person is used as a marker of old racism. This item was recoded so that the greater the opposition, the higher the response code.

**New Racism**

In addition to the concept of racial attitudes, I look at a number of variables that relate to how blacks are perceived as a group. The literature often refers to anti-black sentiment as a key ingredient of symbolic racism (Bobo, 1988; Henry and Sears, 2002). Each of these items was rated on a scale of one to seven. Respondents
were asked to rate blacks' intelligence; black's level of commitment to strong families; blacks tendency to be hard-working or lazy; and blacks tendency to be violence-prone. Respondents were also asked to rate blacks' level of commitment to strong families; and equal treatment of all groups in society. These five items were recoded so that the more negative the response, the higher the response value (7 = unintelligent; 7 = lazy; 7 = lacks commitment to strong families; 7 = lacks commitment to fair and equal treatment; 7 = violence-prone). After recode, a positive score to each item can be considered negative black regard.

In an attempt to reduce the number of variables used to explore these concepts, I ran a principle components analysis of the reconditioned racial attitudes measures and the black regard measures for white respondents. Tables 2a and 2b illustrate the results of this factor analysis.

Principle components analysis shows a high stability in the way the black regard items hold together. The results revealed three underlying dimensions of regard for blacks. I retained the first three factors whose Eigen values were greater than 1. As a traditional rule of thumb, I used 0.60 as the cut-off point for my factor scores.
Table 2a: Principle Components Factor Analysis of Black Regard Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Initial Eigenvalues</th>
<th>Total % of Variance</th>
<th>Cumulative %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.981</td>
<td>27.103</td>
<td>27.103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.366</td>
<td>12.419</td>
<td>39.522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.081</td>
<td>9.830</td>
<td>49.352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>.968</td>
<td>8.801</td>
<td>58.153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>.866</td>
<td>7.876</td>
<td>66.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>.769</td>
<td>6.987</td>
<td>73.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>.679</td>
<td>6.171</td>
<td>79.186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>.673</td>
<td>6.115</td>
<td>85.301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>.611</td>
<td>5.554</td>
<td>90.855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>.568</td>
<td>5.168</td>
<td>96.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>.438</td>
<td>3.977</td>
<td>100.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. race2 White = 1.00 White

These three components explain 49.35% of the variance. I used a varimax rotation in order to maximize the sum of the variance loadings.
Table 2b: Rotated Component Matrix for Black Regard Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception</th>
<th>Component 1</th>
<th>Component 2</th>
<th>Component 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blacks are hard working – lazy</td>
<td>.715</td>
<td>-.209</td>
<td>-.222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacks are Intelligent – Unintelligent</td>
<td>.699</td>
<td>-.058</td>
<td>-.143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacks are committed to fair and equal treatment committed – uncommitted</td>
<td>.688</td>
<td>-.006</td>
<td>.123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacks are committed to strong families committed – uncommitted</td>
<td>.679</td>
<td>.070</td>
<td>.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have blacks positive contribution to country</td>
<td>.544</td>
<td>-.244</td>
<td>-.117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences due to lack of education</td>
<td>-.068</td>
<td>.757</td>
<td>-.113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences due to discrimination</td>
<td>.032</td>
<td>.751</td>
<td>-.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences due to lack of will</td>
<td>-.351</td>
<td>.577</td>
<td>.281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences due to inborn disability</td>
<td>-.170</td>
<td>.085</td>
<td>.746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have conditions for blacks improved</td>
<td>.166</td>
<td>-.197</td>
<td>.580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacks are Not violent – violent</td>
<td>.343</td>
<td>-.134</td>
<td>-.406</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Table 2b shows the Rotated Component Matrix of the principle components factor analysis of Black Regard Items. The scores have been sorted by size to more easily identify the highest scoring items. The four items that held together best, all scoring over 0.60 after rotation were perception of Blacks as *hardworking – lazy*; perception of blacks as *intelligent – unintelligent*; and perception of Blacks commitment to fair and equal treatment *committed – uncommitted* and perception of
blacks commitment to strong families *committed – uncommitted*. Based on the resulting stability in these four measures, I constructed an index of Black Regard. In order to check the index, I then ran a reliability analysis of the four items, which resulted in a Cronbach’s alpha score of 0.704. Identical results were verified using a 50% sample of cases to run the principle components factor analysis and reliability analysis, cross validating these findings. Furthermore, the same components continued to hold together for white respondents after splitting the file by race. Therefore, it is safe to say that the constructed index is statistically reliable in that it is made up of items that measure the same general construct; namely *negative black regard*.

*Racial Attitudes*

Social analyses have already established the importance of examining racial attitudes in quantitative race models geared towards understanding inequality (Henry and Sears 2002; Sears and Henry 2003; Sears, Henry and Kosterman 2000; Sears and Tarman, 2005). In a series of yes/no questions asking about the perceived differences between blacks and whites, four such questions start with the statement, “On the average blacks have worse jobs, income, and housing than white people.” These four items are used to represent the concept of racial attitudes. Respondents are asked if the differences are due to *discrimination, inborn disability, lack of education* and lastly they are asked if the differences are due to *lack of will*. A yes answer to half of the questions suggests traditionally racist responses; in other words, respondents
attribute racial differences/black disadvantages to inborn disability and lack of will. The other two variables were recoded (yes = 0; no=1) so that a yes response would also suggest a traditionally racist explanation of racial differences, rather than support social explanations for the differences (i.e. discrimination and lack of education).

**HYPOTHESES**

All hypotheses for this research are made for white respondents only. Effectively, this study is only seeking to examine these relationships for white respondents. All hypotheses will be tested using controls for age, sex, education and region.

H1: As traditionally racist attitudes increase; measures of Whiteness increase.

H2: As traditionally racist attitudes increase; measures of Old Racism increase.

H3: As measures of Whiteness increase; measures of Old Racism increase

H4: As traditionally racist attitudes increase; measures of New Racism increase

H5: As measures of Whiteness increase; measures of New Racism increase.
RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Descriptive statistics for all variables used in analysis are displayed in Table 3. With over 1000 valid cases for each item, you can see that there is a healthy sub-sample to be used in analysis. The average age of the population is just over 47 and the average level of education is just over 13 years.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for all Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Description</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Age</td>
<td>2213</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>47.41</td>
<td>17.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Sex</td>
<td>2213</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Education</td>
<td>2207</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13.44</td>
<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Region (South)</td>
<td>2213</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Differences due to discrimination</td>
<td>1351</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Differences due to lack of education</td>
<td>1381</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Differences due to inborn disability</td>
<td>1387</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Differences due to lack of will</td>
<td>1327</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Hard working – lazy</td>
<td>1730</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Blacks committed to fair and equal treatment</td>
<td>1040</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Blacks committed to strong families</td>
<td>1055</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Not violent – violent</td>
<td>1052</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.49</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Intelligent – Unintelligent</td>
<td>1717</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 How close feel to blacks</td>
<td>1434</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>1.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Blacks positive contribution to country</td>
<td>1031</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Blacks overcome prejudice w/o favors</td>
<td>1420</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Conditions for blacks improved</td>
<td>1401</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Close relative marry black</td>
<td>1782</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Negative Black Regard</td>
<td>1003</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Descriptive Statistics for Year 2000 whites only. Statistics shown here represent values post-recode where applicable.
Table 4 displays the correlation matrix for all variables chosen for analysis. Among racial attitudes measures, there is a significant, positive correlation between the belief that racial differences are due to lack of education and those that ascribe racial differences to discrimination \((r = .323**)\).

Hypothesis one points to traditionally racist attitudes increasing as measures of Whiteness increase. This hypothesis is supported. The belief that blacks should overcome prejudice without favors is negatively correlated with racial differences due to discrimination \((r = -.258**)\) and racial differences due to lack of will \((r = -.389**)\). Additionally, there is a positive relationship between traditionally racist attitudes and feeling less-close to blacks. The belief that racial differences between Blacks and Whites are due to inborn disability has a negative correlation with feeling less close to blacks \((r = -.199**)\) as does the belief that those differences are due to lack of will on the part of blacks \((r = -.186**)\).

Hypothesis two posits that as traditionally racists attitudes increase so will opposition to a close relative or friend marrying a black person. This hypothesis is supported. The correlations show a negative relationship between close relative marrying a black person and differences due to lack of will \((r = -.317**)\). Also, there are significant negative relationships between overcoming prejudice without favors and two of the racial attitudes; (1) racial differences due to lack of will \((r = -.389**)\) and (2) racial differences due to lack of education \((r = -.339**)\).
Hypothesis three predicts a positive relationship between feeling less-close to blacks and opposition to a relative marrying a black person. The hypothesis is supported. There is the expected positive relationship between these variables ($r = .357**$).

Hypothesis four suggests that an increase in traditionally racist attitudes will increase negative black regard. This relationship is confirmed for all four racial attitude measures. Differences due to lack of will correlates significantly and negatively with negative black regard ($r = -.347**$), as does differences due to discrimination ($r = -.258**$); differences due to lack of education ($r = -.339**$) and differences due to in born disability ($r = -.1228**$).

Hypothesis five is supported. The belief that blacks should overcome prejudice without favors is positively related to negative black regard ($r = .250**$). Hypothesis five also predicts that as the less-close one feels to blacks increases; the more negative black regard will increase ($r = .215**$).

While zero correlations are suggestive of relationships in the data, they do not control for association among the independent variables and the dependent variable(s). Due to this limitation, the possibility of spuriousness, I then moved to linear regression to help investigate the potential relationships between variables.
Table 4: Correlation Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
<th>(7)</th>
<th>(8)</th>
<th>(9)</th>
<th>(10)</th>
<th>(11)</th>
<th>(12)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Age</td>
<td>2213</td>
<td>47.41</td>
<td>17.88</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Sex</td>
<td>2213</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>.077***</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Education</td>
<td>2207</td>
<td>13.44</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>-.161***</td>
<td>-.048*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Region (South)</td>
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<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-.055**</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Differences due to discrimination</td>
<td>1351</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>.064*</td>
<td>.071**</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-.166**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Differences due to lack of education</td>
<td>1381</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>.224**</td>
<td>-.132**</td>
<td>.323**</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) Differences due to inborn disability</td>
<td>1387</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>-.151**</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>.199**</td>
<td>-.005</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) Differences due to lack of will</td>
<td>1327</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>-.157**</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>.257**</td>
<td>-.128**</td>
<td>.267**</td>
<td>.269**</td>
<td>.273**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) Close relative marry black</td>
<td>1782</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>.334**</td>
<td>-.036</td>
<td>-.187**</td>
<td>.191**</td>
<td>-.171**</td>
<td>-.181**</td>
<td>-.165**</td>
<td>-.317**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10) Negative Black Regard</td>
<td>1003</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>.201**</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.124**</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-.064</td>
<td>-.119**</td>
<td>-.189**</td>
<td>-.347**</td>
<td>.307**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11) Blacks overcome prejudice without favors</td>
<td>1420</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>.106**</td>
<td>-.053*</td>
<td>-.234**</td>
<td>.119**</td>
<td>-.258**</td>
<td>-.339**</td>
<td>-.128**</td>
<td>-.389**</td>
<td>.273**</td>
<td>.250**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(12) How close feel to blacks</td>
<td>1434</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>.153**</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.114**</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.078*</td>
<td>-.046</td>
<td>-.199**</td>
<td>-.186**</td>
<td>.357**</td>
<td>.215**</td>
<td>.186**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Table 5 summarizes results for all Models. A belief that racial differences between blacks and whites are due to, discrimination, lack of education and differences due to lack of will on the part of blacks are all significant predictors that are negatively associated with the belief that blacks should overcome prejudice without favors. As education decreases; one of the measures of Whiteness, the belief that blacks should overcome prejudice without favors, increases ($b = -.055; p=.000$). This is also the case for the association between believing that racial differences are not due to discrimination and that measure. In short, the belief that racial differences are not due to racial discrimination is negatively associated with the belief that blacks should overcome prejudice without favors ($b = -.315; p=.000$). This pattern also holds with respect to beliefs that racial differences are due to education ($b = -.515; p=.000$).

Model 1 significantly predicts for 25.3% of the variance in the proxy variable for Whiteness ($R^2 = .234; p < .001$), represented by the belief that blacks should overcome prejudice without favors. Therefore, it is reasonable to reject the null hypothesis for hypothesis one.

Model 2 also shows support for hypothesis 1. In an attempt to predict for the second measure of Whiteness, how close one feels to blacks, results show that age, differences due to inborn disability and differences due to lack of will are all significant. A positive relationship exists between age and the less-close one feels to blacks ($b = .016; p=.001$). As the less of a belief in differences due to inborn disability decreases; the less-
close one feels to blacks increases ($b = -0.844; p = 0.001$). There is a significant negative association between the belief in differences due to black's lack of will and how close one feels to blacks ($b = -0.472; p = 0.010$). Since two of the racial attitudes items yielded significant relationships, we again find support for hypothesis one.

Model 3 tests hypothesis 2. Regarding predictions as to whether one opposes a relative marrying a black person; age, sex, education, region and all but one of the traditionally racist attitude measures are significant. As age increases; the measure of old racism - opposition to a relative marrying a black person - grows stronger ($b = -0.022; p = 0.000$). So the older you are, the more likely you are to uphold old racism by opposition to a relative marrying a black person. Males (answer coding for sex: female = 1; male = 0) are more likely to display old racism by opposition to a relative marrying a black person ($b = -0.157; p = 0.014$). As education goes down; opposition to a relative marrying a black person goes up ($b = -0.026; p = 0.033$). Southerners are more likely to display old racism via opposition to a relative marrying a black person ($b = 0.331; p = 0.000$). As the less belief that differences are due to discrimination decreases; the measure of old racism increases, marked by greater opposition to a relative marrying a black person ($b = -0.233; p = 0.001$). So, less support for differences due to discrimination relates to stronger opposition of a relative marrying a black person. As less belief that differences are due to lack of education decreases; old racism as opposition to a relative marrying a black person grows stronger ($b = -0.217; p = 0.002$). Model 3 significantly predicts for 23.4% of the
variance in the proxy variable for persisting Old Racism (R Squared = .234; p < .001), represented by opposition of a close relative marrying a black person. Results show support for hypothesis two.

Model 4 tests hypothesis 3. Results show significant positive relationships with age (b = .023; p = .000) and region (b = .335; p = .000) when predicting for the measure of old racism. Additionally, significant negative relationships are found with differences due to discrimination (b = -.248; p = .015) and differences due to lack of will (b = -.312; p = .015). And lastly, there is a significant positive relationship with feeling less-close to blacks (b = .172; p = .000) and being opposed to a relative marrying a black person. Older whites are more likely to opposition to a relative marrying a black person and Southern whites are more likely to do the same. Belief in differences due to discrimination is negatively associated with opposition to a relative marrying a black person (b = -.248; p = .015). As less belief in differences due to lack of will goes down; opposition to a relative marrying a black person increases (b = -.312; p = .002). And of particular interest, there is a significant positive relationship between feeling less-loss to blacks and opposition to a relative marrying a black person (b = .172; p = .000). So as Whiteness increases, Old Racism increases. The results show strong support for hypothesis three, explaining 35.2% of the variance in Old Racism. Therefore, I can reject the null hypothesis for H3.
Model five tests hypotheses 4. I attempt to predict for New Racism (aka Negative Black Regard), using the racial attitudes items. Model 5 provides a weak design, with only 18.6% of the variance explained. The significant relationships found are age, differences due to inborn disability and differences due to lack of will. As age goes up, Negative Black Regard increases \( (b = .010; p = .000) \). The less-belief that differences are due to inborn disability is negatively associated with Negative Black Regard \( (b = -.284; p = .012) \). As the less-belief that differences are due to inborn disability decreases, Negative Black Regard increases \( (b = -.284; p = .000) \). With two of the traditionally racist belief items showing a significant relationship in this model, I can reject the null hypothesis for H4.

Model 6 again predicts for New Racism, but this time I have added the two Whiteness factors to the racial attitude measures as predictors. Resulting in a slight improvement to Model 5, the regression equation for Model 6 explains 22.0% of the variance for New Racism \( (X^2 = 3.4\%) \). The significant relationships are age and differences due to lack of will. Again results show that as age goes up; Negative Black Regard goes up \( (b = .009; p = .002) \). Additionally, as less-belief in differences due to lack of will goes down; Negative Black Regard goes up \( (b = -.416; p = .000) \). So, the older you are, the more likely you are to regard blacks negatively and similarly, the more you attribute differences to lack of will, the more likely you are to regard blacks negatively.
Hypothesis six suggests that measures of Whiteness will positively predict for the new racism item of negative black regard. However, neither measure of Whiteness was found to be significant in this model. This raises concerns of model misspecification and requires further examination. “Model misspecification is always a concern when statistical inferences are based on a parametric likelihood. Even when a model manages to capture the gross features of the data, misspecification of distributional forms, dependence structures, link functions, and other "structural" components of the model can lead to excessively biased estimates and misrepresentation of their precision” (Boos, 2004, p. 216). The inflated standard errors point to an issue of colinearity in the model. For this reason, I reran the model without the racial attitudes measure of differences due to lack of will. The results of omitting this variable from the model are shown in table 6. After dropping the racial attitudes measure of lack of will, results show that both of the Whiteness measures become significant. The belief that blacks should overcome prejudice without favors significantly and positively predicts for the new racism measure of negative black regard ($b = .137; p = .002$) and the same relationship is found with how close one feels to blacks ($b = .052; p = .030$). However, it's important to note that more of the model is explained by keeping the racial attitudes measure of differences due to lack of will. This is evident by the drop in R Square in Table 6. Therefore, with the use of theory and zero order correlations to help interpret the model, I chose to keep the original Model and not omit differences due to lack of will.
Table 5: Model Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Whiteness (1)</th>
<th>Whiteness (2)</th>
<th>Old Racism</th>
<th>Old Racism</th>
<th>New Racism</th>
<th>New Racism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td></td>
<td>Blacks</td>
<td>How Close</td>
<td>Oppose Close</td>
<td>Oppose Close</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Negative</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Overcome</td>
<td>Feel to Blacks</td>
<td>Marrying Black</td>
<td>Marrying Black</td>
<td>Black Regard</td>
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<td>(.003)</td>
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<td>(.063)</td>
<td>(.086)</td>
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<td>(.098)</td>
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<td>-.026</td>
<td>-.026*</td>
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<td>-.024</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(.011)</td>
<td>(.031)</td>
<td>(.012)</td>
<td>(.017)</td>
<td>(.014)</td>
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<td>region (south)</td>
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<td>.355**</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(.175)</td>
<td>(.068)</td>
<td>(.093)</td>
<td>(.074)</td>
<td>(108)</td>
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<td>-.248*</td>
<td>-.055</td>
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<td>(.073)</td>
<td>(.101)</td>
<td>(.079)</td>
<td>(.116)</td>
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<td>-.064</td>
<td>-.217**</td>
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<td>-.061</td>
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<td>(.070)</td>
<td>(.098)</td>
<td>(.074)</td>
<td>(.111)</td>
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<td>differences due to inborn disability</td>
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<td>-.844**</td>
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<td>-.284*</td>
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<td>(.094)</td>
<td>(.258)</td>
<td>(.103)</td>
<td>(.137)</td>
<td>(.113)</td>
<td>(.161)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>differences due to lack of will</td>
<td>-.546**</td>
<td>-.472**</td>
<td>-.427**</td>
<td>-.312**</td>
<td>-.515**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.065)</td>
<td>(.182)</td>
<td>(.071)</td>
<td>(.099)</td>
<td>(.075)</td>
<td>(112)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whiteness</td>
<td>blacks should overcome prejudice without favors</td>
<td>( .080 )</td>
<td>(.042)</td>
<td>(.045)</td>
<td>(.042)</td>
<td>(.045)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>how close feel to blacks</td>
<td>(.172**)</td>
<td>(.022)</td>
<td>(.037)</td>
<td>(.024)</td>
<td>(.024)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R Square</td>
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<td>.086</td>
<td>.234</td>
<td>.352</td>
<td>.186</td>
<td>.220</td>
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<tr>
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<td>586</td>
<td>1193</td>
<td>573</td>
<td>569</td>
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* Significant at the 0.05
** Significant at the 0.01
Table 6: Omitted Variable Comparison for Model 6

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<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>New Racism</th>
<th>New Racism</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Negative Black Regard</td>
<td>Negative Black Regard</td>
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<td>Controls</td>
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<td>.009**</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>(.019)</td>
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<td>region (south)</td>
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<td>(.106)</td>
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<td>differences due to lack of education</td>
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<td>(.108)</td>
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<td>(.161)</td>
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<td>Whiteness</td>
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<td>blacks should overcome prejudice without favors</td>
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<td>.137**</td>
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<td>(.043)</td>
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DISCUSSION

Examples of the existence of Whiteness beyond the epidermal reality of skin color include but are not limited to the legal history of naturalization in the U.S., visual representation in media, culture, and social institutions, invisible white privilege and the unquestionable position at the top of the racial hierarchy. The first step to dismantling the omnipresent power and presence of Whiteness in our society is calling attention to its existence. We must call attention to Whiteness, and then deconstruct the meaning of its existence before we can work to justify ridding it as a social force in society. Only then can we begin to build a new and positive, non-oppressive white identity and work towards an egalitarian society where all cultures and races are paid equal importance.

Building upon the foundations of symbolic racism and racial attitudes research, the addition of Whiteness into data models seeking to better explain the present-day inequality that is found in persisting racism is a step in the right direction. Beyond the scope of recent research, it’s advantageous to quantify Whiteness as a separate and observable phenomenon. Using our theoretical understanding of Whiteness to move into the realm of empirical investigation would provide a deeper understanding of how Whiteness is constructed, experienced and proliferated in society today. Currently, we lack a standard classification of how Whiteness is experienced and enacted. It’s time to take a step back from competing arguments about Whiteness and look into the empirical reality of this phenomenon. If we can come to understand how Whiteness is constructed within the workings of symbolic
racism, we can then work towards a solution for deconstruction (and perhaps reconstruction). Although recent works have attempted to measure white racial attitudes, what I feel is still missing is a conceptualized model that includes clear constructs of Whiteness to help better explain the lingering racism that we find in society today. Incorporating Whiteness into our quantitative models will further our understanding as well as expand the academic avenues of discovery for future research.

Based on my review of the current literature and my own attempts at formulating a quantitative data model that includes the key concept of Whiteness as it relates to Racism and modern race relations, it is my belief that further research is needed in this area. One major limitation of this study design was the lack of variables geared towards exploring the concept of Whiteness directly. Additional research of this nature will not only help further our understanding of race relations but also work towards eliminating the persistence of racism in all of its present forms. One possible vehicle for progressive race-based data models that include both Symbolic Racism and constructs of Whiteness is the General Social Survey Instrument. Just as the GSS year 2000 data included, for example, the “Multi-Ethnic Topical Module,” future years could include topical modules geared specifically at exploring both Racism and Constructs of Whiteness. In general, my suggestion is that future research seeks to explore the phenomenon of Whiteness directly and incorporate it into models seeking to explain persisting racism.
CONCLUSION

In Summary, these series of hierarchical multiple multivariate regression models show support for at least four of my hypotheses. These findings suggest that while controlling for the socio-demographic factors of age, sex, education and region that traditionally racist attitudes are good predictors of Whiteness (Models 1 and 2).

It is evident by model improvements ($X^2 = .118$) that adding measures of Whiteness to traditionally racist attitudes helps to explain the persistence of old racism (R Square = .352) better than traditionally racist beliefs alone (R Square = .234).

Similarly, traditionally racist beliefs can be used to predict “New” Racism (a.k.a. Negative Black Regard) but there is a slight model improvement after adding Whiteness items to the list of predictors ($X^2 = .014$). It can be argued then that Whiteness plays a role in predicting for both “Old” and “New” Racism.

The strengths of this study are numerous and include its large number of valid responses ($N = 2213$), the generalizability of the sample, and the fact that it's a nation-wide study that is representative of American adults in the contiguous United States. The difference in model improvement that Whiteness adds is illustrated by this series of multiple multivariate regression models.

One major weakness of this study was the absence of prior quantitative data on Whiteness. Since this is an innovative approach to exploring the impact of Whiteness, there is a lack of comparative models against which results could be judged. Also, the lack of direct observations of Whiteness, leaving only proxy variables to be used, is another shortcoming of this model. In an ideal research
design, I could use independent variables that were designed with the intent of measuring Whiteness directly. However, I feel that the strengths of my work far exceed its slight methodological weaknesses as it directly relates to key historical and current events.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Though I never thought I'd live to see the day, in a timely turn of events, we the people of the United States of America have found ourselves in historical transition as President elect Barack Obama takes over as our 44th Commander and Chief. As I'm sure was the experience of many Americans, I shed tears of joy at the announcement of his victory. Yet in the aftermath of celebration, I started to consider what this would mean for the future role of Whiteness in persisting racism.

On March 18, 2008 then “Senator” Obama addressed the nation as democratic Presidential nominee to deliver a speech about race. He talked about “this country’s original sin of slavery” but also highlighted the move away from “Jim Crow” (old) racism. He addressed the gap in education between black and white students and the anger associated with black strife. Without calling it by its name, Senator Obama spoke about Whiteness. He said, “Most working- and middle-class white Americans don’t feel that they have been particularly privileged by their race.” He claims that the anger of both blacks and whites leaves us in the position we find ourselves now. In what I felt was a powerful statement, he claims, “This is where we are right now. It’s a racial stalemate we’ve been stuck in for years. Contrary to the claims of some
of my critics, black and white, I have never been so naïve as to believe that we can
get beyond our racial divisions in a single election cycle, or with a single candidacy -
particularly a candidacy as imperfect as my own” (Obama, 2008). It seems clear by
this speech that although Barack Obama has high hopes for a progressive state of race
relations in the future, we still remain far from “a perfect union.”

Given our now-President’s straightforward and plainly spoken opinion of
persisting inequality and the need for progressive change, one might assume that his
supporters share in his vision. However, it is my fear that the simple fact of his
position as the first black President of the United States has inspired many Americans
to pack away the idea of inequality – check it off the list if you will. Although I
couldn’t be happier about the dawning of a new era – where we have finally moved
away from the “old white man” avatar of U.S. Presidents – I feel that this turn of
events may strengthen the power and prevelence of Whiteness and covert forms of
(new) racism. Pointing to the President-elect as proof of diminished racism, the
platform widens for the owners of Whiteness to perpetuate covertly racist attitudes.

Preceding the current election, Barack Obama authored a book in which he
dedicates a whole chapter to the topic of race. In his book, amongst other political
topics, he addresses black stereotypes, disadvantages, personal experiences and fears.
He expresses his support for affirmative action programs in order to combat
“prolonged and systematic discrimination” (Obama, 2006, p.289). I find some
comfort in that notion and hope that he is able to push past the power of Whiteness in
order to invoke more equality-driven programs in the future. Yet, in order to do so, I
believe that he will have to push the issue of race throughout his term as President.

Speaking directly to my reservations he states,

“there is always a fear on the part of many minorities that unless racial discrimination, past and present, stays on the front burner, white America will be let off the hook and hard-fought gains may be reversed. I understand these fears – nowhere is it ordained that history moves in a straight line, and during difficult economic times it is possible that the imperatives of racial equality get shunted aside” (Obama, 2006, p. 294).

As faith would have it, President Obama has adopted a nation in great economic disparity. It will be interesting to see how Whiteness continues to play out in the future of our nation as we are lead by a historical icon of hope for a better tomorrow. It is with shared faith in our human potential that racial equality will not be shunted aside.

Now more than ever, it is important that we seek a better understanding of the workings of Whiteness and how it relates to persisting racism. Regardless of my faith in the abilities of our new President, whose political ideals align with many of my own, I continue to fear the magnitude and power that Whiteness has to maintain its place at the top of the social hierarchy (and ultimately drive the persistence of racism) even in the shadows of the first black President of the United States.
Appendix A: Complete List of Original Variables Used in Analysis

**RACDIF1** Differences due to discrimination (Q.266A) Survey Question: On the average (Negroes/Blacks/African-Americans) have worse jobs, income, and housing than white people. Do you think these differences are ... Mainly due to discrimination?

Response Categories
0 NAP
1 Yes
2 No
8 DK
9 NA

**RACDIF2** Differences due to inborn disability (Q.266B) Survey Question: On the average (Negroes/Blacks/African-Americans) have worse jobs, income, and housing than white people. Do you think these differences are ... Because most (Negroes/Blacks/African-Americans) have less in-born ability to learn?

Response Categories
0 NAP
1 Yes
2 No
8 DK
9 NA

**RACDIF3** Differences due to lack of education (Q.266C) Survey Question: On the average (Negroes/Blacks/African-Americans) have worse jobs, income, and housing than white people. Do you think these differences are ... Because most (Negroes/Blacks/African-Americans) don't have the chance for education that it takes to rise out of poverty?

Response Categories
0 NAP
1 Yes
2 No
8 DK
9 NA
**RACDIF4** Differences due to lack of will (Q.266D) Survey Question: On the average (Negroes/Blacks/African-Americans) have worse jobs, income, and housing than white people. Do you think these differences are ... Because most (Negroes/Blacks/African-Americans) just don't have the motivation or will power to pull themselves up out of poverty?

Response Categories
- 0 NAP
- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 DK
- 9 NA

**FAIRBLKS** Blacks committed to equality (Q.737B) Survey Question: In the next statement a score of 1 means that you think almost all of the people in the group have a "commitment to the fair and equal treatment of all groups in society." A score of 7 means that you think almost everyone in the group "lacks a commitment to the fair and equal treatment of all groups in society." A score of 4 means that you think that the group is not towards one end or the other, and of course you may choose any number in between that comes closest to where you think people in the group stand. Blacks?

Response Categories
- 0 NAP
- 1 Commitment to fair and equal treatment
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Lacks commitment to fair and equal treatment
- 8 DK
- 9 NA
FAMBLKS Blacks committed to strong families (Q.736B) Survey Question: In the next statement a score of 1 means that you think almost all of the people in the group have a "commitment to strong families." A score of 7 means that you think almost everyone in the group "lacks a commitment to strong families." A score of 4 means that you think that the group is not towards one end or the other, and of course you may choose any number in between that comes closest to where you think people in the group stand. Blacks?

Response Categories
0 NAP
1 Commitment to strong families
2 2
3 3
4 4
5 5
6 6
7 Lacks commitment to strong families
8 DK
9 NA

VIOLBLKS Blacks prone to violence or not (Q.403C3) Survey Question: The next set asks if people in each group tend to be violence prone or if they tend not to be prone to violence? Blacks?

Response Categories
0 NAP
1 Violence-prone
2 2
3 3
4 4
5 5
6 6
7 Not violence-prone
8 Don't know
9 NA
**WORKBLKS** Blacks hard working or lazy (Q.403B3) Survey Question: The second set of characteristics asks if people in the group tend to be hard-working or if they tend to be lazy. Blacks?

Response Categories
0 NAP
1 Hardworking
2 2
3 3
4 4
5 5
6 6
7 Lazy
8 Don't know
9 NA

**WLTHBLKS** Black in general rich or poor (Q.403A3) Survey Question: Now I have some questions about different groups in our society. I'm going to show you a seven-point scale on which the characteristics of people in a group can be rated. In the first statement a score of 1 means that you think almost all of the people in that group are "rich." A score of 7 means that you think almost everyone in the group are "poor." A score of 4 means you think that the group is not towards one end or another, and of course you may choose any number in between that comes closest to where you think people in the group stand. Blacks?

Response Categories
0 NAP
1 Rich
2 2
3 3
4 4
5 5
6 6
7 Poor
8 Don't know
9 NA
**BLKSIMP** Have conditions for blacks improved (Q.154) Survey Question: In the past few years, do you think conditions for black people have improved, gotten worse, or stayed about the same?

Response Categories
0 NAP
1 Improved
2 Gotten worse
3 About the same
8 DK
9 NA

**CONTBLK** Contribution of blacks to US (Q.738E) Survey Question: Since the beginning of our country, people of many different races, nationalities, and religions have come here and settled. As I name some of these groups please tell me if the group has made one of the most important positive contributions to this country, an important contribution, some contribution, or little positive contribution to this country? Blacks/African Americans?

Response Categories
0 NAP
1 Most important contribution
2 Important contribution
3 Some contribution
4 Little positive contribution
8 DK
9 NA

**WRKWAYUP** Blacks overcome without favors (Q.153B) Survey Question: Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, neither agree nor disagree, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with the following statement: [Hand card to respondent.] Irish, Italians, Jewish and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without special favors.

Response Categories
0 NAP
1 Agree strongly
2 Agree somewhat
3 Neither agree nor disagree
4 Disagree somewhat
5 Disagree strongly
8 DK
9 NA
CLOSEBLK How close feel to blacks (Q.155A) Survey Question: In general, how close do you feel to Blacks?

Response Categories
0 NAP
1 Not at all close
2 2
3 3
4 4
5 Neither one or the other
6 6
7 7
8 8
9 Very close
98 DK
99 NA

MARBLK Close relative marry black (Q.405B) Survey Question: How about having a close relative or family member marry a black person? Would you be very in favor of it happening, somewhat in favor, neither in favor nor opposed to it happening, somewhat opposed, or very opposed to it happening?

Response Categories
0 NAP
1 Strongly favor
2 Favor
3 Neither favor nor oppose
4 Oppose
5 Strongly oppose
8 Don't know
9 NA 26
AGE Age of respondent (Q.13)

Range of Valid Numeric Responses
Minimum value= 1    Maximum value= 97

Response Categories
98 DK
99 NA

RACE Race of respondent (Q.24) Survey Question: What race do you consider yourself?

Response Categories
0 NAP
1 White
2 Black
3 Other

Region
1 NEW ENGLAND
2 MIDDLE ATLANTIC
3 E. NOR. CENTRAL
4 W. NOR. CENTERAL
5 SOUTH ATLANTIC
6 E. SOU. CENTRAL
7 W. SOU. CENTRAL
8 MOUNTAIN
9 PACIFIC

SEX RESPONDENTS SEX

Response Categories
1 Male
2 Female
EDUC. HIGHEST YEAR OF SCHOOL COMPLETED

What is the highest grade in elementary school or high school that (you) finished and got credit for?

Range of Valid Numeric Responses
Minimum value= 1 Maximum value= 20

Response Categories
98 DK
99 NA
References


