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Reexamining Racial Resentment: Conceptualization and Content

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and
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There is an ongoing debate in the racial attitudes literature about the degree to which new racism measures actually tap negative racial beliefs. Racial resentment is one construct that has been criticized on such grounds. To date, Kinder and Sanders (1996) have proposed the most commonly utilized measure of racial resentment, which is largely based on a similar construct—symbolic racism. The authors enter this discussion by proposing and testing an alternative racial resentment measure, one that is more explicit. They analyze data from two convenience samples of college students and from two national adult samples. They find the Explicit Racial Resentment (EXR) measure to have strong measurement properties and associations with known correlates of racial attitudes, suggesting promise as a survey-based indicator of underlying racial resentment.

Keywords: racial attitudes; measurement; resentment; prejudice; racism

Few areas of research have been more intensely debated than the conceptualization and measurement of contemporary racial attitudes. As a result of this attention, we now

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know a great deal about racial perceptions and their complexity. The major controversy centers on the conceptualization and content of contemporary racial animosity. While it is clear that the behavioral nature of racism has changed—based on peoples' expressed willingness to reject racial stereotypes and biological explanations for racial differences in survey interviews—exactly what racism has morphed into is open to debate. Thus, a core problem with contemporary racial attitudes research has been measuring and defining perceptions of African Americans and other minorities in ways that are uncontaminated by other simultaneously evolving attitudes of individualism, conservatism, perceptions of government, and social desirability (Feldman and Huddy 2005). Since racial attitudes are theorized to have significant effects on both racial and non-race-targeted policy opinions (Alvarez and Brehm 2002; Kinder and Sanders 1996; Kinder and Sears 1981; Sears et al. 1997; Sniderman and Piazza 1993), as well as evaluations of political candidates (Mendelberg 2001; Reeves 1997), it is important to dissect and assess the nature and levels of current racial beliefs and the ways in which they are measured.

Attempts to capture the range of racist attitudes seemed to have accepted the conceptual and operational framework of racial resentment (Feldman and Huddy 2005; Kinder and Sanders 1996). Unfortunately, racial resentment has been met with criticism that calls into question its validity as a measure of racism. It is argued that racial resentment conflates ostensibly racist views with individualism and conservatism as well as with predispositions about government policy (Feldman and Huddy 2005; Sniderman et al. 1991; Sniderman, Crosby, and Howell 2000; Sniderman and Tetlock 1986). While some research has substantiated the claim that racial attitudes matter more than ideology (Kinder and Mendelberg 2000; Sears et al. 1997), the continued use of the same controversial measures has led to further division than agreement and has, according to some scholars, “hindered the advancement of research on white racial policy attitudes” (Feldman and Huddy 2005, 168). Adding to the controversy is the view that racial resentment may be a rehashed version of “symbolic racism” (see, for example, Feldman and Huddy 2005), given the similarity of the items contained in the scales (Henry and Sears 2002; Kinder and Sears 1981; Kinder and Sanders 1996; Schuman 2000).

The goal of this article is to hold racial resentment to greater scrutiny. We build off of an existing literature on the general construct of resentment (Feather 2006), propose a new racial resentment scale, and validate the proposed measure. Results suggest that we have a valid and powerful new measure that we term Explicit Racial Resentment (EXR).

The Existing Measurement of Racial Resentment

The stated rationale of racial resentment is to “distinguish between those whites who are generally sympathetic toward blacks and those who are unsympathetic” (Kinder and Sanders 1996, 106). The creation of a measure to reflect such

resentment was intended to tap into the broader beliefs that promote the expression of subtle racial hostility without violating democratic norms of racial egalitarianism. The racial resentment items that Kinder and Sanders (1996) proposed are stated as assertions (i.e., the extent of agreement or disagreement with a statement), refer to blacks as a whole, contain strong evaluative components designed to reveal racial antipathy without referencing white supremacy, and focus on character (e.g., effort, determination, and enterprise) rather than racial superiority.

Kinder and Sanders propose that levels of racial resentment hang on the contention that “blacks do not try hard enough to overcome the difficulties they face and they take what they have not earned” (1996, 105–6). Thus, according to Kinder and Sanders, racial resentment differs from old-fashioned racism in that it raises questions about effort and determination on the part of African Americans, as opposed to references regarding genetic or biological differences. Racial resentment features annoyance and fury as its central emotional themes, and these emotions are provoked by the sense that “blacks Americans are getting and taking more than their fair share” (1996, 293). That is, black Americans are undeserving of special considerations on the basis of racial group membership alone. Herein lies the problem with racial resentment and its measurement: while it is not clear from a conceptual standpoint if resentment underlies these racial motivations, the items have to reflect a great deal more than simple resentment or sympathy. The items must also go further than implicating resentment through beliefs about racial stereotypes related to the personal efforts of blacks; believing a racial stereotype is true does not necessarily equate to racial resentment. It raises the question of whether resentment is a simple retrofitting of symbolic racism.

The original Racial Resentment Scale (RRS) relied on a set of items conceptualized around the sense that blacks have been handed advantages; that government has provided these advantages and special favors; and that hard work, personal responsibility, sacrifice, and self-discipline no longer matter. Yet none of the RRS items explicitly connects this basis of resentment with both blacks and the underlying notion of unfairness or special consideration. What is more, the items do not *explicitly* measure the sentiment of racial resentment; rather, they *allege* that the underlying source of the response is resentment.

For example, Kinder and Sanders (1996) pose the following assertion: “Over the past few years blacks have gotten less than they deserve.” Disagreement with this question is presumed to indicate racial resentment. However, the item only indicates resentment if one believes that blacks have gotten more than they deserve. One could have disagreed with the question—a prejudiced response—and still feel as though blacks have gotten exactly what they deserve, which is not necessarily resentful or racist. Moreover, it is not clear what blacks have gotten less of or less of relative to what. In another question, respondents evaluate whether “generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class.” Disagreement with this statement presumably indicates resentment; however, one could disagree with this statement but still believe that some other structural conditions, other than

slavery and discrimination, have made it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class. Also, similar to the first item mentioned, the resentment is implicit, not explicit. A third statement asserts, "Government officials usually pay less attention to a request or complaint from a black person than from a white person." Disagreement with this item also presumably indicates resentment. However, once again, the resentment seems implicit. One must believe that government officials pay more attention to a request or complaint from a black person than a white person, and one must be angry or resentful about it. One could disagree with this statement, yet be angry at government officials, or believe that whites and blacks receive the same treatment; neither belief is racially resentful. Thus, there is some ambiguity about the nature of the underlying source and meaning of resentment within these items.

In our view, the most troubling, but most commonly employed, RRS item makes the following assertion: "Irish, Italians, Jews and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors."¹ Agreement with the statement signifies resentment; however, there are a number of confounding issues. First, the item implies that blacks do not already work their way up, or that they do not work their way up at the same level as the other groups listed in the statement. It also implies that Irish, Italian, and Jewish groups have not received "any special favors" in their efforts to overcome prejudice. There is also ambiguity about to whom the "other minorities" part of the statement is referring; could they be other "blacks"—Haitians, Brazilians, or Africans—who live in America but would not consider themselves American blacks? Second, the item is double-barreled in that there is more than one assertion being made in the statement; individuals must judge whether other minority groups have worked their way up, whether blacks should do the same (as the other groups), and, potentially, whether blacks should do the same (as the other groups) without "any special favors." One could agree that the other groups have worked their way up but disagree that blacks should do the same without special considerations or vice versa. This second concern is less that it is double-barreled and more that the statements are almost independent, with a respondent making assertions about one set of groups (i.e., Irish, Italians, Jews, and other minorities) and a second assertion about blacks. Thus, in our view, the items composing the RRS need revision.

Measurement of Explicit Racial Resentment (EXR)

Before we get into the measurement details, it is important to explain our conceptualization of racial resentment. At the most basic level, *resentment* is an explicit feeling of animosity or antipathy toward a person or group of people who are perceived to be unfair or unjust recipients of some outcome. While resentment can emanate from a variety of sources, it departs from simple envy or jealousy by including a sense of injustice originating from judgments about the deservingness of some other individual or group (Feather 2006; Feather and Sherman 2002).

Applying this to racial perceptions, *racial resentment* may also encompass anger, bitterness, or concern related to one racial group's beliefs about the deservingness of special considerations on the basis of race for another group. "Special considerations" violate norms of fairness and values related to deservingness. Thus, the racially resentful person is offended by claims of racism and racial discrimination and other racial justifications for special consideration because he or she believes racism and discrimination are events of the past and, thus, attempts to present race as a rationale for social problems, inequality, or celebration are invalid and unfair.

The EXR items mainly differ from past resentment measures in their explicit connection between the source of the resentful feelings and the targeted racial group. As mentioned in previous conceptualizations, racial resentment is not overt racial prejudice (Kinder and Sanders 1996); rather, it is a general annoyance and antipathy related to race. Observe the EXR statements presented to respondents.

Question 1: I resent all of the special attention/favors that African Americans receive; other Americans like me have problems too.

Question 2: African Americans should not need any special privileges when slavery and racism are things of the past.

Question 3: How concerned are you that the special privileges for African Americans place you at an unfair disadvantage when you have done nothing to harm them?

Question 4: For African Americans to succeed they need to stop using racism as an excuse.

The first item explicitly considers resentment in terms of what African Americans get relative to oneself (a non-African American). Agreement with the item acknowledges that African Americans receive special advantages and that this is an unfair situation. However, the item does subtly imply that African Americans do have problems (i.e., "too"); it is just that these problems are no different from those of non-African Americans. This subtle suggestion taps into the belief that while all races may have problems, African Americans are getting more attention and support for their problems than other races and such attention is undeserved and unfair. Thus, stronger agreement on this item indicates that the respondent believes he or she is placed at a disadvantage because of African Americans.

The second statement assesses the basis of special privileges for African Americans. It requires the respondent to consider two ideas: (1) that African Americans should not need special privileges and (2) that slavery and racism are not currently relevant to the situation of African Americans. Stronger agreement with this item indicates that currently, African Americans have virtually no excuse by which to claim special considerations.

The third item measures the extent to which individuals view special privileges for African Americans as unfair because they place the individual in a disadvantaged position for something for which he or she is not responsible. The statement also

asserts that African Americans already receive undeserved special privileges. This is an important feature of resentment because it reverses the blame from the past behavior of whites to the current behavior of African Americans. Thus, it is because African Americans are making such a big deal of race that contemporary whites are blamed for the past sins of their race. Notice the response options for this item are “very concerned,” “concerned,” “not concerned,” or “not at all concerned.” More concern implies that the respondent is aware of his or her racial group’s current position and that his or her position is affected by what African Americans potentially get (in terms of special considerations). This item can also be presented on an agreement scale using the following wording: “The special privileges for African Americans place me at an unfair disadvantage when I have done nothing to harm them.”

The fourth statement taps into the beliefs about the prevalence of racism and its affect on African Americans’ success. Agreement assumes (1) the individual believes that African Americans use racism as a reason for their social position in society, and (2) the individual does not believe that racism is a valid reason for the position of African Americans. An underlying premise of this question is the belief that blacks often use racism as a convenient defense rather than accept responsibility for their lot in life.

Together, these four items compose our EXR scale. We hypothesize that this scale is aptly suited for the measure of racial resentment because the items are descriptive of the content of the racial resentment concepts and because the items explicitly state the nature of the resentment toward blacks. Thus, the EXR, on its surface, has strong face validity and contains suitable content as a parsimonious measure of racial resentment. What is more, the items do not contain any references to government programs or politics, nor is there ambiguity in the meaning of agreement with the items.

We expect our EXR scale to be characterized by strong validity and reliability and to have strong associations with other known correlates of racial attitudes.

Data

We assessed the EXR items and their scale properties in four separate studies, two—studies 1 and 2—using student convenience samples and two—studies 3 and 4—using national samples of registered voters. Brief descriptions of the data are presented below.

Study 1. Participants in this study were respondents from surveys administered to an interdisciplinary course at a midwestern university in fall 2006.² We removed self-identified nonwhites and those who did not provide a racial-ethnic classification, since there is no way of knowing whether they are racial minorities.³ The sample contains 98 (65 percent) females and 51 (34 percent) males; 2 (1.3 percent) respondents provided no gender. Our final sample size for study 1 was 129.

Study 2. Respondents in this study were a convenience sample of students who volunteered to participate in a research project at a mid-Atlantic university. Participants were solicited campuswide and had the option of choosing one of three consecutive days in October 2007 to take part in the survey. Similar to study 1, we removed all nonwhites and those who did not provide a race, bringing the final working sample to 520.⁴ Of this group, 352 (68 percent) were females and 163 (31 percent) males; 5 (1 percent) respondents provided no gender.

Studies 3 and 4. These studies contain survey data from the 2008 Cooperative Campaign Analysis Project (CCAP). The CCAP data contain a national sample of registered voters, stratified by political geography, with oversampling of populations in “battleground” states.⁵ The YouGov Polimetrix research firm collected the data online using a six-wave preelection and postelection panel design. Our data were collected from a random subsample of respondents in two of the waves—September (study 3) and October (study 4)—preceding the 2008 presidential election. For consistency with previous studies, we include only self-reported white respondents (Study 3 $N = 556$ and Study 4 $N = 564$).

Our goal in each study was to examine the construct validity and the internal consistency of the four items composing the EXR scale. Construct validity is the degree to which collected measures in a study correspond to the theoretical constructs on which they were based, and internal consistency is the extent to which items show similar patterns of response as for items designed to measure the same characteristic. On the surface, the EXR items appear to be measuring resentment as we define it; that is, they have face validity. However, we conducted the four studies in search of empirical confirmation. We ran Principal Components Analysis (PCA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to assess validity and calculated reliability (Cronbach’s alpha [α]) statistics to assess internal consistency.⁶ Statistically speaking, good constructs will form a single factor and explain a large amount of variance in the items (e.g., 50 percent or more), have sufficient reliability (i.e., internal consistency), and have a good “fit” with the data to which they are applied. We set our reliability (α) standards at .600 or higher and assessed fit through multiple indicators: a nonsignificant ($p > .05$) chi-square (χ^2) statistic; confirmatory (CFI), normed (NFI), relative (RFI) fit indices of $> .95$, $> .90$, and $> .90$, respectively; and a root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) $< .08$ (Tabachnick and Fidell 2006). The scale and measurement statistics for the EXR in all four studies are provided in Table 1.

Findings

Study 1. The EXR items formed a single factor and produced an adequate reliability statistic of .644. Also, CFA showed the proposed EXR measures are well modeled by the data (i.e., have good fit). Thus, our initial examination reveals the EXR items to have strong psychometric properties in our first student sample.

TABLE 1
Descriptive Statistics and Scale Metrics for Racial Resentment

Statistics	Explicit Racial Resentment (EXR) Statistics			
	Study 1 (<i>n</i> = 116) ^a	Study 2 (<i>n</i> = 502) ^b	Study 3 (<i>n</i> = 556) ^c	Study 4 (<i>n</i> = 564) ^d
Descriptive statistics				
Mean (<i>SD</i>) ^e	10.1 (2.1)	10.4 (2.4)	11.9 (3.0)	12.1 (3.0)
Reliability				
Cronbach's alpha (α)	.644	.752	.894	.908
PCA results				
Eigenvalues (% variance explained)	1.95 (48.7)	2.32 (58.7)	3.0 (76)	3.1 (78)
CFA Results				
χ^2 (<i>df</i> = 2), sig.	1.47, <i>p</i> = .48	10.1, <i>p</i> = .01	16.9, <i>p</i> = .01	2.7, <i>p</i> = .26
NFI	.98	.98	.99	.99
CFI	1.00	.98	.99	1.00
RFI	.95	.94	.94	.99
RMSEA	.00	.09	.07	.02

NOTE: White respondents only.

a. Student sample, midwestern university.

b. Student sample, mid-Atlantic university.

c. Cooperative Campaign Analysis Project (CCAP), September.

d. CCAP, October.

e. The scales range from 4 to 16 (higher scores indicate more resentment), and the mean is the average of the sum of the four items.

Study 2. Here, the EXR items once again form a single factor with good reliability ($\alpha = .752$), and the CFA shows a good to moderate fit. The larger size of this college student sample may help to explain the stronger alpha value and larger amount of explained variance in the items by the factor.

Studies 3 and 4. For both these studies, the PCA revealed single factors with excellent reliability metrics of .894 and .908, respectively. Most impressive with the EXR scale is that across both studies all but one indicator—a significant χ^2 fit statistic in study 3—meet the statistical standard. This is solid evidence that the EXR items are likely capturing the theoretical construct that they are designed to measure in the data.

While sufficient, our student samples in studies 1 and 2 were not optimal in terms of their factor analysis and reliability results, so we took an extra step to assess the scales' ability to converge with other relevant variables. This approach allows us to say whether the effects of a proposed measure are consistent with theory and should therefore correlate ("converge") with known predictors of concept of interest, already accepted measures of the concept, or expected outcomes.

In studies 1 and 2, we collected data on several well-established correlates of racial attitudes. For complete information on the measures and their questions, see the appendix. We measured Social Dominance Orientation (SDO) using a set of eleven items reported in Sidanius and Pratto (2003). Examples of these survey items include statements such as, “Some groups of people are simply not the equal of others” and “Inferior groups should stay in their place.” Authoritarianism is measured using six items from Altemeyer’s (1981) Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA) scale. For example, “People can be divided into two distinct classes: the weak and the strong.” Dogmatism is measured using a subset of eight items from Rokeach’s D-scale (Dogmatism scale) (Christie 1991; Rokeach 1960), which includes, for example, “There are two kinds of people in this world: those who are for the truth and those who are against it.” We also take account of explanations for black-white socioeconomic differences—which we will call “stratification beliefs”—using five items, such as, “On average Blacks have worse jobs, income, and housing than white people. Do you think these differences are mainly 1) due to discrimination or 2) because most Blacks are irresponsible in their daily lives?”⁷ Items on the stratification beliefs index were coded such that higher values supported more individualistic explanations for racial inequality (see the appendix). All of the above mentioned variables were rescaled to range from zero to one, with higher values indicating more influence by the underlying construct.⁸ We also consider a measure of racial affect: a ten-point feeling thermometer question asked students to indicate the extent to which they like (dislike) blacks. We call this “black affect.” In addition, we tapped social distance with other races by asking students to indicate what percentage of their close friends and associates belong to a different racial/ethnic group. We call this variable “interracial friendships.”

Since racial resentment is theorized to stem from early preadult attitudes and beliefs about race, along with a blend of traditional values and conservatism, we expect that individuals who are more closed-minded or dogmatic, more authoritarian, more conservative, hold more individualistic racial stratification beliefs, have lower affect toward blacks, have fewer interracial friends, and have a stronger social dominance orientation will have higher EXR scores (see Sears and Henry 2003). We tested these hypotheses with bivariate correlations (Pearson’s r), which are shown in Table 2.

In study 1, a social dominance orientation and authoritarianism strongly characterized the EXR measure, but it was also significantly related to lower black affect, fewer interracial friendships, and stronger self-reported conservatism. Study 1 confirms that the EXR measure is related to known correlates of negative racial attitudes. Note, the EXR measure, which contains no references to politics or government, is significantly related to self-reported political ideology (higher values equate to stronger conservatism). This is consistent with the conceptualizations of new racism that are hypothesized to contain conservative value orientations. But the significant relationship also indicates that resentment is not simply political but an orientation that is likely to occur among conservatives. This is counter to the findings of Feldman and Huddy (2005).

TABLE 2
Correlates of Racial Resentment for Studies 1 and 2

	Study 1 ^a
	Explicit Racial Resentment
Affect toward blacks	-.204°
Interracial friendships	-.214°
Conservatism (ideology)	.200°
Stratification beliefs	.136
Social dominance orientation	.417°°
Authoritarianism	.359°°
Dogmatism	.201
	Study 2 ^b
	Explicit Racial Resentment
Affect toward blacks	-.271°°
Interracial friendships	-.089°
Conservatism (ideology)	.347°°
Stratification beliefs	.638°°
Social dominance orientation	.343°°
Authoritarianism	.308°°
Dogmatism	.312°°

NOTE: White respondents only.

a. Student sample, midwestern university.

b. Student sample, mid-Atlantic university.

° $p < .05$. °° $p < .01$.

In study 2, the EXR measure is most strongly associated with stratification beliefs, stronger self-reported conservatism, and a higher social dominance orientation. That the EXR was not related to stratification beliefs in the first study, but was the strongest predictor of EXR in the second study, suggests that context (e.g., region, university, classroom setting, or the race of the study's presenter) may have played a role in some way. Nevertheless, study 2 also confirms that EXR stands as a consistent indicator of negative racial attitudes and also replicates the finding that conservatism is correlated with politically neutral racial attitudes (Federico and Sidanius 2002).

Discussion

The study of racial attitudes over the past five decades has led to the conclusion that racial antagonisms have “changed” to be more subtle and covert

(Sears, Sidanius, and Bobo 2000). Current measures of racial resentment are criticized for their content and validity (Feldman and Huddy 2005; Sniderman, Crosby, and Howell 2000), yet the theoretical arguments regarding the need for a more accurate measurement and understanding of the contemporary forms of racism are not questioned. Thus, in our view, progress in the study of racial attitudes depends largely on clarifying the operationalization and meaning of these concepts and improving their measurement.

Our goal was to design and test a new, more explicit measure of resentment, and we believe that we have done so with great promise. First, we believe our questions are more explicit in their connection to resentment. Our measures contain updated wording using the label of “African American” instead of “black”; the questions are free of wording related to government or policy; and most important, they explicitly connect the sources of the resentment (e.g., special attention/favors or racial excuses) to the target (African Americans). Second, our EXR scale measure has strong validity and reliability properties. Both PCA and CFA results show a single factor, and the data have a good fit with the theoretical model of resentment. As with all measures, the items should continue to undergo revision, testing, and scrutiny, and we encourage more, rather than less, dialogue regarding our items.

By making the measurement more explicit, we believe the construct of resentment becomes more pronounced and has the ability to detect nongovernment-based racial attitudes (e.g., attitudes toward African Americans’ progress in economic and social arenas) while avoiding many of the criticisms levied against traditional measures of resentment. While some will claim that the proposed EXR is nothing more than the “same thing using different words,” the fact that we have explicitly and empirically connected our concept of racial resentment to its operationalization and measurement is a marked improvement over what currently exists, which is essentially a different name—“resentment”—for an existing symbolic racism measure. For example, four of the six RRS items are found on the Symbolic Racism 2000 (SR2K) scale (see Henry and Sears 2002). Overall, our results signal to us that measures of contemporary racial attitudes should continue to undergo scrutiny with the goal of improving our understanding of the content, origins, and effects of racial considerations.

While we are hopeful about the ability to offer an alternative measure of racial resentment, there are caveats and limitations to our findings. First, that our items form a single factor does not mean that they are an independent construct from existing “new racism” measures. It is possible that the EXR items could be used in conjunction with the existing symbolic and modern racism items, as well as with the Kinder and Sanders’s (1996) racial resentment items, to form a multidimensional measure of government/policy based on racial resentment. Second, and related to the previous point, none of the items in the EXR scale is expressly political. This is intentional, so as to identify the general source of racial resentment toward African Americans; however, the exclusion of political references may take away from the theory related to the new racism theses: it is both caused by and affects policy and political judgments.

Conclusion

A refocus on the concept of resentment helps to bring about new questions related to racial attitudes. The racial resentment term was applied to what is symbolic racism, yet resentment is something much more explicit. We have defined resentment as a general feeling related to notions of deservingness for racial groups. Such a conceptualization allows researchers to answer and address many new questions connecting political science and psychology.

One example lies in the motivations for resentment. Because of social identity concerns, resentment may result from seeking pleasure in another's misfortune (*Schadenfreude*) (Feather 2006; Feather and Sherman 2002).⁹ The perceived competitive nature of racial differences in society (e.g., equality can only be gained if whites give up some of their prerogatives to blacks) may heighten group identities, with in-groups becoming more protective of their prerogatives by "cutting down" out-groups. Whites who feel that they have been unfairly disadvantaged may gain pleasure (i.e., experience positive emotion) in seeing black Americans lose out on various political and policy issues, so as to not gain an advantage over their white in-group. Their internal rationale is that blacks are undeserving of anything they get that they have not presumably worked hard to get; being members of a racial group that has faced past discrimination is not enough. Thus, racial resentment may serve a positive psychological purpose (i.e., it is self-serving), which manifests itself when whites are asked to evaluate certain policies, institutions, programs, and candidates.

Another thought is that resentment may act to reduce dissonance in the minds of subtle racists. Many whites may believe that blacks are undeserving of special considerations or favors based on race, while simultaneously believing that equality is important in American society. Instead of accepting arguments that blacks should receive positive special considerations because of past racism and discrimination, they instead alter their thinking to believe that no one should receive anything special. This allows their racial and egalitarian beliefs to become balanced. By being resentful of any special favors, especially those based on race, the subtle racist can hold anti-black beliefs without being "anti-black."

In general, we believe that the importance of contemporary racial attitudes has been renewed with the election of President Barack Obama. Obama's popularity has altered stereotypes about black candidates, but it has also increased racial resentment through the subtle framing of Obama as a person who receives "special treatment" from the media. Perhaps unwittingly, as the media played up Obama's race and his status as the first African American nominated by a major party, they also likely primed feelings about deservingness that were then assimilated to statements about his experience. Moreover, Obama was consistently characterized as an eloquent speaker who was high on presentation but low on substance, and political figures such as former Democratic vice presidential nominee Geraldine Ferraro suggested that Obama's race was the main reason for his early Democratic primary success. In an interview with a local

California paper, Ferraro said, “If Obama was a white man, he would not be in this position. And if he was a woman of any color, he would not be in this position. He happens to be very lucky to be who he is. And the country is caught up in the concept” (quoted in Seelye and Bosman 2008).¹⁰ Such comments implied that Obama’s race was his sole political skill and that he was benefiting by using it. Together these characterizations, or “frames,” of Obama may have racialized him and heightened concerns that he was gaining an unfair advantage because of his race.

While some of the events of the 2008 presidential campaign are a sad commentary on racial thinking in America (e.g., constant references and imagery of Obama as a monkey), they highlight why the measurement of racial attitudes and beliefs is so important. Without accurate measures, we may miss the opportunity to thoroughly understand why some people opposed Obama and his policies based more on their political principles and partisanship than on Obama’s race and qualifications.

The added value of our new measure is that it explicitly takes into consideration the conceptual notion of resentment and ties it to the chief source of antipathy toward African Americans: special considerations on the basis of race. Thus, researchers now have a competing indicator of racial feelings through which policy attitudes and political behaviors can be evaluated.

Appendix

Social Dominance Orientation Scale

Please indicate whether you strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree.

1. Some groups of people are simply not the equal of others.
2. Some people are just more worthy than others.
3. This country would be better off if we cared less about how equal all people were.
4. Some people are just more deserving than others.
5. It is not a problem if some people have more of a chance in life than others.
6. Some people are just inferior to others.
7. To get ahead in life, it is sometimes necessary to step on others.
8. If people were treated more equally we would have fewer problems in this country.
9. We should treat one another as equals as much as possible.
10. It is probably a good thing that certain groups are at the top and other groups are at the bottom.
11. Inferior groups should stay in their place.

(continued)

Appendix (continued)

Dogmatism Scale

Please indicate whether you strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree.

1. There are two kinds of people in this world: those who are for the truth and those who are against it.
2. A group which tolerates too many differences of opinions among its members cannot exist for long.
3. To compromise with our political opponents is dangerous because it usually leads to the betrayal of our own side.
4. Of all the different philosophies that exist in the world there is probably only one that is correct.
5. In the long run the best way to live is to pick friends and associates whose tastes and beliefs are the same as one's own.
6. Most of the ideas that get printed nowadays aren't worth the paper they are printed on.
7. In this complicated world of ours the only way we can know what's going on is to rely on leaders or experts who can be trusted.
8. There are a number of people I have come to hate because of the things they stand for.

Authoritarianism Scale

Please indicate whether you strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree.

1. America is getting so far from the true American way of life that force may be necessary to restore it.
2. No matter how they act on the surface, men are interested in women for only one reason.
3. Human nature being what it is, there will always be war and conflict.
4. What this country needs is fewer laws and agencies, and more courageous, tireless, devoted leaders whom the people can put their faith in.
5. What the youth needs most is strict discipline, rugged determination, and the will to work and fight for your family and country.
6. People can be divided into two distinct classes: the weak and the strong.

(continued)

Appendix (continued)

Stratification beliefs

Please indicate whether you strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree.

1. On the average Blacks have worse jobs, income, and housing than white people. These differences are mainly due to discrimination? (disagree)
2. Because most blacks don't have the chance for education that it takes to rise out of poverty. (disagree)
3. Because most blacks just don't have the motivation or will power to pull themselves up out of poverty. (agree)
4. Because most blacks enjoy or have no problems with being where they are in life. (agree)
5. Because most blacks are irresponsible in their daily lives. (agree)

Anti-black affect

On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 being cold (I really dislike this group) and 10 being warm (I really like this group), how would you rate your feelings towards black people?

Interracial friendships

What percentage of your close friends and associates (people with whom you normally hang-out—including friends back home) are from a different racial or ethnic group?

Notes

1. This question has been asked in the General Social Survey (GSS) since 1994, and over the past three administrations—2004, 2006, and 2008—it has been presented as a stand-alone resentment measure. The American National Election Study (ANES) has asked this item since 1986 along with other variations of the RRS items; however, the 2008 ANES removed the wording “Irish, Italians, Jews, and many” from the assertion.

2. As a required course intended to expose entering college students to multidisciplinary treatment of social inequality, the class contained a cross-section of students.

3. Of 208 students interviewed, at least sixty majors were represented. Seventy-four percent were freshmen, 18 percent sophomores, 4 percent juniors, and 1 percent seniors. The original sample contained 129 (62 percent) whites, 11 (5.3 percent) blacks, 11 (5.3 percent) Asians, and 3 (1.4 percent) Latinos. Pacific Islanders and American Indians each had one respondent from their respective group, and six respondents (2.9 percent) said they belonged to some “other” race not listed. Finally, forty-six (22.1 percent) respondents did not provide their racial background when asked. The human subjects consent form explicitly stated subjects may opt out of any question they felt uncomfortable answering, and given the anonymity of response, we could not gather much information on those who did not provide their race or ethnic classification. However, those who did not provide a racial-ethnic classification were more likely to be male than female and were more conservative than liberal, but these differences were not statistically significant.

4. The original sample consisted of 622 respondents, including 520 (85 percent) white, 28 (5 percent) black, 23 (4 percent) Asian, and 25 (4 percent) Latino students. Pacific Islanders and American Indians each had three (0.5 percent) respondents from their respective group, and twelve respondents (2 percent) said they belonged to some "other" race not listed. Finally, eight (1 percent) respondents did not provide their racial background when asked.

5. "Registered voter" identification is based on a self-report. The political geographic strata are early primary battleground (FL, WI, PA, IA, NH, MN, NM, NV, and OH) and nonbattleground (all others) states. The sampling frame was designed by YouGov Polimetrix, using target estimates based on the 2007 American Community Study (ACS) that the U.S. Census Bureau conducted. Sample targets were created within each strata according to age, race, gender, education, and voter registration battleground/nonbattleground state location. While the data contain sample design weights, our analyses are unweighted because of our experimental design and our focus on measurement. The baseline study (wave 1) took place between December 17, 2007 and January 3, 2008; wave 2 took place between January 24 and February 4, 2008; wave 3 took place from March 21 to April 14, 2008; wave 4 took place from September 17 to September 29, 2008; wave 5 took place between October 22 and November 3, 2008; and the postelection study (wave 6) took place from November 5 to December 1, 2008.

6. The PCAs were estimated using oblique rotated (Promax) factor structures, and our interpretations were based on the estimated "structure" matrices (Tabachnick and Fidell 2006). In cases where all items loaded on a single factor, no rotation was needed. With the PCA analyses, we are looking for a single-factor solution with factor loadings greater than .500 (Comrey and Lee 1992). The CFAs were conducted in AMOS 16 using maximum likelihood estimation.

7. Three of these items have been asked in the GSS and are understood to tap support for structural (e.g., discrimination, education) and individualistic (e.g., motivation) explanations for black-white socioeconomic differences (see Hunt 2007). Although structuralist and individualistic explanations are generally analyzed as separate constructs, in both studies the items have sufficient internal consistency to fit together as a single scale (study 1: $n = 102$, $M = .73$, $SD = .10$, $\alpha = .614$; study 2: $n = 521$, $M = .58$, $SD = .12$, $\alpha = .706$), with higher values indicating stronger individualistic beliefs.

8. All items on the SDO, RWA, and Dogmatism scales were coded such that more agreement on a four-point Likert scale equates to higher levels of the construct.

9. *Schadenfreude* is a sense of pleasure gained by witnessing another's misfortune.

10. The Torrance, California paper was the *Daily Breeze*.

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