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Community Influences on White Racial Attitudes: What Matters and Why?

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Abstract

Tracing the roots of racial attitudes in historical events and individual biographies has been a longstanding goal of race relations scholars. Recent years have seen a new development in racial attitude research: Local community context has entered the spotlight as a potential influence on racial views. The race composition of the locality has been the most common focus; evidence from earlier decades suggests that white Americans are more likely to hold anti-black attitudes if they live in areas where the African American population is relatively large. However, an influential 2000 article argued that the socioeconomic composition of the white community is a more powerful influence on white attitudes: In low-SES locales, “stress-inducing” deprivations and hardships in whites’ own lives purportedly lead them to disparage blacks. The study reported here re-assesses this “scapegoating” claim, using data from the 1998–2002 General Social Surveys linked to 2000 census information about communities. Across many dimensions of racial attitudes, there is pronounced influence of both local racial proportions and college completion rates among white residents. However, the economic dimension of SES exerts negligible influence on white racial attitudes, suggesting that local processes other than scapegoating must be at work.

INTRODUCTION

Studies of racial attitudes raise broad theoretical questions important to researchers in many branches of social science. However, views about race are not just a matter of scholarly interest: Public opinion can influence public policy (Burstein 2003), including race policy (Pride 2000). Traditional approaches to understanding racial attitudes look to the characteristics and circumstances of individual perceivers, along with broad historical patterns and events. Recent years have seen an important extension of racial attitude research, calling attention to the potential influence of local communities on residents’ views. Among community characteristics, often referred to as “contextual” or “environmental” factors, race composition has been the most common focus. However, some researchers argue that the socioeconomic composition of the local white community is the more potent contextual force. If there is debate about which environmental characteristics influence racial attitudes, even more remains to be learned about how local

processes serve as mediators, transforming demographic patterns into racial attitudes of white residents. This study reports evidence about which community characteristics shape racial attitudes, and considers implications of those findings for local mediating processes.

Backdrop: The impact of local race composition

Theory and research have pointed to local race composition, especially the proportion of African Americans in the population, as a critical influence on white racial attitudes. Previous studies have found white Americans reporting greater race prejudice in localities where the black population share is high (see, for example, Fossett and Kiecolt 1989; Quillian 1996; Taylor 1998), especially outside the South (Taylor 1998). Tangible outcomes such as racial occupational inequality (Burr, Galle, and Fossett 1991) and certainty of criminal punishment (Liska, Chamlin, and Reed 1985) have also shown positive associations with the relative size of the local African American population, presumably as an outgrowth of negative white attitudes.¹

The proposition that white hostility may be fueled by proximity to racial minorities is not new (see Allport 1954; Williams 1947). The underlying dynamic is often assumed to be threat associated with some form of “realistic group conflict” (Levine and Campbell 1972). Economic and political rivalries were discussed by Blalock (1967), who concluded that threat/competition in each of these spheres produced a distinctive curvilinear relationship between black numbers and white reactions: With economic competition, white antipathy should sharply increase as minority concentration begins to rise but level off at higher levels of minority population, by which point whites have developed mechanisms of exclusion to control the economic threat; political threat, in contrast, rises at an accelerating rate as minority numbers increase, and thus so does white antipathy. Emphasizing economic competition, Quillian (1996) used regional black population share along with per capita income as an indicator of “perceived group threat,” demonstrating that the former relates directly and the latter inversely to white prejudice and opposition to race-targeting. Political struggle has been the focus of analysts such as Giles and his colleagues (see Giles and Evans 1985); for example, Giles and Hertz (1994) showed white Southerners’ defections from the Democratic party to be greater where blacks were heavily represented in the local population.

Perceived threat that may mediate effects of black population numbers on white attitudes need not be exclusively economic or political. Herbert Blumer (1958) portrayed white prejudice as a “sense of group position” that becomes virulent prejudice when the dominant position is threatened. The dynamic Blumer described is often referenced in discussions of economic and political competition, but can be interpreted as more encompassing. Analysts in the Tajfel tradition describe in-group identification and out-group derogation as serving psychological needs for social inclusion and distinctiveness (Tajfel and Turner 1986; Brewer 1991) or attempts to maintain social status and thus self esteem (see Forbes’ discussion of social identity theory, 1997:32). Followers of Blumer might make a similar point but with a

¹The conflict between these patterns and claims that contact can improve intergroup relations is more apparent than real. Locales with large proportions of African American residents often have high levels of residential segregation, precluding the kind of intergroup contact found to encourage positive attitude change (Allport 1954).

sociological twist, noting that the valued sense of dominant group position is multifaceted, entailing diffuse social status along with economic and political gains.²

Indeed, potentially important forms of threat aroused by the presence of minorities are not exhausted when we add *status* to the *economic* and *political* spheres. Whites' sense of *physical* threat from minorities is emphasized in the criminal justice literature; and objections to the inclusion of non-English languages in education and public life are reminders that *cultural* threat may be important, whether the minority in question is African Americans or Hispanics. Citing Liska (1992) among others, Stults and Baumer note that some analysts believe the presence of minorities may lead to tightened social controls because "culturally dissimilar minority groups are perceived as a diffuse threat to the social order" (2007:510).

A Different Focus: Socioeconomic composition of the white community

A provocative and influential article by Oliver and Mendelberg (2000) argues that earlier analysts got the story about environmental effects on racial attitudes mostly wrong. Black population share has limited influence on white attitudes, these analysts claim, largely because segregated institutions have been erected to mitigate racial competition and threat. As supporting evidence, Oliver and Mendelberg report their 1991 telephone survey findings that neither zipcode-level nor metropolitan-level proportion black seems to influence "symbolic racism;" and that racial stereotyping is similarly unaffected by zipcode-level race composition, although a modest relationship exists at the metro level. Overall, these researchers contend that community characteristics influence policy opinions only where the specific predictor indexes competition in the arena referenced by the policy question. Thus, for example, their data did evidence a metropolitan-level impact of proportion black on whites' opinions about affirmative action in employment, purportedly because job competition exists at the metropolitan level.

The more powerful environmental influence on white residents' racial attitudes, according to Oliver and Mendelberg (2000), is the socioeconomic composition of the local white community. These researchers took the percentage of local whites holding college degrees as their contextual SES predictor and found zipcode-level effects of this education index on measures of racial attitudes, net of the influence of educational attainment by individual white residents.

In sociology as well as political science, the Oliver and Mendelberg (2000) paper has received widespread attention – cited to legitimate the search for contextual effects in general, even in projects where the focal environmental predictor is the factor that Oliver and Mendelberg downplayed, racial composition of the local population (for example, see Dixon 2006; McLaren 2003). Among studies that have focused on socioeconomic status as an environmental influence on racial and other attitudes, a number have followed Oliver and Mendelberg in using educational level of local residents to represent SES (see Blake 2003; Branton and Jones 2005; Marschall and Stolle 2004; Soss, Langbein, and Metelko 2003).³

²Objections to using Blumer's theory in survey research (see Esposito and Murphy 1999) were effectively answered by Ulmer (2001).

Interpretation of socioeconomic composition effects

Why should the socioeconomic composition of the local white community matter? Oliver and Mendelberg considered and rejected a list of possibilities. If low SES local environments increase whites' sense of vulnerability, then low SES in the white community would magnify the threat represented by local black numbers; in Oliver and Mendelberg's data such interaction was absent. If the contextual SES measure reflected the impact of certain unmeasured individual differences, its force should be diminished by introducing political information as a control variable; their data showed no such pattern. Social norms are an implausible mediator of the contextual SES effect, Oliver and Mendelberg contend, because residents within areas as large as zipcodes don't generally interact enough to develop norms; also, zipcode areas don't contain "far-reaching normative institutions" (2000:585) that would generate strong norms, nor was the contextual SES effect more pronounced among longer-term residents, as a normative explanation might imply.

By elimination, Oliver and Mendelberg came to favor what others might call "scapegoating" theory to explain the zipcode-level contextual SES effects emphasized in their findings. "The greatest environmental determinants of racial attitudes come not from material competition, social norms, or unmeasured individual characteristics, but from psychological responses of out-group aversion that are triggered by low status contexts" (2000:586). The authors' introductory discussion paved the way for this conclusion: "Low-status settings, defined by low rates of education and employment, expose residents to a daily dose of petty crime, concentrated physical decay and social disorder... This exposure in turn leads to a constellation of negative psychological states... In settings characterized by general anxiety and fear, anti-black affect may arise because African Americans are a salient target in a racially divided society" (2000: 576).

This portrayal closely echoes Allport's (1954) description of scapegoating. Allport underlines "the escapist function of aggressiveness...(its) capacity to soften the disappointments and frustrations of life," and goes on to say: "Throughout life the same tendency persists for anger to center upon available rather than logical objects" (1954:343).

A very different interpretation is suggested if we focus not on "socioeconomic" composition, but on the environmental SES measure actually used in much of the existing research—the educational composition of the white community. For one thing, this invites attention to processes that may exist in higher-status white communities, not just to the demoralization that may pervade the white population of lower-status communities.

A thoughtful and provocative interpretation of contextual education effects was spelled out by Moore and Ovadia (2006) in connection with research not on racial attitudes, but on support for civil liberties. Moore and Ovadia propose: "transmission of pro-tolerance attitudes that result from greater concentrations of college graduates is achieved through

³Taking off from Oliver and Mendelberg (2000), subsequent studies by Oliver and his collaborators have incorporated Hispanic and Asian-American presence as potential environmental predictors and have broadened the set of dependent measures examined. Also, level of analysis has moved to center stage: Oliver and Wong (2003), along with Ha (2010), conclude that sizeable outgroup representation in the neighborhood encourages positive attitudes among residents, while a large outgroup population in the metropolitan area seem to have a negative influence on attitudes.

institutional and macrosocial means, as opposed to the face-to-face interactions between similar individuals.” And they go on to say: “It may be that areas with more college graduates are more likely to pass anti-discrimination laws (and may also be more likely to see that they are enforced). These areas may have stronger norms of cultural acceptance that lead both the college educated and those without degrees to be accepting of non-normative individuals and their ideas. Institutions, such as local governments, schools, cultural centers and businesses, may be more likely to create and support pro-tolerance activities when the population that they serve contains a higher proportion of individuals who are likely to value diversity. And even though these public activities may be set up in response to the demands of the intellectual elite, their effects are likely to be felt throughout the community” (2006:2215).⁴

The mediation of socioeconomic composition effects has yet to receive the academic consideration given to mediation of race composition effects on racial attitudes, making these Moore and Ovadia ideas an especially valuable contribution.

THE PRESENT STUDY

A central focus of this research is the influence of socioeconomic composition in the local white community on the racial attitudes of its residents. In particular, we seek to disentangle the influence of white educational composition from that of white economic composition in order to adjudicate between alternate interpretations of observed environmental SES effects. As well, we respond to earlier comparisons of white socioeconomic composition with race composition effects by including local racial proportions among our key predictors.

More specifically, having linked 1998–2002 General Social Survey (GSS) responses to information from the 2000 U.S. Census about the localities where the GSS respondents live, we ask:

1) In these data, what is the evidence that black population share in the metropolitan area or non-metro county influences white racial attitudes?

Research using 1990 GSS data showed noteworthy metropolitan-level effects of the proportion of residents who were African American (Taylor 1998). Oliver and Mendelberg (2000) de-emphasized race composition effects, reporting inconsistent metropolitan-level proportion-black effects across their two racial attitude and three racial policy measures. However, the Oliver and Mendelberg research used dummy variables rather than a continuous scale to index race composition, and introduced controls—zipcode-level contextual variables and political party affiliation—that may distort the assessment of metro-level predictors. An updated assessment is needed, using a continuous race composition predictor and a broad array of eight racial attitude measures.

⁴It may be instructive that Moore and Ovadia’s discussion shifts between reference to “attitudes” and reference to “norms.” Schuman et al. (1997:2–5) provide a thoughtful response to critics who worry that race attitude measures may largely reflect survey respondents’ deference to assumed normative expectations held by researchers, especially in face-to-face interviews and among highly educated respondents. Debates about what attitude measures actually measure are too complex to be extensively considered here. However, the Schuman et al. argument that norms exert powerful influences on social life implies that if indeed racial attitude measures are partially barometers of racial norms, they nonetheless supply us with very important information.

2) To what extent are the racial attitudes of white residents affected by the educational composition of the white community in the metropolitan area or non-metropolitan county?

The influential Oliver and Mendelberg article assessed the impact of contextual education only at the zipcode level, assuming that the variability of educational composition across metropolitan areas is too small and the variability within sub-communities of metropolitan areas too great for metro-level education to be a plausible influence on racial attitudes (2000: 577). Our project tests that assumption.

3) To what extent are the racial attitudes of white residents affected by the economic composition of the white community in the metropolitan area or non-metropolitan county?

This project dissects white “socioeconomic” composition, assessing the role of economic context as well as educational context. What is the relative strength of white educational and economic composition when each is examined separately, and does each aspect of aggregate SES contribute to understanding white racial attitudes when both are included in multivariate analyses?

Why focus on White Americans’ attitudes about blacks?—The need to assess outgroup attitudes among perceivers other than European Americans and for targets other than African Americans is crucially important in our multiracial society (see, for example, Taylor and Schroeder 2010). However, there are clear indications that black targets face particularly disparaging attitudes (see, for example, Bobo and Hutchings 1996; Dixon 2006). And there is powerful evidence that the impact of minority population proportions differs when the minority group is blacks rather than Hispanics or Asians (see, for example, Taylor 1998; Taylor and Auran 2004; Dixon 2006). Furthermore, the interaction of racial context with individual interracial experience depends on which minority group is the focus (Dixon 2006). In short, negative attitudes held by whites about blacks are particularly acute, and environmental influences on those attitudes are in some ways unique. Even as valuable research involving other perceivers and targets is pursued, there is ample reason to ask specifically about whites’ attitudes toward blacks.

Why focus on metropolitan areas and non-metropolitan counties as contextual units?—There is certainly good reason to study environmental impacts of smaller units, and to compare results for localities varying in scale, as some researchers have done (e.g. Ha 2010; Oliver and Wong 2003). However, larger contextual units do influence attitudes in ways that are inadequately understood and deserve further study. Substantively and statistically significant effects of metropolitan-level factors have been demonstrated by Taylor (1998) and by Baumer, Messner, and Rosenfeld (2003), among others. Acknowledging the importance of metropolitan areas as labor markets, U.S. government labor statistics and research on wage equity are presented for metropolitan areas (see, for example, Cohen and Huffman 2003; McCall 2001). Newspaper readership is often defined by metropolitan area (see, for example, Lacy 1984; Maier 2005), as is the scope of other media. Geographically-focused sociology research notes that activity patterns of Americans typically extend far beyond their immediate residential area (Matthews, 2008; Matthews, Detwiler, and Burton 2005).⁵

Distinguishing contextual influences of socioeconomic status from

individual-level SES effects—The well-established tendency for better educated white individuals to report less negative views on many racial attitude measures (see e.g., Schuman et al., 1997) springs to mind during discussions of contextual socioeconomic status effects. It is worth emphasizing that our interest here is in the impact of community-level socioeconomic status, above and beyond any effects of individuals' own SES on their racial views. The data analysis strategy described below accomplishes the differentiation of individual-level from contextual predictors, and labeling the environmental factors "educational composition" and "economic composition" emphasizes this important distinction.

METHODOLOGY

Using responses of non-Hispanic white participants in the 1998–2002 General Social Surveys (GSS) merged with year 2000 Census data, we examine contextual effects on eight measures of racial perspective that collectively represent traditional prejudice; perceptions related to "new" racism; and racial policy views.

1998–2002 General Social Survey Samples

General Social Surveys (GSS) are administered biannually to stratified, multi-stage samples of English-speaking Americans over the age of 17 by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago. The National Opinion Research Center is one of the few research organizations that has retained the capability to conduct national surveys through in-person interviews, considered the gold standard in survey research. For this reason, and because the track record of the staff is outstanding, General Social Survey data are widely regarded to be of the highest quality. The GSS data are particularly valuable for this research because they contain a rich variety of sophisticated and well-tested measures of racial attitudes. The stereotype measures, for example, developed for an earlier special GSS module on Intergroup Relations, are subtle enough to reveal evidence of racial stereotyping not detectable by traditional stereotype questions (Bobo and Kluegel 1991).

The 1998, 2000, and 2002 surveys were selected for this project because of their temporal proximity to the 2000 decennial census that provided the data on respondents' communities. For these three surveys, response rates were 76%, 70%, and 70%, respectively. Over the three years, the non-Hispanic whites whose responses are examined here number 6323. The GSS practice of administering selected questions to random sub-samples of respondents,

⁵Another advantage of studying context effects for larger geographical units is that there is less reason to worry about the direction of causation between race composition and attitudes. The chicken and egg problem haunts contextual as well as individual-level assessments of the impact of proximity and contact on intergroup attitudes. Although data analytic strategies have been employed to offer some assurance that selection of diverse environments is not the primary cause of apparent contact effects (see for example Branton and Jones 2005; Dixon 2006; Welch et al. 2001) most analysts acknowledge that reverse causality remains an issue (Oliver and Mendelberg 2000). The role of race composition in white Americans' neighborhood choices is indisputable (see, for example, Zubrinsky Charles 2001, 2006), but it is likely that economic considerations, sentiment, and accident dominate people's selection of metropolitan area or non-metropolitan county. For most whites, the economic or sentimental cost of avoiding a metropolitan area because of its minority population would be too great. And levels of residential segregation are high enough in virtually all areas (Massey and Denton 1993; Stoll 2005) so that those averse to diversity can satisfy their taste for racially homogenous neighborhoods within the metropolitan area they choose for other reasons.

inclusion of some measures in only one or two survey years, and item-specific refusals leave us with smaller samples for any given analysis. Ns range from 2904 to 5264.

For these three surveys, NORC randomly selected respondents from 100 Primary Sampling Units (PSUs), 70 metropolitan areas and 30 non-metropolitan counties.⁶ Details of the sampling plan are available in the General Social Surveys 1972–2002: Cumulative Codebook, distributed by the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research. The PSUs are the contextual units representing localities in our analyses.

Dependent Variables

Responses to twenty-three questions were used individually or in scales to yield eight measures of race-related views and feelings. This set includes measures of “traditional prejudice,” measures related to “new” forms of racism (Kinder and Sanders 1996), and indicators of race-policy-related views.

Three scales represent traditional prejudice: *Stereotyping* is the unweighted mean of three quantities, the differences in white respondents’ ratings of whites and blacks on seven-point scales representing trait dimensions of intelligence, industriousness, and propensity to violence. *Emotion* is the mean of two quantities, differences in reported warmth or coldness felt toward whites and blacks, and differences in respondents’ feelings of closeness toward whites and blacks. *Social Distance* is the mean of reported reactions to living in a half-black neighborhood and to having a close family member marry a black person.

Three measures assess perceptions associated with “new” forms of racism. *Attributions for Racial Inequality* is a four-item scale registering respondents’ assignment of responsibility for racial inequality to blacks’ inborn ability, lack of effort, inadequate schools, and discrimination. *Belief in Reverse Discrimination* records respondents’ assessments of how often white job seekers lose out to less qualified blacks. *Racial Resentment* is a two item scale registering sentiment that blacks should work their own way up and should not push where they are not wanted.

Finally, two measures assess views on racial policy questions. *Opposition to Affirmative Action* records opinions about racial preferences in hiring and promotion. *Opposition to Government Help* is a scale registering respondents’ preferred level of government spending to assist blacks and their opinions about whether the government is obliged to help blacks.

Details on GSS question wording and alpha coefficients for the scales are presented in Table 1. *All measures were coded so that unfavorable racial views and feelings score high.*

Focal Predictors: Locality Characteristics

The focal predictors are built from information gathered in the 2000 census for the 100 metropolitan and non-metropolitan GSS primary sampling units. *Race Composition* is a straightforward measure of proportion of the population that is African American. *White Educational Composition* is the proportion of white residents who have not attained a

⁶A single exception should be noted: One non-metro Primary Sampling Unit encompasses two counties.

college degree, transformed to a standard score (to be in the same metric as the economic composition indicator described next). *White Economic Composition* is a scale, the mean of standard scores representing the local proportion of whites falling below the poverty level, the proportion having family income less than \$50,000, and the proportion of white men who are not employed. The proportion black in the local population is correlated with the two SES indicators at negligible levels ($r = -.01$ and $r = -.12$ for educational and economic composition, respectively); the two indicators of white SES composition are more strongly correlated with each other ($r = .67$). *Note that the coding of these SES composition predictors, with high values assigned where lower-status whites predominate, means we would see positive relationships with racial prejudice if disparaging racial attitudes were encouraged where SES composition in the white community is low.*

Locality-level controls

Population Size, the natural log of the 2000 population count for the locality, was included in all analyses, as was *Metro Status*, coded 1 for metropolitan localities and 0 for non-metropolitan counties. Region was represented by a variable *South*, coded 1 for Southern localities, 0 otherwise.

Individual-level controls

Four characteristics of individual respondents were included in all analyses: *Education*, measured as years of schooling; *Age* in years; gender, labeled *Male* to indicate coding of males as 1, females as 0; and *Family Income* on a 23-point scale. For dependent measures included in more than one survey year, we also included two dummy variables to indicate year of the survey, *Year 2000* and *Year 2002*; 1998 was the reference year.

Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics for dependent and independent variables are presented in Table 2.

Analyses

The multi-stage samples from which our GSS data come, with survey respondents clustered in one hundred geographical areas, call for specialized data analysis. Co-residents of localities are presumably more similar to each other than to individuals randomly-picked from across the country, on a whole range of unmeasured as well as measured characteristics; more technically, there is a lack of independence among errors within clusters. For our central measures of community characteristics, all residents from the same locality have identical values. This project employs the multi-level modeling program HLM that adjusts for the structure of these data (Raudenbush and Bryk 2002).⁷

Our strategy is to begin with an analysis that includes *Race Composition* along with individual-level and locality-level controls. In Model 2 we add the second focal contextual predictor, *White Educational Composition*. In Model 3, *White Educational Composition* is

⁷Another useful hierarchical linear modeling reference is Snijders and Bosker (2000).

removed and *White Economic Composition* is added. Finally, Model 4 incorporates both *White Educational Composition* and *White Economic Composition*.⁸

RESULTS

HLM results for the four sets of analyses are presented in Tables 3 and 4. As background, effects of individual-level characteristics on the eight dependent measures are presented in Table 3 for the model that included all three focal contextual variables along with locality-level controls (Model 4 in Table 4). The individual-level effects change little as contextual variables are added to the model, and they are not the focus of this research; thus the single set of summaries presented in Table 3 suffices. As found in earlier racial attitude research, more highly educated respondents give more progressive answers to racial attitude questions. On the social distance scale and especially the two policy opinion measures, after controlling on education whites with higher family income were more negative. When the liberalizing influence of the education that often accompanies higher income is statistically removed, the resulting partial effects of family income may indicate that those with the most to lose, whether it be status, occupational position, or money, are most invested in the racial status quo. There was a gender difference on five of the eight dependent measures, in all cases women being the more progressive; evidence for widespread gender differences in racial attitudes is inconsistent (see Hughes and Tuch, 2003). With one exception, the young are more progressive than older respondents, a common finding for some kinds of racial attitude measures (see e.g. Taylor 1998) often interpreted in cross-sectional data such as these to be “cohort effects,” reflecting prevalent racial views at the time various cohorts came of age.

Table 4 contains the information that is our central interest – contextual effects for the localities that constitute the GSS primary sampling units. As noted earlier, three environmental factors -- population size, metro status, and region -- are included in all analyses as controls. Status as a metropolitan area or non-metro county never made a difference in these dependent measures, and none of the significant effects of population size withstood the introduction of locality-level education in the analysis. Congruent with findings in other recent research (see, for example, Tuch and Martin 1997), where we see evidence of regional differences, Southerners are the less progressive group.⁹

We now turn to the primary focus of this paper, the effects of race composition and the two contextual measures of white socioeconomic composition.

Effects of black population share

As we see in the first column of Table 4 (representing Model 1), when *Race composition* is the only focal environmental predictor, it has highly significant effects on five of the eight

⁸The logic of such multivariate strategies is powerfully spelled out in the classic work by Rosenberg (1968). Another classic, Cohen and Cohen (1975) outlines the essentials of multiple regression; such recent sources as Agresti and Finlay's text (2008) update this description.

⁹Southern region and proportion black are confounded ($r=.581$), and the racial history of the U.S. leaves some question about how to disentangle the two. Inclusion of each in a multivariate analysis of white racial attitudes generally weakens the observed impact of the other. The region effects seen for Model 1 should be interpreted remembering that they are partial effects, controlling on black population share (as well as population size and metro status).

racial attitude measures. In all cases, the racial composition effects are in the expected direction – unfavorable attitudes (coded high) are more common among non-Hispanic whites living in areas where blacks represent a larger proportion of the population.

Two of the attitude dimensions showing non-significant effects of black population share are the *Emotion* scale and the *Social Distance* measure. Perhaps the positive feelings and acceptance registered on these indicators are so closely tied to personal experience as to be relatively impervious to environmental influence.

Surprisingly, the only other dimension of racial attitudes not affected by proportion black was opposition to affirmative action. Readers may recall that opinion about affirmative action was one of the few racial attitude items that did show an effect of metro-level racial proportions in the 1991 telephone survey data analyzed by Oliver and Mendelberg (2000), a pattern the earlier researchers interpreted as reflecting racial threat tied to metro-level job competition. Evidently that effect is not robust.¹⁰

For the five dimensions of racial attitudes that showed a significant impact of race composition, effects declined only modestly when the other focal contextual predictors were introduced into the model (see columns 2–4 in Table 4). All remained clearly significant.

Education and economic dimensions of white socioeconomic composition

What about the impact of white educational composition on racial attitudes? Recall, we control for the education of the individual white respondents; we ask here about the impact of the proportion of college graduates in the collectivity of local whites, over and above any impact of college on the attitudes of individuals who attended. Their own education aside, do those living where relatively few whites hold college degrees reveal greater race prejudice? Across our mostly-metro localities, a contextual effect of white educational composition is significant for six of the eight racial attitude measures, prejudice being higher in white communities where the college educated are relatively rare. It is two measures of traditional prejudice – stereotyping and emotion – that are unaffected by white educational composition.

When race composition and white educational composition are in the model together, which influence is the stronger? The standardized slope coefficients¹¹ presented in parentheses for Model 2 in Table 4 tell the story, and the answer is mixed. Where there is any difference to speak of in the strength of the two environmental influences, racial composition has the stronger influence on stereotyping, while educational composition has the stronger influence on social distance, racial resentment, and opposition to affirmative action. The two contextual predictors have significant and approximately equally strong effects on

¹⁰The corollary of the point made in Note 6 is that assessing the impact of proportion black on white attitudes after controlling for Southern location, as we did here, predictably yields conservative estimates. If the ambiguity about the appropriate treatment of region and race composition in multivariate analyses had been resolved by reporting race composition coefficients without the control for South, we would see substantially larger proportion black effects on most dependent measures; and for one of the three attitude measures that didn't show a significant effect of proportion black in Table 4, social distance, the effect becomes significant at $p < .001$ (results available from the authors).

¹¹Standardized slope coefficients are presented in parentheses for all effects reported in Tables 3 and 4, because they allow comparison of the strength of the various partial effects. They can be interpreted as the change in standardized dependent variable scores expected when the independent variable increases by one standard deviation, controlling for other variables in the model.

attributions for racial inequality, belief in reverse discrimination, and opposition to government help; and neither has a significant effect on emotion.

In sum, net of individual white respondents' education, the educational composition of the white community is indeed an important environmental influence on racial attitudes. In fact, on three dimensions of racial attitudes the influence of white educational composition is notably stronger than the influence of locality race composition. But how are we to interpret these effects? Is white education level a proxy for economic hardship among whites in the locality, as prominent earlier researchers seemed to assume? The answer is clear when we add white economic status to the HLM analyses. For Model 4, where all three focal contextual predictors are included, the six effects of white educational level that were significant in Model 2 remain significant.

In contrast to the Model 4 findings for educational composition, partial effects of white economic composition are non-significant across the board. Does collinearity play a role here? As noted earlier, the contextual education and economic indicators are substantially correlated with each other. Is the absence of significant white economic composition effects just a matter of white education level having stolen its thunder in the multivariate analysis? No. As revealed by the coefficients for Model 3, without white educational composition in the analysis, white economic composition has significant effects on four of the eight dimensions of racial attitudes, but only at the .05 level. Comparison of Model 2 and Model 3 standardized coefficients for the two environmental SES dimensions confirms that education is dominant, not economics: The prominent contextual education effect is just that – not a proxy for the influence of economic composition. Indeed, the economic composition of the white community seems to play no role in shaping racial attitudes once educational composition is controlled.¹²

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

What have we learned from these data, and what questions need to be resolved? For a start, the race composition of the 100 metropolitan areas and non-metro counties represented in the 1998–2002 General Social Surveys has an impact on five of the eight dimensions of racial attitudes held by white residents. In localities where the black population is relatively large, white residents tend to be less progressive on many forms of race-related attitudes. This pattern is congruent with claims of selected earlier analysts, including Taylor's (1998) conclusion based on GSS data collected a decade earlier. It is incongruent with Oliver and Mendelberg's (2000) skepticism about the importance of black presence in the community, possibly reflecting differences in the measurement of race composition, the dependent

¹²As noted earlier, Oliver and Mendelberg (2000) suggested that residential segregation may alleviate perceived threat in localities where blacks represent a large share of the population, mitigating the tendency for negative racial attitudes to develop. In supplementary analysis we found only qualified support for this hypothesis: For the stereotyping and emotion measures, the impact of race composition was significantly weaker in metro areas where the (dissimilarity) segregation index was high; but the interaction was not significant for the other six attitude measures, and for five of the six it ran in the opposite direction. Interaction effects between residential segregation and the two socioeconomic composition measures were more likely to run in the predicted direction, socioeconomic composition effects being fainter when segregation was high, but only two of the sixteen interaction effects were significant. (Full results are available from the author.)

measures, the sample, or their emphasis on zipcode-level effects rather than those of larger geographical units.

With respect to the prominence of white educational composition as a contextual influence on white racial attitudes, Oliver and Mendelberg's (2000) point is made more strongly by these results than by their own. At the metro- or non-metro-county level, the proportion of whites without a college degree surpasses black population share in the consistency and size of its effects on white attitudes.

Importantly, as seen in Table 4 results for Model 4, when the contextual education and economic indicators are both included in the analysis, white educational composition remains a significant predictor for most racial attitude measures and white economic composition is never significant. White educational composition is not a proxy for material hardship in the community: Relatively low rates of college education among white residents are linked to negative racial attitudes among whites; prevalent economic hardship in the white community has no such effect.¹³

Data restrictions limit our ability to extend these analyses into the past, but it is probable that patterns observed here are at least to some extent historically specific. Given the racial turbulence associated with the northward migration by African Americans during the first half of the 20th century, parallel analyses of data from that era might well have shown even more dramatic responsiveness by northern whites to the size of local black populations. The recent rise of Hispanic population in the U.S. and associated public debate will provide an opportunity to look for such changing patterns in the future. In GSS and census information from 1990, the impact of black populations on anti-black attitudes among whites found no parallel in the association of Latino population figures with anti-Latino attitudes among Anglos (Taylor 1998). Given the current bleak economic picture, with media and political attention to Hispanic immigration on the upswing, we might expect the local Latino population share to have growing effects on the attitudes of Anglos. This possibility calls for research attention.

The impact of local white educational composition on residents' racial attitudes may be responsive to historical change as well. Especially, values and norms related to racial equality were undoubtedly promoted more vigorously in colleges and universities during and after the civil rights revolution gained momentum in the 1950s and 1960s.

In short, national population shifts, changing economic conditions, political climate, and social movements probably affect white reaction to both the race composition and the white educational composition of local communities. We must take the evidence reported here as a snapshot of patterns obtaining when the last decennial census data were available.

¹³For decades, race scholars have asked whether the tendency for the better educated to give more liberal answers on surveys represented their greater commitment to racial equality or something rather more superficial, even self-serving (see e.g. Jackman and Muha 1984). The educational composition effect reported here is not open to the same questions: If residents of white communities with a higher proportion of college graduates appear more liberal across the board, the highly educated and the poorly educated alike, something more substantial must be going on than a veneer of liberalism polished by college education.

This project assessed a variety of racial attitude measures, in acknowledgment that whites' racial perspectives are often multi-dimensional, and patterns that emerge in survey data are not necessarily homogenous. Conclusions based on a handful of racial attitudes are worrisome; alternate selections of attitudinal outcome measures might have yielded different results. The major findings of this study are reasonably uniform, although there is some variation in observed environmental influences on the alternate measures of racial attitudes. Better understanding of this variability would be useful.

Many analysts of racial attitudes have drawn the distinction between voicing acceptance of racial minorities and supporting changes necessary to remedy racial inequity (see e.g. Jackman and Crane 1986; Schuman et al. 1997; Bobo and Kluegel 1997; Quillian 2006). It would have been interesting and informative if environmental effects demonstrated here systematically differed when the outcome measures assessed traditional prejudice as opposed to policy views. Although results across the eight racial attitude measures used here showed no such divide, future research should permit assessment of the possibility that environmental influences operate differently for conceptually distinctive classes of racial attitudes.¹⁴

The provocative findings reported here underline the need to develop fuller insight into the mediation of the two contextual effects shown here to be important—local black population share and white educational composition.

Beginning with the former, what processes in localities with large black populations fuel negative racial attitudes among whites? As noted in the introduction to this paper, threat associated with “realistic group conflict” (Levine and Campbell 1972; Blalock 1967) or slippage of “group position” (Blumer 1958) is often presumed to be the key mediator. However, earlier efforts to demonstrate such mediation have not been persuasive (Fossett and Kiecolt 1989; Taylor 1998).

Attempts to validate threat interpretations of race composition effects are complicated by the potential existence of many forms of threat – economic, political, status, physical, cultural, and “diffuse threat to the social order” (Stults and Baumer 2007). Also, threat exists in the eye of the beholder, and perception is not veridical. Interpreting their individual-level data, Halperin, Pedahzur, and Canetti-Nisim (2007) confront this fact, suggesting that advanced education may lower hostility toward outgroups by decreasing the *perception* of threat. An analogous point was powerfully made by Kinder and Sanders: “Threat is not so much a clear-eyed perception as it is an emotion-laden attitude. Whites feel racially threatened because they are predisposed to look at the world that way; they see danger and risk when others, more sympathetic in their racial sentiments, do not” (1996: 90). These challenges to understanding the psychological mediation of white reactions to sizeable black populations should energize rather than deter research.

¹⁴Other important questions, not our focus here, also deserve continuing research attention. We trust future studies will permit analysts to make confident statements about differences in contextual influences across broader and narrower contextual units, and to extend generalizations about environmental effects to multi-racial and multi-ethnic perceivers and targets.

Also, as noted in Taylor (1998), the search for mediators that translate local demographic realities into residents' racial views should not be confined to perceived threat and other psychological states of mind. The content of local broadcast and print media must certainly be channels through which race composition comes to influence white attitudes. The structure of local political competition and public statements of candidates and local officials are other potential mediators open to examination by energetic researchers. Important work remains to be done.

What about the contextual education effect? The 1998–2002 GSS data clearly show that white educational composition is not a proxy for economic composition in its influence on racial attitudes. Since educational and not economic status makes a difference, scapegoating growing from stressful surroundings is not a plausible mediator—we must look elsewhere. How *do* low rates of college attainment among local whites, net of individual education, translate into less favorable attitudes toward blacks?

The content of local norms was discounted as an explanation by Oliver and Mendelberg (2000), who reasoned that the generation of strong norms would require sustained interpersonal interaction not found across large localities. Their finding that the strength of the education effect did not increase with respondents' length of residence in the same community was also taken as disqualifying evidence for the norms-as-mediator notion. Indeed, for the 2002 GSS data we were able to look for the same cross-level moderation, and like the earlier researchers didn't find evidence for it (results available from the author).

But recall Moore and Ovadia's (2006) thinking. Focusing on better-educated localities where progressive efforts may be launched rather than on poorly-educated communities where white prejudice may be socially supported, these analysts argue that sustained interpersonal contact among residents is not necessary to generate positive environmental influence. Rather, the answer may lie in "institutional and macrosocial means" (2006:2215). Where there is a critical mass of the better educated whites shown here and elsewhere to have more positive racial attitudes, localities may more often pass and enforce anti-discrimination laws, positively represent racial diversity in school curricula and civic programs, and generally support messages of tolerance and intergroup appreciation. Effects of this community culture would be felt by highly-educated and poorly-educated white residents alike.

Documenting such dynamics represents a formidable task for researchers, but the yield in understanding contextual influences on white racial attitudes could be well worth the effort.

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Table 1**Dependent Variables -- Measures of Racial Attitudes****Traditional Prejudice***Stereotyping* (alpha = .724)

Where would you rate whites in general/Blacks [on this 7-point scale that runs from Hard-Working to Lazy]?

Where would you rate whites in general/Blacks [on this 7-point scale that runs from Intelligent to Unintelligent]?

Where would you rate whites in general/Blacks [on this 7-point scale that runs from Violence-Prone to Not Violence-Prone]?

Emotion (alpha = .662)

In general, how warm or cool do you feel towards African Americans/white or Caucasian Americans? [9-point scale]

In general, how close do you feel to Blacks/Whites? [9-point scale]

Social Distance (alpha = .694)

Now I'm going to ask you about different types of contact with various groups of people. In each situation would you please tell me whether you would be very much in favor of it happening, somewhat in favor, neither in favor nor opposed to it happening, somewhat opposed, or very much opposed to it happening? ...

Living in a neighborhood where half of your neighbors were blacks?

What 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?)

Perceptions Associated with "New" Forms of Racism.*Attributions for Racial Inequality* (alpha = .515)

On average Blacks/African-Americans have worse jobs, income, and housing than white people. Do you think these differences are...

Mainly due to discrimination? (coding reversed)

Because most (Blacks/African-Americans) have less in-born ability to learn?

Because most (Blacks/African-Americans) don't have the chance for education that it takes to rise out of poverty? (coding reversed)

Because most (Blacks/African-Americans) just don't have the motivation or will power to pull themselves up out of poverty?

Belief in Reverse Discrimination

What do you think the chances are these days that a white person won't get a job or promotion while an equally or less qualified black person gets on instead? Is this very likely, somewhat likely, or not very likely to happen these days?

Racial Resentment (alpha = .517)

Here are some opinions other people have expressed in connection with black-white relations. Which statement on the card comes closest to how you, yourself, feel? [Card contains responses Agree strongly, Agree slightly, Disagree slightly, Disagree strongly] The first one is...

Blacks/African-Americans shouldn't push themselves where they're not wanted.

Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, neither agree nor disagree, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with the following statement [statement appears on card]:

Irish, Italians, Jewish and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without special favors.

Racial Policy Opinions*Opposition to Affirmative Action*

Some people say that because of past discrimination, blacks should be given preference in hiring and promotion. Others say that such preference in hiring and promotion of

blacks is wrong because it discriminations against whites. What about your opinion – are you for or against preferential hiring and promotion of blacks? IF FAVORS: Do you favor preference in hiring and promotion strongly or not strongly? IF OPPOSES: Do you oppose preference in hiring and promotion strongly or not strongly?

Opposition to Government Help ($\alpha = .561$)

[Now look at CARD.] Some people think that (Blacks/African-Americans) have been discriminated against for so long that the government has a special obligation to help improve their living standards. Others believe that the government should not be giving special treatment to (Blacks/African-Americans). Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you made up your mind on this?

We are faced with many problems in this country, none of which can be solved easily or inexpensively. I'm going to name some of these problems, and for each one I'd like you to tell me whether you think we're spending too much money on it, too little money, or about the right amount...

[Data were combined for the two split-ballot versions of this question.]

Version A: Improving the conditions of Blacks

Version B: Assistance to Blacks

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics

A. Dependent Measures	Mean	S.D.	Min.	Max.	N
Stereotyping	0.64	1.08	-4.00	6.00	3235
Emotion	-0.01	0.96	-4.59	3.66	4210
Social Distance	-0.03	0.87	-2.03	1.81	3345
Attributions for Racial Inequality	-0.02	0.79	-1.56	2.09	3037
Belief in Reverse Discrimination	1.93	0.70	1.00	3.00	3040
Racial Resentment	-0.03	0.95	-2.76	1.63	4538
Opposition to Affirmative Action	3.44	0.85	1.00	4.00	2904
Opposition to Government Help	-0.01	0.91	-2.41	1.39	5264
B. Independent Measures	Mean	S.D.	Min.	Max.	N
Individual-Level					
Education	13.59	2.87	0.00	20.00	5264
Age	46.64	16.97	18.00	89.00	5264
Family Income	16.16	5.10	1.00	23.00	5264
Male	0.47	0.50	0.00	1.00	5264
Year 2000	0.33	0.47	0.00	1.00	5264
Year 2002	0.33	0.47	0.00	1.00	5264
Locality-Level					
Population Size	12.91	1.78	8.87	16.79	100
Metro Status	0.70	0.46	0.00	1.00	100
South	.40	0.49	0.00	1.00	100
Proportion Black	0.12	0.12	0.00	0.57	100
White Ed. Comp.	0.08	0.98	-2.89	2.02	100
White Econ. Comp.	0.09	0.88	-1.79	3.72	100

Note: Statistics for dependent variables are limited to cases for which valid data exists on all independent variables. Statistics for individual-level independent variables were computed on the sample for which valid data exists on all other independent variables and on the dependent variable with the largest N (Opposition to Government Help). Statistics for locality-level independent variables were computed with locality as the unit of analysis.

Table 3HLM Estimates – Fixed Effects of Individual-Level Controls on Racial Attitudes. ^a

	<i>Stereotyping</i> (N = 3235)	<i>Emotion</i> (N = 4210)
Education	-.044 *** (-.116)	-.021 *** (-.063)
Age	.010 *** (.157)	.004 *** (.071)
Family Income	-.002 (-.009)	.000 (.002)
Male	.100 ** (.046)	-.037 (-.019)
Year 2000	.189 *** (.088)	.051 (.024)
Year 2002	.104 * (.037)	-.004 (-.002)
	<i>Social Distance</i> (N = 3345)	<i>Attributions for Racial Inequality</i> (N = 3037)
Education	-.040 *** (-.131)	-.059 *** (-.214)
Age	.012 *** (.235)	.003 *** (.064)
Family Income	.008 * (.047)	.002 (.013)
Male	.151 *** (.087)	.136 *** (.086)
Year 2000	-.075 * (-.043)	.019 (.012)
Year 2002	-.155 *** (-.068)	.045 (.023)
	<i>Belief in Reverse Discrimination</i> (N = 3040)	<i>Racial Resentment</i> (N = 4538)
Education	-.021 *** (-.088)	-.073 *** (-.221)
Age	.002 ** (.049)	.007 *** (.125)
Family Income	.004 (.029)	.000 (.001)
Male	-.015 (-.011)	.143 *** (.075)
Year 2000	-.070 * (-.049)	-.023 (-.012)
Year 2002	.024 (.014)	-.004 (-.002)
	<i>Opposition to Affirmative Action</i> (N = 2904)	<i>Opposition to Government Help</i> (N = 5264)
Education	-.015 * (-.050)	-.030 *** (-.095)
Age	.001 (.020)	.002 * (.037)
Family Income	.016 *** (.094)	.015 *** (.084)
Male	.019 (.011)	.116 *** (.064)
Year 2000	-.110 ** (-.063)	-.038 (-.020)
Year 2002	.001 (.000)	.057 (.029)

^aValues are unstandardized HLM coefficients (and their standardized counterparts) estimated from analyses where the model also included all focal contextual variables and controls.

*
 $p < .05$

**
 $p < .01$

 $p < .001$

Table 4HLM Estimates – Contextual Effects on Racial Attitudes. ^a

<i>Stereotyping</i> (N = 3235)	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<i>Population Size</i>	-.033 (-.051)	-.017 (-.026)	-.022 (-.034)	-.013 (-.020)
<i>Metro Status</i>	.046 (.018)	.065 (.026)	.051 (.020)	.065 (.026)
<i>South</i>	.040 (.017)	.038 (.016)	.033 (.014)	.034 (.014)
<i>Proportion Black</i>	1.263*** (.132)	1.232*** (.129)	1.297*** (.135)	1.253*** (.131)
<i>White Educ. Composition</i>		.056 (.048)		.049 (.042)
<i>White Econ. Composition</i>			.041 (.031)	.021 (.016)
<i>Emotion</i> (N = 4210)	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<i>Population Size</i>	-.019 (-.036)	-.005 (-.010)	-.012 (-.023)	-.004 (-.008)
<i>Metro Status</i>	.021 (.010)	.035 (.017)	.023 (.011)	.035 (.017)
<i>South</i>	-.022 (-.012)	-.026 (-.014)	-.027 (-.014)	-.027 (-.014)
<i>Proportion Black</i>	.221 (.029)	.200 (.026)	.243 (.031)	.208 (.027)
<i>White Educ. Composition</i>		.047 (.050)		.045 (.047)
<i>White Econ. Composition</i>			.026 (.025)	.007 (.007)
<i>Social Distance</i> (N = 3345)	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<i>Population Size</i>	-.041** (-.094)	-.013 (-.030)	-.022 (-.050)	-.007 (-.016)
<i>Metro Status</i>	.056 (.033)	.084 (.050)	.062 (.037)	.084 (.050)
<i>South</i>	.235*** (.148)	.232*** (.146)	.224*** (.141)	.227*** (.143)
<i>Proportion Black</i>	.317 (.049)	.265 (.041)	.370 (.057)	.297 (.046)
<i>White Educ. Composition</i>		.091*** (.114)		.080** (.101)
<i>White Econ. Composition</i>			.065* (.073)	.032 (.036)
<i>Attributions for Racial Inequality</i> (N = 3037)	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<i>Population Size</i>	-.029 (-.063)	.002 (.004)	-.017 (-.037)	.001 (.002)
<i>Metro Status</i>	.023 (.013)	.056 (.031)	.027 (.015)	.056 (.031)
<i>South</i>	.151*** (.090)	.149*** (.089)	.144*** (.086)	.150*** (.090)
<i>Proportion Black</i>	.873*** (.128)	.823*** (.120)	.904*** (.132)	.815*** (.119)
<i>White Educ. Composition</i>		.104*** (.124)		.107*** (.128)
<i>White Econ. Composition</i>			.039 (.042)	-.008 (-.009)
<i>Belief in Reverse Discrimination</i> (N = 3040)	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<i>Population Size</i>	-.021 (-.056)	-.004 (-.011)	-.020 (-.053)	-.009 (-.024)
<i>Metro Status</i>	-.005 (-.003)	.016 (-.011)	-.005 (-.003)	.016 (.011)

<i>Stereotyping</i> (N = 3235)	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<i>South</i>	-.003 (-.002)	-.007 (-.005)	-.003 (-.002)	-.003 (-.002)
<i>Proportion Black</i>	.571*** (.102)	.553*** (.099)	.573*** (.103)	.526*** (.094)
<i>White Educ. Composition</i>		.059** (.086)		.068** (.099)
<i>White Econ. Composition</i>			.002 (.003)	-.027 (-.035)
<i>Racial Resentment</i> (N = 4538)	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<i>Population size</i>	-.047* (-.106)	.010 (.022)	-.025 (-.056)	.009 (.020)
<i>Metro status</i>	.039 (.023)	.085 (.049)	.044 (.026)	.085 (.049)
<i>South</i>	.144** (.089)	.136** (.084)	.130* (.081)	.137** (.085)
<i>Proportion Black</i>	.723** (.110)	.641*** (.097)	.782*** (.119)	.635*** (.096)
<i>White Educ. Composition</i>		.180*** (.223)		.182*** (.226)
<i>White Econ. Composition</i>			.073* (.081)	-.006 (-.007)
<i>Opposition to Affirmative Action</i> (N = 2904)	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<i>Population Size</i>	-.026 (-.060)	-.006 (-.014)	-.011 (-.025)	.000 (.000)
<i>Metro Status</i>	.021 (.013)	.048 (.029)	.030 (.018)	.049 (.029)
<i>South</i>	.070 (.045)	.067 (.043)	.061 (.039)	.062 (.039)
<i>Proportion Black</i>	.084 (.013)	.051 (.008)	.134 (.021)	.087 (.014)
<i>White Educ. Composition</i>		.072** (.092)		.061* (.078)
<i>White Econ. Composition</i>			.059* (.067)	.035 (.040)
<i>Opposition to Government Help</i> (N = 5264) Model	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<i>Population Size</i>	-.038** (-.074)	-.016 (-.031)	-.022 (-.043)	-.011 (-.022)
<i>Metro Status</i>	-.062 (-.031)	-.036 (-.018)	-.056 (-.028)	-.036 (-.018)
<i>South</i>	.116** (.062)	.113** (.061)	.107* (.058)	.109** (.059)
<i>Proportion Black</i>	.674*** (.089)	.639*** (.084)	.717*** (.095)	.663*** (.087)
<i>White Educ. Composition</i>		.076*** (.082)		.067** (.072)
<i>White Econ. Composition</i>			.054* (.052)	.025 (.024)

^aValues are unstandardized HLM coefficients (and their standardized counterparts) estimated from analyses where the model also included all individual-level controls. The metropolitan areas or non-metro counties from which GSS samples were drawn are the contextual units.

*
p < .05

**
p < .01

p < .001