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WHOSE FAULT IS IT? A SURVEY EXPERIMENT EXAMINING DIFFERENCES IN
ATTRIBUTION AND SUPPORT FOR WHITE AND BLACK MEN

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ABSTRACT

Race has an enormous impact on the mindset and collective culture of the United States. Previous research has established that race impacts housing, employment, healthcare, and educational opportunities, partially as a result of ideologies that favor internal attributions. The present research aimed to examine the relationships between attribution and race, and support for social policy and race, in addition to the impacts of level of education, field of study, and social political orientation. To investigate these relationships, participants were randomly assigned to one of six conditions consisting of a vignette, racial indicators and a series of questions on Amazon Mechanical Turk. Results demonstrated that, in line with traditional American ideology, a majority of respondents made internal attributions for difficult life situations. Internal attributions, causative factors linked to personal characteristics or decisions, were more frequently made than external attributions, the causative factors linked to societal structure. However, liberal respondents, white respondents and female respondents were more likely to make external attributions and to support social policy for black individuals than for white individuals. Social political orientation had the strongest relationship with both attribution by racial condition and support for social policy. The trend of more frequent external attributions and stronger policy support for black individuals than for white individuals is noteworthy, and necessitates further research.

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Introduction

In American economic and social policy, the rationale given for socioeconomic and racial financial disparities dictates the narratives of both conservative and liberal policy principles. The United States is ideologically divided on policies designed to reduce racial disparity such as affirmative action. According to the Pew Research Center (2014), 60% of steadfast conservatives saw affirmative action as a bad thing, as compared to 10% of solid liberals. A common narrative disparaging the affirmative action policy claims that discrimination, racism and barriers to success for communities of color are a thing of the past. An argument outlined by Stanford University's Hoover Institute states that affirmative action "primarily benefits minority applicants from middle- and upper-class backgrounds" (Sacks & Thiel, 1996), while hurting poor whites and high achieving Asian students.

The anti-affirmative action narrative focuses on the barriers associated with financial disadvantage and fails to acknowledge the barriers associated with race. This view does not account for race-based disadvantages including stereotype threat in academic environments and the health and educational disparities born from segregated neighborhoods that exist independent of socioeconomic status. The data shows that many racial disparities exist independent of wealth and educational attainment. For example, according to a Federal Reserve report (2013), 4-year college educated Black families had a median net worth of 327,148 dollars less than White 4-year college educated families (\$359,928 as compared to \$32,780). Additionally, adjusting for socioeconomic status, African Americans have higher prevalence rates of asthma, diabetes and cardiovascular disease, and higher mortality rates than Whites for all cancers (Landrine &

Corral, 2009). It is noteworthy that prevalence rates are higher for Whites than Blacks, while mortality rates are higher for Blacks than Whites. This is true for many cancers including breast cancer, suggesting the possibility of delayed and less effective treatment.

The narratives describing the reasons behind racial disparities dictate the ways in which we approach reducing them. Failing to recognize the impact of racial discrimination and unequal treatment on vast differences in housing, health, educational attainment and salary between Blacks and Whites contributes to a failure to produce policy and social programs that would potentially reduce these disparities. At the core of the differing narratives on poverty and success is the notion of attribution. Attribution of racial disparity can be broken roughly into two categories: internal and external attribution. Examples of internal attributions include: “lack of effort, being lazy, low in intelligence, being on drugs” (Cozzarelli, 2001, p.209). External attributions include: “being a victim of discrimination, low wages, being forced to attend bad schools” (ibid). Cozzarelli’s (2001) “Attitudes Toward the Poor and Attributions for Poverty” provides some insight into the implications of denying discrimination as a factor contributing to socioeconomic and racial disparity. She notes that “most [previous studies] find that Americans believe that there are multiple determinants of poverty, but that individualistic or ‘internal’ causes... tend to be more important than ‘external’ ones” (209). Cozzarelli’s research found that “positive stereotypes about the poor were related to increased external and decreased internal attributions for poverty” (217). Cozzarelli’s research demonstrates that Americans tend to believe that individualistic causes of poverty are stronger forces than external, but how does this translate into policy or opinion?

Tuch et. al.’s (1996) “Whites’ Racial Policy Attitudes” compared the GSS and the American National Election Survey data on whites’ racial policy attitudes from 1996 and 2011

and concluded that there had been no changes in the racial policy views of whites. In 1996, 24% of Americans had received a college degree, and in 2011 30% had, so if higher education led to more liberal ideologies, one would anticipate that this percentage increase would have caused an increase in external attributions of disparity. However, racial policy attitudes and attributions for disparity are often disconnected, despite the logical correlation. Tuch and colleagues also discuss a concept known as the principle-policy paradox, which points to the trend of rejecting overt prejudice and superficially supporting racial equality while opposing policies that aim to reduce disparity and threaten the current structure. This research corroborates Campbell and Horowitz's (2015) claim that familial political ideology plays more of a role than a college education, as it is possible that as college became more of a norm, a proportional number of students from each familial ideology attended college. Considering Cozzarelli's research, perhaps despite the general support for racial equality, people still believe that a lack of success is the fault of the individual and thus do not feel inclined to support programs that would elevate those who are less successful, as most feel that external help is not as important as inherent traits or personal choices. The progress that has been made in recent years is surface level, and we can see the incongruity between spoken opinions and internal opinions in the current movement against "political correctness." American culture has created a cognitive dissonance for many individuals in that the positive narrative about promoting equality and the common beliefs of the population are at odds, and the movement against political correctness plays on the acceptability of voicing policy concerns while masking personal views. There is clearly a difference between what many Americans feel and what they are permitted to feel and express given social norms.

The present research aims to explore the variables contributing to the divergent American narratives on racial inequality by examining the impact of several variables including educational

attainment, field of study, political views and income level on opinions about racial disparity.

This study utilizes a field experiment that includes two vignettes and a series of questions to study the relationships between level of attribution, race and support for social policy. The relationships between these variables dictate existing and future social policy in the United States, and are therefore important to investigate and to understand.

Previous Research

Race and Attribution

Racial bias impacts everything from job and housing applications to healthcare treatment (Gaddis 2015; Goyal, Kuppermann and Cleary, 2015; Turner et. al., 2012). The cultural narratives surrounding race, specifically black and brown people in American society, are incredibly pervasive. B. Keith Payne's (2001) study "Prejudice and Perception: The Role of Automatic and Controlled Processes in Misperceiving a Weapon," focuses on the processing behind identifying a weapon, and tries to identify the role of race in cognitive mechanisms behind identification. The experiment presented participants with a picture of either a tool or a weapon primed with a photo of either a black or a white face. The results showed that respondents more quickly identified guns when primed with a Black face, and more quickly identified tools when primed with a White face. The implications of these results for police brutality are evident, but there are implications far beyond the behavior of law enforcement.

Payne's research falls in line with a large body of research on the "bad is black" effect, perhaps best known due to Mamie and Kenneth Clark's doll test (Clark & Clark, 1939). The association between darker skin and bad qualities is demonstrated through Alter, Stern, Granot and Balcetis' (2016) study, "The 'Bad is Black' Effect: Why People Believe Evildoers Have Darker Skin than Do-Gooders." Through two correlational and five research experiments, the research creates a solid basis for the effect. One experiment presented participants with a short vignette describing either a morally bad or good scenario and three photographs of an individual. In this experiment, the "bad is black" effect was operationalized through manipulating the skin tone in the different pictures presented to participants. The photos were of the same individual

and either lightened, left alone or shaded to appear darker, and the participants were asked to choose which picture was the most representative of the individual being described in the vignette. Analysis of the results found that participants were more likely to select the darker skinned photos as representative of the morally bad scenarios. This experiment demonstrates the pervasiveness of the association between dark skin and morally bad behavior.

Another widespread area of research is the impact of racial bias and stereotyping on our ability to empathize. When considering the life situations and emotional states of others, it is key that we are able to create empathetic forecasts, or the prediction “of how other people will feel in [a] social interaction” (Moons, Chen & Mackie, 2017, p. 140). These empathetic forecasts influence our own affective forecasts, or our predictions about how we will react and feel in situations. When stereotypes interfere with our empathetic forecasts, we are not able to understand how we might feel in given situations. Moons, Chen and Mackie found that “affective forecasts were clearly linked to how the forecaster intended to relate to the target” (p. 147). This indicates the impact that stereotypes can have on our ability to empathize with and interact with others. When we consider the relationship of emotional forecasts impacted by stereotypes on attribution, it becomes clear there will be less empathy involved in the process of making attributions for those in more stereotyped groups.

Societal Infrastructure and Government Assistance

There is a disconnect between opinion on societal equality and related social policy called the principle-policy paradox. Tuch et. al. (1998, 2011) found that even individuals who reportedly value racial equality do not support social policy that promotes it. Wodke (2013)

found this paradox to be present across levels of cognitive ability, indicating that it is a cultural belief that is not often challenged. A more recent study by Wodtke (2016), “Are Smart People Less Racist? Verbal Ability, Anti-Black Prejudice and the Principle-Policy Paradox,” found that white people with high cognitive ability hold fewer prejudices and support racial equality more than whites with low cognitive ability, but they are not more likely to support social policy meant to promote racial equality. Thus, the factors behind support for social programs aimed to reduce racial disparity (e.g. affirmative action) must be different than the factors contributing to support for racial equality.

Wellman, Liu and Wilkins (2015) found that a major factor in white people’s support for social programs aimed to reduce racial inequality is the presence of status-legitimizing beliefs. These beliefs affirm one’s place in the societal hierarchy by viewing individual success as dependent upon hard work and as flexible dependent upon improved merit (Kleugel & Smith, 1986). Status-legitimizing beliefs lay the groundwork for internal attributions, and for seeing racial and societal inequalities as a matter of individual failures rather than of societal structures (Wellman, Liu & Wilkins, 2015). In this light, social programs are unlikely to make a difference aside from boosting the status of undeserving people while robbing the hard workers of their deserved social status. This ideology is rooted in the Protestant work ethic and informs modern conservative thought. According to the research, the presence of status-legitimizing beliefs in white people is correlated with less support for affirmative action.

In addition to the role of status-legitimizing beliefs in support for racial social policy, there is the added component of fear. Part of white racial prejudice is the fear that equality poses some sort of threat to their way of life or quality of life (Stephan & Stephan, 2000). This phenomenon of perceived threat is addressed by Integrated Threat Theory (Stephan, Diaz-Loving

& Duran, 2000). Integrated Threat Theory proposes that realistic threats, symbolic threats, intergroup anxiety and negative stereotypes influence prejudice toward outgroup members. Realistic threats in this theory refer to differences in political and economic beliefs, and symbolic threats refer to differences in morality, cultural norms, world view, etc. When considering support for societal infrastructure, both status-legitimizing beliefs and the Integrated Threat Theory play a major role in the principle-policy paradox. There are many factors contributing to the support for societal infrastructure promoting racial equality, but the established body of research focuses on the effects of racial group identification. The present research aims to examine additional factors impacting support for societal infrastructure.

Level of Education, Attribution and Societal Infrastructure

The question of how education plays into racial awareness and the principle-policy paradox comes rather naturally, as education is where we receive a good amount of cultural information and come to develop a view of the world around us. Wodtke's (2012) "The Impact of Education on Intergroup Attitudes: A Multiracial Analysis" compares several schools of thought on the impact of education on racial attitudes. Enlightenment Theory, he explains, claims that "an advanced education attenuates prejudice and fosters a real commitment to racial equality by providing knowledge about the historical, social and economic forces responsible for inequality" (p. 82). A second body of thought, the Ideological Refinement Perspective, argues that, "an advanced education cannot be seen as an enlightening agent because it does not liberate individuals from their group interests" (p. 83). In other words, education can lead individuals to obtain information that confirms their beliefs, known in psychology as confirmation bias, or to

learn skills or bodies of information that promote the best interests of the groups of which they are members. Evidently, the relationship between education and racial views is complex and unclear, and years of research have not produced a consensus.

Another of Wodtke's (2013) studies mentioned previously, "Are Smart People Less Racist? Verbal Ability, Anti-Black Prejudice and the Principle-Policy Paradox," found that people with higher cognitive abilities are less likely to hold racial prejudices, but for all levels of intelligence the principle-policy paradox is at play. Intelligence tests and academic performance and attainment are strongly correlated (Brody, 1992). Wodtke notes, "a large body of evidence indicates that, compared to whites with lower levels of education, highly educated whites are more likely to reject negative stereotypes, to endorse norms of racial equality, and to accept racial integration in principle, but are no more likely to support affirmative action policies" (p. 7). Attribution is likely the missing piece in explaining the dissociation between valuing racial equality with endorsing affirmative action policies. If one believes that racial equality is important, but also sees the condition of the individual as something controlled internally, it would make sense that external help in the form of policy would not actually promote racial equality, thus explaining the principle-policy paradox.

Wodtke's (2012) "The Impact of Education on Intergroup Attitudes: A Multiracial Analysis" concludes that Hispanics, African Americans and Whites with higher educational attainment are more likely to reject negative racial stereotypes. Wodtke writes, "although education has consistent positive effects on awareness of discrimination against minorities, a more advanced education is not associated with greater support for racial preferences among any respondent group" (p. 85). Instead, he argues, more education gives individuals the tools to become more well-spoken, thoughtful and respected advocates for their personal group interests.

This perspective, the Empowerment Perspective or the Ideological Refinement Perspective, considers education to be a polarizing force, empowering members of different social groups to become more empowered members and advocates for their original groups. This perspective understands education as another polarizing force with no directional impact on attribution or racial attitudes.

Previous research in the Empowerment school of thought suggests that there is a significant relationship between obtainment of a college degree and liberal sociopolitical attitudes, which would lead us to believe that higher levels of education could increase students' understanding of structural and institutional racism and discrimination. However, the relationship between a college education and a liberal ideology is likely more complicated than causation. Campbell and Horowitz's (2015) "Does College Influence Sociopolitical Attitudes?" asserts that certain types of families are more likely to both attend college and hold liberal sociopolitical attitudes. They conclude that "because pre-adult family influences reduce the effect of a college education to zero, this provides from support to the spurious model" (p.16). Further research is necessary to understand more about this relationship. The present research seeks to further investigate the role of level of education on attribution and racial attitudes.

Field of Study, Attribution and Societal Infrastructure

In addition to considering the impact of level of education on attribution, it is worth considering the impact of field of study. Van de Werfhorst and Kraaykamp's (2009) "Four Field-Related Educational Resources and Their Impact on Labor, Consumption and Sociopolitical Orientation." Van de Werfhorst and Kraaykamp discuss the relationships between types of

education including cultural, economic, communicative and technical and sociopolitical views. It is unclear whether people with different sociopolitical views choose different fields or whether different courses of education impact sociopolitical views, but it is important to acknowledge that some students are taught explicitly about race relations and racial disparity while others are not academically exposed to social issues. Their research found that those with more cultural resources, those in the category of cultural education, had greater cultural literacy than those in the other educational categories.

The relationship between college major, political attitudes, empathy, and concern for social justice is well established (Bécares and Turner 2004; Jennings, 1993; Shiarella & McCarthy, 2000; Sidanius et al., 2003). Business majors less likely to value social justice and societal equality, whereas psychology and nursing majors are more likely than others to demonstrate high levels of empathy (Bécares and Turner, 2004). Previous research has focused mostly on the impact of education as a whole on world view, but there are essential subtleties in the examination of field of study or type of education attained. College major correlates with profound differences in political attitudes and political involvement (Jennings, 1993).

Despite strong evidence of ideological differences between students in various college majors, it is not possible to conclude causation. Farnworth, Longmire and West's (2006) "College students' views on criminal justice" found a liberalizing effect of college with seniors demonstrating less punitive views than freshman, but also found an important distinction between criminal justice majors and other students. The majority of majors experienced a liberalizing effect throughout college, but criminal justice majors did not experience change in their punitive views between freshman and senior year. This could indicate that due to an early interest in criminal justice, students who choose this major are already set in their opinions and

self-select their track of study due to pre-existing beliefs. The relationship between major and world view hardly seems causative, however there are clear distinctions between the beliefs of students in different tracks of study.

Political Views, Attribution and Societal Infrastructure

The development of political ideologies is extremely complex, but it is clear that political views are related to general worldview and specifically are related to beliefs about policy.

Lundell, Niederdeppe and Clarke's (2013) "Public views about health causation, attributions of responsibility, and inequality" conducted six focus groups on liberals and six focus groups on conservatives. They found that "individual behaviors and personal responsibility dominated the conversation and serves as a counter argument to the significance of social determinants" (p. 1116). For both liberals and conservatives, individual attributions far outweighed the perceived impact of external attributions that respondents made. Though this research focused on health causation, the failure to recognize social determinants on life outcomes is pervasive. Despite the overall leaning of all those involved toward external determinants and attribution, several differences were present. For example, liberals were more likely to see the value in government intervention and see society as responsible for the wellbeing of individuals.

In conjunction, Bobbio, Canova and Manganelli (2010) found that liberals tend to see society as responsible for creating social change and to see society as a factor in various challenging life scenarios. Conservatives more frequently reported individual responsibility as the main component of fate. They attribute the conservative tendency to make individual attributions as influenced by "Belief in a Just World, the Protestant Ethic of Work, Right-Wing

Authoritarianism and Social Dominance” (p. 224). These ideological backgrounds contribute to the modern notion of the American Dream, and essentially conclude that hard work directly leads to success and good fortune, thus placing the main emphasis of success on the individual and neglecting, or at the very least downplaying, the impact of external conditions on life outcomes. Due to this ideological background, conservative beliefs have been found to increase internal attributions and decrease social and external attributions of poverty (Zucker & Weiner, 1993).

It has also been found that those with conservative beliefs, as measured by the belief in a just world value, tend to have more positive attitudes toward authority, and institutions such as corporations, the military, the police force and the government (Jost, Hawkins, Nosek, Hennes & Stern, 2014). The same study concluded that conservatives favor rich people, and hold more negative attitudes toward government infrastructure, like universal health care, than liberals do. The belief system of modern conservatives, rooted in the health of a social body and individualism, is ideologically rooted in internal attribution and personal responsibility. Though there is more support for authority amongst conservatives than liberals, it is a support for interventional authorities rather than preventative authorities (Jost, Hawkins, Nosek, Hennes & Stern, 2014).

Hypotheses

This study aims to explore the variables contributing to the divergent American narratives on racial inequality by examining the impact of several variables including educational attainment, field of study, political views and income level on opinions about racial disparity. The present research has operationalized understanding of racial inequality through the internal or external attribution of difficult life events. With the goal of furthering the field of research on racial inequality and social justice and the factors that contribute to the principle-policy paradox, two hypotheses and eight sub-hypotheses have been developed that will be investigated in detail in order to uncover any existing relationships and correlations:

1. On the basis of the ‘bad is black’ effect and pervasive racial bias in perception and cognitive processes, the present research aims to identify a relationship between the race of the individual depicted alongside the vignette with attribution. Hypothesis 1 posits that all respondents will be more likely to make internal attributions than external attributions for the difficult situations when presented with an image of a black man. The following sub-hypotheses expand on several moderating variables present in Hypothesis 1.
 - a. Based on previous research on the role of level of education on racial attitudes and the principle-policy paradox, Hypothesis 1A proposes that level of education will not have a significant relationship with attribution and race. The present research seeks to replicate Campbell and Horowitz’s (2015) findings that the impact of level of education is negligible on racial attitudes, and in addition investigate the role of field of study in light of Van de Werfhorst and Kraaykamp’s (2009) findings.

- b. The present research aims to build on the body of research distinguishing the liberalizing effect of college from the presence of other factors. Based on the findings of Van de Werfhorst and Kraaykamp (2009) and Jennings (1993), there is an evident basis on which to presume examining college major will produce a different result than examining level of education. Hypothesis 1B posits that field of study will have a significant relationship with attribution and race, with fields that are more human-focused more often making external attributions for difficult situations.
 - c. Given previous research on the relationship between political views and attribution and the belief in a just world principle, the present research intends to replicate the finding that conservative political views correlate with internal attributions. Hypothesis 1C predicts that respondents with more liberal political ideologies will correlate with more external attributions for difficult situations, and anticipates that this finding will be even more significant for the black man condition than the white man condition.
 - d. Finally, Hypothesis 1D proposes that non-white individuals will be less likely than white individuals to make internal attributions. The research clearly points to white racial biases present in attribution, and it is expected this ideology is less pervasive in respondents of color.
2. Hypothesis 2 proposes that, based on the principle-policy paradox, respondents will overall not support societal or government infrastructure for difficult situations and will be even less likely to support societal or government infrastructure when presented with

the image of a black man. The following sub-hypotheses expand on several moderating variables present in Hypothesis 2.

- a. Based on previous research regarding the role of cognitive abilities and support for social policies to promote racial equality, Hypothesis 2A proposes that level of education will not have a significant relationship with supporting societal infrastructure or government assistance.
- b. Due to the differing information presented to students in different disciplines, there is reason to hypothesize that field of study will have a significant impact on support for societal infrastructure or government assistance. Hypothesis 2B predicts that those in human-focused fields of study will be more likely to support societal infrastructure and government assistance in both conditions than those in other fields of study.
- c. Considering the connection between conservative ideology, the Protestant work ethic, belief in a just world and status-legitimizing beliefs, Hypothesis 2C proposes that conservative respondents will be less likely than liberal respondents to support societal infrastructure and government assistance both overall and when presented with the image of the black man.
- d. Based on the research on Integrated Threat Theory, the role of outgroup and in-group bias and cultural threat is present in the support for societal infrastructure. For this reason, Hypothesis 2D posits that non-white respondents will be more likely to support societal infrastructure and government assistance for the image of a black man, because there is no perceived threat present to their societal status.

Data and Methods

Amazon Mechanical Turk

To best understand the variables contributing to the divergent American narratives on racial inequality, I designed a survey experiment composed of two vignettes on Amazon.com's Mechanical Turk. When considering potential options for distributing the survey, MTurk was appealing because of its convenience and sample population. Historically, most social science research has been conducted on undergraduate college students, so there is an imperative to expand the base of study participants (Sears, 1986). MTurk, though still imperfect in demographic representation, is a cost and time-efficient tool for accessing a more socio-economically, educationally diverse sample and has become popular among social science researchers in the fields of psychology and sociology. The departure from the focus on college students and the reliance on their availability opens many doors for researchers with human subjects to generalize to a broader population.

Despite this popularity, there are several major concerns with MTurk regarding both internal and external validity. Recent research has examined these concerns, and the results are promising. In fact, researchers find that the external validity of MTurk studies is superior to convenience samples, and samples are more representative of the general population (Berinsky, Huber, and Lenz, 2012). Still, MTurk should be used with caution, as its samples tend to be younger and more politically liberal than the general population (Berinsky, Huber, and Lenz, 2012). In terms of demographics, the MTurk sample also tends to be skewed more female and educated than the general population, but the income distribution is fairly representative (Buhrmester, Kwang, and Gosling, 2011; Paolacci, Chandler, and Ipeirotis, 2010; Ipeirotis

2010). Additionally, Hispanic and Black populations are underrepresented while Asians are overrepresented (Berinsky et al, 2012; Chandler et al, 2014). Overall, MTurk samples appear to have high levels of external validity, particularly compared to more traditional means of sampling for survey experiments.

Other research has addressed the major concerns surrounding internal validity, or the reliability of reporting from MTurk respondents. Some studies have used longitudinal designs to verify the demographics and attentiveness of respondents (Mason & Suri, 2012). Additionally, according to Peer, Vosgerau, and Acquisti (2014), data quality can be controlled by limiting responses from respondents with a HIT approval rating below 95%. Moreover, while there certainly is a risk of social desirability bias in the survey platform, the vignette experiment format may limit the severity of this concern as respondents only see one condition of the experiment and thus are unable to compare their responses to the more or less socially desirable response options (Sniderman & Piazza, 2002).

Sample and Survey Setup

In order to obtain the most valid results possible from Amazon Mechanical Turk, participants were required to have an HIT (Human Intelligence Task) approval rating of 95% or higher. The survey was published with the title “Economic Conditions in America” on December 14, 2016. Respondents were presented with a consent page followed by a series of demographic questions on age, race/ethnicity, gender, relationship status, parental status, level of education, college major, household income, employment status, political views and zip code (see Appendix A2 for a full list of these questions). Next, each respondent was randomly assigned

one out of eight possible vignette conditions, though the present research collapses the final results into six conditions. Finally, respondents were asked to verify their payment information and were given an opportunity to ask questions or leave comments.

Each respondent was paid \$0.18 to complete the survey, with an average completion time of 7 minutes and 9 seconds. The data was collected over a span of 24 total days from the time it was posted. The six conditions examined here yielded a final sample of 1315 respondents. Each of the 1315 respondents was assigned to one of six conditions: (1) white name, vignette 1 [215 respondents, 16.3%], (2) black name, vignette 1 [225 respondents, 17.1%], (3) black photo, vignette 1 [222 respondents, 16.9%], (4) white name, vignette 2 [236 respondents, 17.9%], (5) black name, vignette 2 [219 respondents, 16.7%], (6) black photo, vignette 2 [198 respondents, 15.1%].

The Vignettes

Respondents were presented with a series of demographic questions, followed by a vignette (see Appendix A1 for a full text of the vignettes). The survey design consisted of two vignettes, each describing a difficult financial situation, but each respondent only read and responded to one. For each vignette, there were two conditions of race. Each vignette was presented using (1) a generically white male name, (2) a generically black male name, or (3) a white name accompanied by a photo of a black man. Due to the fact that racialized black names can be problematic cues of race that are often conflated with social class, I chose to use two versions of the black signal (Bertrand and Mullainathan 2004; Gaddis 2016). None of the results presented here are significantly different between the two signals.

The vignettes both describe difficult life situations that relate to financial responsibility. In both vignettes, the situations describe a man making \$500.00 per week at a manufacturing plant. In Vignette 1, the man wants to return to school, but knows that it would impede his ability to pay bills on time and is hesitant to take out loans. In Vignette 2, the man loses his job due to his ability to afford a car and the unreliable nature of public transportation. Neither vignette discusses family or external economic factors aside from the specific situation. After reading Vignette 1, participants responded to the following five questions, with either the white or black name, aimed to assess attribution and support for societal infrastructure:

1. If you were [Jake, Tyrone], what would you do? [Open ended]
2. Which of the following reasons do you attribute to [Jake's, Tyrone's] situation? (multiple answers are allowed)
 - a. [Jake, Tyrone] chose not to save money and is dealing with the consequences. It is everyone's responsibility to save money.
 - b. [Jake, Tyrone] lives in a culture that does not encourage saving or receiving a higher education. For this reason, he is financially unprepared for his life decision to return to school.
 - c. [Jake, Tyrone] is not making enough money to save, and does not have the resources for money management.
 - d. College is not designed for full time employees and is too difficult for most people of middle and lower socioeconomic status to afford without the help of loans.
3. Now, which is the MOST important reason?
 - a. [Jake, Tyrone] chose not to save money and is dealing with the consequences. It is everyone's responsibility to save money.
 - b. [Jake, Tyrone] lives in a culture that does not encourage saving or receiving a higher education. For this reason, he is financially unprepared for his life decision to return to school.
 - c. [Jake, Tyrone] is not making enough money to save, and does not have the resources for money management.
 - d. College is not designed for full time employees and is too difficult for most people of middle and lower socioeconomic status to afford without the help of loans.
4. Should there be societal infrastructure to prevent this situation from happening? (For example: government funding, intervention by charity organizations, intervention by private companies, etc.)
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
5. In particular, should there be government assistance to help people like [Jake, Tyrone]?

- a. Yes
- b. No

After reading Vignette 2, participants responded to the following five questions aimed to assess attribution and support for societal infrastructure:

1. If you were [Jake, Tyrone], what would you do? [Open ended]
2. Which of the following reasons do you attribute to Jake's situation (multiple answers are allowed)?
 - a. [Jake, Tyrone] chose not to adjust his schedule and leave earlier for work and is dealing with the consequences. It is everyone's responsibility to arrive at work on time.
 - b. [Jake, Tyrone] lives in a culture that does not encourage timeliness or money management. For this reason, he is unprepared for the expectations of work and life.
 - c. [Jake, Tyrone] is not making enough money to save, and does not have the time to leave early for work due to other responsibilities in his life.
 - d. The factory is not designed to be considerate of employees' circumstances and sets limits that are difficult to achieve for many people of middle and lower socioeconomic status.
3. Now, select the MOST important reason.
 - a. [Jake, Tyrone] chose not to adjust his schedule and leave earlier for work and is dealing with the consequences. It is everyone's responsibility to arrive at work on time.
 - b. [Jake, Tyrone] lives in a culture that does not encourage timeliness or money management. For this reason, he is unprepared for the expectations of work and life.
 - c. [Jake, Tyrone] is not making enough money to save, and does not have the time to leave early for work due to other responsibilities in his life.
 - d. The factory is not designed to be considerate of employees' circumstances and sets limits that are difficult to achieve for many people of middle and lower socioeconomic status.
4. Should there be societal infrastructure to prevent this situation from happening? (For example: government funding, intervention by charity organizations, intervention by private companies, etc.)
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
5. In particular, should there be government assistance to help people like [Jake, Tyrone]?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

Dependent Variables

In Hypothesis 1, the *level of attribution* is the dependent variable as measured by the survey. The question prompting respondents to select a most important reason was used to categorize level of attribution into external (cultural, structural) and internal (individual, resources). Responses A and B in both conditions were coded as internal, while responses C and D were coded as external. In Hypothesis 2, the present research examines *support for societal infrastructure and government assistance* as the independent variable. Support for societal infrastructure and government assistance was measured by the fourth and fifth questions in both vignette conditions.

Independent Variables

For both Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2, the primary independent variable of interest is the *race* of the man being described in the vignette. Race of the individual being considered is operationalized by name, photo or both depending on the condition. The present research considers two levels for the dependent variable: white and black. For analysis purposes, various methods of operationalization of race have been combined into only two categories, not differentiating between the presentations of race to the respondent.

For both hypotheses, the independent variables are studied in relation to level of education, field of study, social political views and race of respondent. Level of education, for the purposes of data analysis was broken into two levels: less than a bachelor's degree and bachelor's degree or greater. The category of college major was coded into three categories: human-focused, system-focused and process-focused. The human-focused major category

includes students with degrees in the fields in the arts, humanities, social sciences and education. The system-focused major category includes students with degrees the fields of health, communications and business, and the process-focused major category includes students with degrees in all STEM fields. For analyzing social political views, the seven categories were combined into three: liberal, moderate and conservative. The liberal level was comprised of respondents identifying as extremely liberal, liberal and slightly liberal, and the conservative level was comprised of respondents identifying as extremely conservative, conservative and slightly conservative. Finally, the variable race had four levels: white, black, Hispanic and Asian.

Descriptive Statistics

The sample of 1315 consists of a majority white (78.78%) respondents, followed by Black/African American respondents (7.91%), Asian respondents (7.38%) and small percentages of American Indian/Alaska Native, Hispanic, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander and other. It is overly representative of women (61.9%). The largest percentage of respondents are married (43.42%) followed by single, never married (31.71%). The range of education levels is fairly wide, with 47.98% of respondents having less than a bachelor's degree and 52.01% having a bachelor's degree or more. 30.26% of college-educated respondents majored in human-focused fields of study, 28.59% in system-focused fields of study and 21.06% in process-focused fields of study. Only 17.34% of respondents were current students. The majority of respondents had an income level of between \$25,000 and \$74,999. In terms of social political orientation, the sample was 54.23% liberal, 19.47% moderate and 26.31% conservative. In terms of economic political orientation, the sample was 39.62% liberal, 21.83% moderate and 38.56% conservative.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N (%)
Race	
American Indian/Alaska Native	7 (0.53)
Asian	97 (7.38)
Black/African American	104 (7.91)
Hispanic or Latino(a)	58 (4.41)
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	3 (0.23)
Other	10 (0.76)
White	1,036 (78.78)
Gender	
Female	814 (61.9)
Male	491 (37.34)
Other	6 (0.46)
Relationship Status	
Divorced	95 (7.22)
Domestic Partnership/Civil Union	60 (4.56)
Married	571 (43.42)
Separated	23 (1.75)
Single, never married	417 (31.71)
Single, but living with significant other	130 (9.89)
Children	
No	857 (65.17)
Yes	458 (34.83)
Education	
Less than a high school degree	9 (.68)
High school degree or equivalent	137 (10.42)
Some college	316 (24.03)
Associate or other 2-year degree	169 (12.85)
Bachelor's degree	419 (31.86)
Some graduate school	52 (3.95)
Postgraduate degree	213 (16.20)
Current Student	
No	1,087 (82.66)
Yes	228 (17.34)
Household Income	
\$0 to \$9,999	66 (5.02)
\$10,000 to \$24,999	176 (13.38)
\$25,000 to \$49,000	355 (27)
\$50,000 to \$74,999	297 (22.59)
\$75,000 to \$99,999	174 (13.23)
\$100,000 to \$124,999	104 (7.91)
\$125,000 to \$149,999	53 (4.03)
\$150,000 to \$174,999	28 (2.13)
\$175,000 to \$199,999	16 (1.22)
\$200,000 and up	23 (1.75)
Prefer not to answer	23 (1.75)
Employment Status	
Employed full-time	683 (51.94)
Employed part-time by choice	215 (16.35)
Employed part-time, not by choice	81 (6.16)
Unemployed by choice	156 (11.86)
Unemployed not by choice	108 (8.21)
Political Orientation (Social)	
Extremely liberal	211 (16.05)
Liberal	312 (23.73)
Slightly liberal	190 (14.45)
Moderate	256 (19.47)
Slightly conservative	136 (10.34)
Conservative	159 (12.09)
Extremely conservative	51 (3.88)
Political Orientation (Economic)	
Extremely liberal	123 (9.35)
Liberal	233 (17.72)
Slightly liberal	165 (12.55)
Moderate	287 (21.83)
Slightly conservative	217 (16.50)
Conservative	213 (16.20)
Extremely conservative	77 (5.86)
College Major	
Human-Focused	398 (30.26)
System-Focused	376 (28.59)
Process-Focused	277 (21.06)
N/A	264 (20.08)

Results

I used Stata version 14.0 to analyze the data. To test both Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2, I used chi-square tests to assess the relationships between the independent and dependent variables. Although I find significant differences between Vignettes 1 and 2 at the aggregate, my sample sizes were not large enough to investigate three-way differences (vignette version, racial cue, and respondent characteristics). Thus, I briefly discuss difference by vignette before proceeding to differences by respondent characteristics with each set of hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1

To test Hypothesis 1, that all respondents will be more likely to make internal than external attributions for the black man, I conducted a chi-squared analysis. Overall, 53.2% of respondents suggested an internal attribution for the white man's situation compared to 50.5% of respondents for the black man's situation. The chi-square test yields a p-value of 0.344 and suggests no significant relationship between attribution and race of the man in the vignette, leading me to fail to reject the null hypothesis. There is also no significant difference between type of attribution and vignette race for each of the individual vignette versions ($p=0.593$ for Vignette 1 and $p=0.163$ for Vignette 2). However, I do find a significant difference between attribution and vignette version ($p=0.000$) and a marginally significant difference between vignette version, attribution, and vignette race ($p=0.074$). The framing of the vignette text matters a lot; respondents were more likely to make external attributions for Vignette 1 and more

likely to make internal attributions for Vignette 2. However, the gap in attribution for the white man's situation was larger between vignettes than the gap in attribution for the black man's situation. This suggests that respondents give the white man more leeway than the black man in the positive vignette (education but not promoted) and less leeway in the negative vignette (public transportation and fired).

Table 2. Attribution by Vignette Race and Vignette Version

A. Total	White	Black	Total
External Attribution	46.8%	49.5%	48.6%
	211	428	639
Internal Attribution	53.2%	50.5%	51.4%
	240	436	676
Total	451	864	1315
B. Vignette 1	White	Black	Total
External Attribution	62.8%	60.6%	61.3%
	135	271	406
Internal Attribution	37.2%	39.4%	38.7%
	80	176	256
Total	215	447	662
C. Vignette 2	White	Black	Total
External Attribution	32.2%	37.7%	35.7%
	76	157	233
Internal Attribution	67.8%	62.4%	64.3%
	160	260	420
Total	236	417	653

For Hypothesis 1A, concerning level of education, as predicted I found no significant relationships. The chi-square test yields a p-value of 0.922, and I therefore fail to reject the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between level of education and level of attribution or level of education and racial condition. There is also no significant difference between type of attribution and vignette race for either category of education attainment ($p=0.639$ for less than a bachelor's degree and $p=0.383$ for bachelor's degree or greater).

Table 3. Attribution by Vignette Race and Level of Education

A. Less than a bachelor's degree	White	Black	Total
External Attribution	46.8%	48.8%	48.2%
	96	208	304
Internal Attribution	53.2%	51.2%	51.8%
	109	218	327
Total	205	426	631
B. Bachelor's degree or greater	White	Black	Total
External Attribution	46.8%	50.2%	49.0%
	115	220	335
Internal Attribution	52.2%	49.8%	51.0%
	131	218	349
Total	246	438	684

For Hypothesis 1B, concerning field of study, I found no significant relationships between level of attribution and the different categories ($p=0.291$ for human-focused versus

system-focused, $p=0.236$ for system-focused versus process-focused, and $p=0.148$ for human-focused versus process-focused). However, there was a marginally significant finding in that respondents with system-focused degrees in health, communications and business were more likely to make internal attributions for the white condition than the black condition ($p = 0.076$). In effect, this group is placing an internal responsibility on whites that they are not putting on blacks. This relationship is the inverse of would be expected in all categories and interestingly only occurs in one group. The relationships between attribution and race are not significant for human-focused majors ($p=0.958$) or process-focused majors (0.941).

Table 4. Attribution by Vignette Race and Field of Study

A. Human-Focused	White	Black	Total
External Attribution	50.3%	50.6%	50.5%
	76	125	201
Internal Attribution	49.7%	49.4%	49.5%
	75	122	197
Total	151	247	398
B. System-Focused	White	Black	Total
External Attribution	41.7%	51.4%	48.1%
	53	128	181
Internal Attribution	58.3%	48.6%	51.9%
	74	121	195
Total	127	249	376
C. Process-Focused	White	Black	Total
External Attribution	44.4%	44.9%	44.8%
	40	84	124
Internal Attribution	55.6%	55.1%	55.2%
	50	103	153
Total	90	187	277

When testing Hypothesis 1C, the data showed that social political orientation demonstrated several noteworthy relationships. For social conservatives, there is a marginally significant tendency to make more internal attributions when presented with the black, as compared to the white, condition ($p = 0.093$), with 59% of conservative respondents responding

to the black conditions made internal attributions. For social liberals, there is a marginally significant tendency to make more internal attributions when presented with the white, as compared to the black, condition ($p = 0.067$). I found no significant relationship between attribution and race among moderate respondents ($p=0.316$). The relationship between social liberal and social conservative responses is significant ($p=0.012$), implicating that political beliefs and level of attribution are correlated. The relationships between conservative and moderate ($p=0.491$) and between liberal and moderate ($p=0.136$) are not significant. I reject the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between social political orientation, attribution and race.

Table 5. Attribution by Vignette Race and Social Political Orientation

A. Social Conservative	White	Black	Total
External Attribution	50.4%	41.0%	44.2%
	60	93	153
Internal Attribution	49.6%	59.0%	55.8%
	59	134	193
Total	119	227	346
B. Moderate	White	Black	Total
External Attribution	42.2%	48.8%	46.5%
	38	81	119
Internal Attribution	57.8%	51.2%	53.5%
	52	85	137
Total	90	166	256
C. Social Liberal	White	Black	Total
External Attribution	46.7%	53.9%	48.6%
	113	254	367
Internal Attribution	53.3%	46.1%	51.4%
	129	217	346
Total	242	471	713

For Hypothesis 1D, concerning race of the respondent, the data suggests that there is no relationship between race and level of attribution or respondent's race and racial condition.

Within racial categories, I found no relationships between attribution and race ($p=0.214$ for white

respondents, $p=0.264$ for black respondents, $p=0.832$ for Hispanic respondents, and $p=0.5961$ for Asian respondents). I fail to reject the null hypothesis that respondent's race, vignette race and attribution are not related.

Table 6. Attribution by Vignette Race and Respondent Race

A. White	White	Black	Total
External Attribution	46.0%	49.2%	48.1%
	166	332	498
Internal Attribution	54.0%	50.8%	51.9%
	195	343	538
Total	361	675	1036
B. Black	White	Black	Total
External Attribution	57.6%	50.7%	52.9%
	19	36	55
Internal Attribution	42.4%	49.3%	47.1%
	14	35	49
Total	33	71	104
C. Hispanic	White	Black	Total
External Attribution	43.8%	45.2%	44.8%
	7	19	26
Internal Attribution	56.3%	54.8%	55.2%
	9	23	32
Total	16	42	58

D. Asian	White	Black	Total
External Attribution	47.2%	52.5%	50.5%
	17	32	49
Internal Attribution	52.8%	47.5%	49.5%
	19	29	48
Total	36	61	97

During data analysis, it became clear that a significant relationship does exist between gender and overall attribution. Women were more likely than men to make external attributions ($p = 0.000$) and were marginally more likely than men to make external attributions for the black condition specifically ($p=0.102$). 54.4% of women assigned the black condition made external attributions as compared to 42.5% of men. Within the male sample, there was no relationship between race and attribution ($p=0.869$). This gender difference was not anticipated and raises some interesting questions on contributing factors to attribution.

Table 7. Attribution by Vignette Race and Gender

A. Male	White	Black	Total
External Attribution	43.3%	42.5%	42.8%
	71	139	210
Internal Attribution	56.7%	57.5%	57.2%
	93	188	281
Total	164	327	491
B. Female	White	Black	Total
External Attribution	48.4%	54.4%	52.3%
	137	289	426
Internal Attribution	51.6%	45.6%	47.7%
	146	242	388
Total	283	531	814

In summation, Hypothesis 1 correctly posited that at the aggregate, internal attributions were overall more common than external attributions. However, it incorreced posited that all respondents would make more internal attributions for black individuals than for white individuals. Ultimately, social political orientation had the strongest correlation with external attribution and racial condition, with conservative respondents more often making internal attributions for black individuals as compared to white individuals, and with liberal respondents more often making internal attributions for white individuals as compared to black individuals. Neither level of education nor race had a relationship with attribution or correlated with differences between the racial conditions.

Hypothesis 2

To test Hypothesis 2, that respondents will not support societal or government infrastructure and will be less likely to support it for the black condition, I conducted chi-squared analyses. Looking at the aggregate, a majority of respondents (71.0%) supported societal infrastructure and government assistance (71.6%). There is a significant difference between the two vignettes for both reporting yes to societal infrastructure and government assistance ($p=0.000$ for societal infrastructure, $p=0.000$ for government assistance). The responses to the question on government assistance demonstrated a marginally significant difference between the white and black conditions at the aggregate ($p = 0.070$). No differences based on race exist between the vignettes in support for the societal infrastructure ($p=0.900$) or government assistance ($p=0.354$). No significant relationships existed between race and support for societal infrastructure in either Vignette 1 or Vignette 2 ($p=0.667$ for Vignette 1, $p=0.387$ for Vignette 2). No significant relationships existed between race and support for government assistance in either Vignette 1 or Vignette 2 ($p=0.469$ for Vignette 1, $p=0.176$ for Vignette 2). At the aggregate, respondents were more likely to support government assistance when presented with the black condition than when presented with the white condition ($p=0.070$), though I found no significant differences between racial conditions and support for societal infrastructure at the aggregate ($p=0.1862$).

Table 8. Support for Societal Infrastructure by Vignette Race and Vignette Version

A. Total	White	Black	Total
No	31.3%	27.8%	29.0%
	141	240	381
Yes	68.7%	72.2%	71.0%
	310	624	934
Total	451	864	1315
B. Vignette 1	White	Black	Total
No	16.7%	15.4%	15.9%
	36	69	105
Yes	83.3%	84.6%	84.1%
	179	378	557
Total	215	447	662
C. Vignette 2	White	Black	Total
No	44.5%	41.0%	42.3%
	105	171	276
Yes	55.5%	59.0%	57.7%
	131	246	377
Total	236	417	653

Table 9. Support for Government Assistance by Vignette Race and Vignette Version

A. Total	White	Black	Total
No	34.5%	26.7%	28.4%
	142	231	373
Yes	68.5%	73.3%	71.6%
	309	633	942
Total	451	864	1315
B. Vignette 1	White	Black	Total
No	19.1%	16.8%	17.5%
	41	75	116
Yes	80.9%	83.2%	82.5%
	80	176	256
Total	215	447	662
C. Vignette 2	White	Black	Total
No	42.8%	37.4%	39.4%
	101	156	257
Yes	57.2%	62.6%	60.6%
	135	261	396
Total	236	417	653

Analysis of Hypothesis 2A finds that level of education does not significantly impact support for societal infrastructure or government assistance. There are no significant differences between support for societal infrastructure or government assistance between the two levels of education ($p=0.102$ for societal infrastructure, $p=0.119$ for government assistance). However, respondents with a bachelor's degree or greater were marginally more likely to support government assistance when presented with the black condition than the white condition ($p =$

0.085), though the same group exhibited no significant difference in support for societal infrastructure based on racial condition ($p=0.155$). No significant differences between racial conditions exist for respondents with less than a bachelor's degree ($p=0.471$ for government assistance, $p=0.788$ for societal infrastructure).

Table 10. Support for Societal Infrastructure by Vignette Race and Level of Education

A. Less than a bachelor's degree	White	Black	Total
No	46.8%	48.8%	48.2%
	96	208	304
Yes	53.2%	51.2%	51.8%
	109	218	327
Total	205	426	631
B. Bachelor's degree or greater	White	Black	Total
No	46.8%	50.2%	49.0%
	115	220	335
Yes	52.2%	49.8%	51.0%
	131	218	349
Total	246	438	684

Table 11. Support for Government Assistance by Vignette Race and Level of Education

A. Less than a bachelor's degree	White	Black	Total
No	46.8%	48.8%	48.2%
	96	208	304
Yes	53.2%	51.2%	51.8%
	109	218	327
Total	205	426	631
B. Bachelor's degree or greater	White	Black	Total
No	46.8%	50.2%	49.0%
	115	220	335
Yes	52.2%	49.8%	51.0%
	131	218	349
Total	246	438	684

Analysis of Hypothesis 2B finds that college major also does not correlate with significant differences in support for societal infrastructure or government assistance and race. For this reason, I fail to reject the null hypothesis. For societal infrastructure, no significant differences are present within each category ($p=0.862$ for human-focused, 0.223 for system-focused, and $p=0.220$ for process-focused) or between the categories ($p=0.392$ for human-focused versus system-focused, $p=0.444$ for system-focused versus process-focused, and $p=0.838$ for human-focused versus process-focused). For government assistance, no significant differences are present within each category ($p=0.507$ for human-focused, 0.555 for system-focused, and $p=0.341$ for process-focused) or between the categories ($p=0.126$ for human-

focused versus system-focused, $p=0.220$ for system-focused versus process-focused, and $p=0.880$ for human-focused versus process-focused).

Table 12. Support for Societal Infrastructure by Vignette Race and Field of Study

A. Human-Focused	White	Black	Total
No	29.1%	30.0%	29.7%
	44	74	118
Yes	70.9%	70.0%	70.4%
	107	173	280
Total	151	247	398
B. System-Focused	White	Black	Total
No	37.0%	28.5%	31.4%
	47	71	118
Yes	63.0%	71.5%	68.6%
	80	178	261
Total	127	249	376
C. Process-Focused	White	Black	Total
No	33.3%	26.2%	28.5%
	30	49	79
Yes	66.7%	73.8%	71.5%
	60	138	198
Total	90	187	277

Table 13. Support for Government Assistance by Vignette Race and Field of Study

A. Human-Focused	White	Black	Total
No	50.3%	50.6%	50.5%
	76	125	201
Yes	49.7%	49.4%	49.5%
	75	122	197
Total	151	247	398
B. System-Focused	White	Black	Total
No	41.7%	51.4%	48.1%
	53	128	181
Yes	58.3%	48.6%	51.9%
	74	121	195
Total	127	249	376
C. Process-Focused	White	Black	Total
No	44.4%	44.9%	44.8%
	40	84	124
Yes	55.6%	55.1%	55.2%
	50	103	153
Total	90	187	277

Across the levels of social political orientation for both societal infrastructure and government assistance, significant relationships were present ($p = 0.000$). Therefore, the data allows me to reject the null hypothesis. Amongst liberals, societal infrastructure and government

assistance were both more strongly supported when presented with the black condition than the white condition ($p = 0.062$ for societal infrastructure, 0.081 for government assistance). Among both conservative and moderate respondents, no significant differences in support for societal infrastructure based on racial condition occurred ($p=0.944$ for conservatives, $p=0.819$ for moderates). Additionally, among both conservative and moderate respondents, no significant differences in support for government assistance based on racial condition occurred ($p=0.268$ for conservatives, $p=0.936$ for moderates).

Table 14. Support for Societal Infrastructure by Vignette Race and Social Political Orientation

A. Social Conservative	White	Black	Total
No	44.5%	44.9%	44.8%
	53	102	155
Yes	55.5%	55.1%	55.2%
	66	125	191
Total	119	227	346
B. Moderate	White	Black	Total
No	33.3%	31.9%	32.4%
	30	53	83
Yes	66.7%	68.1%	67.6%
	60	113	173
Total	90	166	256
C. Social Liberal	White	Black	Total
No	24.0%	18.1%	20.1%
	58	85	143
Yes	76.0%	82.0%	79.9%
	184	386	570
Total	242	471	713

Table 15. Support for Government Assistance by Vignette Race and Social Political Orientation

A. Social Conservative	White	Black	Total
No	52.1%	45.8%	48.0%
	62	104	166
Yes	47.9%	54.2%	52.0%
	57	123	180
Total	119	227	346
B. Moderate	White	Black	Total
No	30.0%	29.5%	29.7%
	27	49	76
Yes	70.0%	70.5%	70.3%
	63	117	180
Total	90	166	256
C. Social Liberal	White	Black	Total
No	21.9%	16.6%	18.4%
	53	78	131
Yes	78.1%	83.4%	81.6%
	189	393	582
Total	242	471	713

Analysis of Hypothesis 2D finds that white respondents were marginally more likely to support government assistance for the black condition than the white condition ($p = 0.099$).

However, no other significant relationships exist between support for government assistance and

race ($p=0.705$ for black respondents, 0.965 for Hispanic respondents, and 0.656 for Asian respondents). Additionally, no significant relationships exist between racial condition and support for societal infrastructure ($p=0.308$ for white respondents, $p=0.381$ for black respondents, $p=0.571$ for Hispanic respondents, and $p=0.419$ for Asian respondents).

Table 16. Support for Societal Infrastructure by Vignette Race and Respondent Race

A. White	White	Black	Total
No	33.5%	29.3%	30.8%
	121	198	319
Yes	66.6%	70.7%	69.2%
	240	477	717
Total	361	675	1036
B. Black	White	Black	Total
No	24.2%	15.5%	18.3%
	8	11	19
Yes	75.8%	84.5%	81.7%
	25	60	85
Total	33	71	104
C. Hispanic	White	Black	Total
No	25.0%	28.6%	27.6%
	4	12	16
Yes	75.0%	71.4%	72.4%
	12	30	42
Total	16	42	58

D. Asian	White	Black	Total
No	16.7%	24.6%	21.7%
	6	15	21
Yes	83.3%	75.4%	78.4%
	30	46	76
Total	36	61	97

Table 17. Support for Government Assistance by Vignette Race and Respondent Race

A. White	White	Black	Total
No	34.4%	28.7%	30.7%
	124	194	318
Yes	65.7%	71.3%	69.3%
	237	481	718
Total	361	675	1036
B. Black	White	Black	Total
No	18.2%	18.3%	18.3%
	6	13	19
Yes	81.8%	81.7%	81.7%
	27	58	85
Total	33	71	104
C. Hispanic	White	Black	Total
No	18.8%	19.1%	19.0%
	3	8	11
Yes	81.3%	81.0%	81.0%
	13	34	47
Total	16	42	58

D. Asian	White	Black	Total
No	22.2%	21.3%	21.7%
	8	13	21
Yes	77.8%	78.7%	78.4%
	28	48	76
Total	36	61	97

In summation, Hypothesis 2 was incorrect in positing that a majority of respondents would not support societal infrastructure and government assistance. Additionally, it was incorrect in hypothesizing that respondents would be less likely to support societal infrastructure and government assistance for black individuals. Though there were no differences between racial condition for societal infrastructure, respondents were more often in support for government assistance for black individuals than for white individuals. As in Hypothesis 1, social political orientation proved to be the most strongly correlated factor with support for societal infrastructure and government assistance. College major and race each demonstrated no significant relationships.

Discussion

Previous research on race and attribution led to the hypotheses that overall, respondents would make internal attributions and would more often make internal attributions when presented with the black condition. Additionally, the prior research suggested that respondents overall would not widely support societal infrastructure and government assistance, and would support these policies even less when presented with the black condition. The results did support the claim that a majority of respondents make internal attributions for difficult situations, however only by a small margin (51.4% as compared to 48.6%). None of the other claims were supported. Surprisingly, a majority of respondents supported both societal infrastructure and government assistance. It is possible that this overwhelming support was due to an under-representation of social conservatives within the sample. An even more unexpected finding was that the average respondent was less likely to support government assistance when presented with the white condition than the black condition. Respondents were more likely to support government assistance for black individuals than white. Broader support for black, rather than white, respondents is a theme that recurs throughout the data.

Based on Campbell and Horowitz's (2015) research on education and liberal sociopolitical attitudes, level of education was not expected to have a significant relationship with either attribution or support for societal infrastructure and government assistance. Data analysis largely supported this claim, despite a marginal relationship in line with the theme mentioned previously in which respondents with a bachelor's degree or higher were more likely to support government assistance for black individuals than for white individuals. Despite this, there is no evidence of significant differences between the two categories of education. This supports the theory that the liberalizing effect of a college education may be non-existent.

College major, as categorized by human-focused, system-focused and process-focused fields, did not demonstrate significant relationships with attribution or support for societal infrastructure and government assistance. However, system-focused majors in the fields of health, communications and business were marginally more likely to make internal attributions for white individuals. This relationship is the inverse of what was anticipated based on previous research, and is interestingly only present among system-focused majors. Perhaps as students who select majors based on structures like the healthcare system or the corporate world, these respondents have an understanding of the structural obstacles facing black individuals that do not impact white individuals to the same extent. Further research is necessary to investigate and better understand this relationship.

The strongest relationship within the data was between levels of social political orientation. Social liberals were significantly more likely to make external attributions than social conservatives. Another interesting relationship exists in that social conservatives were more likely to make internal attributions for the black conditions, while social liberals were more likely to make internal attributions for the white conditions. Additionally, social liberals were more likely to support societal infrastructure and government assistance for the black conditions than the white conditions. Support for societal infrastructure and government assistance in general increases from social conservative to moderate to social liberal. These results find that socially liberal respondents were harsher on white individuals when placing attribution, and provide reason to believe that social political belief is the personal trait most closely related to level of attribution and support for social programs.

Another surprising finding was that the race of respondent did not impact level of attribution or support for societal infrastructure, aside from the one marginally significant finding

that white respondents were more likely to support government assistance for black individuals than for white individuals. The recent trend of political correctness and the rebirth of racial social justice activism with the formation of the Black Lives Matter movement could be playing a role in this relationship. It is possible that white, liberal respondents are conscious of the beliefs they are being asked to have in popular culture, either through an enlightened understanding of institutional racism or a synthetic, through a surface level awareness influenced by social desirability bias.

Finally, the data showed an unexpected, strong relationship between gender and level of attribution. Women were significantly more likely to make external attributions in both conditions as compared to men. Women face many structural obstacles in education and the work force, and it is possible that these experiences with oppression increase the likelihood of women seeing the structural components of difficult situations. Further, women were more likely than men to support government assistance. Again, there could be a connection between the structural barriers facing women and this support. Further research is necessary to better understand this trend.

Limitations

Though MTurk provided us with the benefit of a sample diverse in age and education unattainable with traditional survey experiments using college undergraduate samples, the MTurk sample was still not entirely representative. It was overly representative of women and did not consist of enough Black, Asian, Hispanic, American Indian/Alaska Native or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander individuals to generalize findings beyond this study. Additionally, the

sample was predominantly socially liberal. For these reasons, I discuss these results with caution and did not consider the results from racial groups with samples less than 50. In a similar vein, the marginally significant findings above a significance value of 0.05 all require replication and more attention with a more representative sample in order to be generalized.

Further, the vast difference between the vignettes could have created some issues. While combining the results of the two vignettes is valuable in considering the impact of race on attribution in two different situations, the results may have been different if the vignettes were analyzed independently. When considering the aggregate, it was clear that between vignettes, attribution based on race did not vary, but for the purposes of understanding level of attribution and support for societal infrastructure and government assistance, there could be value in further analysis with the separation of results from the two vignettes.

Implications for Future Research

Looking ahead, further research is necessary on the trend of white respondents, liberal respondents and respondents educated in system-focused fields making more internal attributions for white individuals and having stronger support for societal infrastructure and government assistance for black individuals. This relationship is the inverse of the anticipated relationship, and was not foreshadowed by past research. Perhaps this is a new trend, emerging following a profoundly controversial election and in the midst of rising racial tensions in the United States. Future research should aim to replicate these findings, and dig deeper into the rationality behind these beliefs. What is prompting white individuals to be harsher judges of their own race? What elements of an education in health, communications and business promote this ideology, or

rather what personal traits and beliefs lead people to these careers that correlate with this attitude?

Furthermore, the tendency of women to make more external attributions than men overall was not predicted by past research. In fact, gender was not mentioned in much of the literature and research on attribution and racial attitudes. Perhaps due to the discrimination and oppression that women experience in the workplace and beyond, women are more likely than men to both see and understand structural barriers to success and institutional oppression. This relationship necessitates replication and further research to find a research-based explanation of this phenomena.

Conclusion

Understanding the factors contributing to attribution and support for social policy is extremely important in order to both create programs that are supported by the public and to understand the narratives surrounding racial attitudes in the United States. By understanding the role of education, college major, political views, race and gender on our belief systems on race and racial inequality, this research contributes to the body of knowledge on shaping cultural narratives, empathy and attribution. Various structures, including educational and political systems, impact our success in this endeavor. The various aspects of our experiences and demographic background that contribute to our understanding of others' experiences are vast, but this research aimed to get closer to a comprehensive understanding.

The most unexpected trend in the data was that of white respondents, liberal respondents, and respondents educated in system-focused fields being more likely to make internal attributions and less likely to support government assistance and societal infrastructure when presented with the white condition than the black condition. This relationship was not predicted from the literature and previous research, and presents several avenues for future research and analysis. It is important to recognize that this research was conducted approximately one month after an incredibly divisive and controversial election in the United States. Race relations and support for social programs played significant roles in the election, which could have influenced the finding that social political orientation had the strongest relationships with level of attribution and support for social programs. These issues were both highly politicized, with conservative and liberal beliefs directly opposing one another. The theme of political correctness in the media

that came along with the election could very well have created an increased awareness of racial politics in the minds of white, liberal respondents, prompting a more supportive, less judgmental attitude toward black individuals.

Finally, this research was able to contribute to a new body of research rejecting the notion of the liberalizing effect of college. Though further, more in-depth research is still necessary, the continued questioning of this effect is important in an effort to best understand the factors that contribute to sociopolitical attitudes. According to the present findings, receiving a college education does not contribute to racial attitudes as expressed through level of attribution or support for social policy, which is a rather profound assertion if proven correct. We seem to be learning more from our political candidates and party platforms than from our teachers and our textbooks.

Appendix A1. Text of Vignettes

Vignette 1:

[Jake Decker, Tyrone Washington] works at a manufacturing plant and has been employed there for the last two years. He currently makes about \$500 per week before taxes. He recently started thinking about returning to school to get more education and move up in his career. [Jake, Tyrone] looked into some options for school and realized that he may not be able to afford it.

[Jake, Tyrone] has limited savings in the bank and he is worried that college tuition would make it hard to pay his bills on time. He would like to start taking night classes part-time but is not sure how to pay for them. Taking out student loans to pay for school seems risky to [Jake, Tyrone], particularly since there has been so much negative press about people having to default on student loans in recent years.

Vignette 2:

[Jake Decker, Tyrone Washington] works at a manufacturing plant and has been employed there for the last two years. He makes about \$500 per week before taxes. He takes the bus to work every day but it often has major delays and causes him to be late. [Jake, Tyrone] looked into some options to buy a used car but with insurance, gas, and possible repairs as added expenses, he just simply could not afford a car.

Last week, [Jake, Tyrone] was late to work for the third time in one month due to the bus. The factory policy stipulates that being late three times in a thirty-day period will result in

termination, so [Jake, Tyrone] was fired. He is now looking for work but is having trouble finding employment and may not be able to pay his rent next month.

Appendix A2. Demographic Questions.

Question Wording	Question Type	Answer Options
What is your age?	Open	Numeric only
What is your race and ethnicity? (Please select all that apply.)	Check-box (multiple selections permitted)	White; Black or African American; Hispanic or Latino(a); Asian; Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander; Other
What is your gender?	Radio button (single)	Female; Male; Other; Prefer not to answer
Which of the following best describes your current relationship status?	Radio button (single)	Married; Widowed; Divorced; Separated; In a domestic partnership or civil union; Unmarried, but living with a significant other; Single, never married
Do you have any children under 18?	Radio button (single)	Yes; No
What is the highest level of education you have completed?	Radio button (single)	Less than a high school degree; High school degree or equivalent; Some college; Associate or other 2-year degree; Bachelor's degree; Some graduate school; Postgraduate school
What is/was your major in college? (Put NA if never in college)	Open	
Are you currently a student?	Radio button (single)	Yes; No
How much total combined money did all members of your HOUSEHOLD earn last year?	Radio button (single)	\$0 to \$9,999; \$10,000 to \$24,999; \$25,000 to \$49,999; \$50,000 to \$74,999; \$75,000 to \$99,999; \$100,000 to \$124,999; \$125,000 to \$149,999; \$150,000 to \$174,999; \$175,000 to \$199,999; \$200,000 and up; Prefer not to answer

What is your current employment status?	Radio button (single)	Employed full-time; Employed part-time by choice; Employed part-time but would prefer to be employed; Unemployed by choice; Unemployed but would prefer to be employed; Other
Below is a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Where do you place yourself on this scale?	Radio button (single)	Extremely liberal; Liberal; Slightly liberal; Moderate, middle of the road; Slightly conservative; Conservative; Extremely conservative
Where do you place yourself on this scale terms of economic issues?	Radio button (single)	Extremely liberal; Liberal; Slightly liberal; Moderate, middle of the road; Slightly conservative; Conservative; Extremely conservative
Where do you place yourself on this scale in terms of social issues?	Radio button (single)	Extremely liberal; Liberal; Slightly liberal; Moderate, middle of the road; Slightly conservative; Conservative; Extremely conservative
Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or something else?	Radio button (single)	Strong Democrat; Not Strong Democrat; Independent, Near Democrat; Independent; Independent, Near Republican; Not Strong Republican; Strong Republican; Other Party
In what zip code is your current residence located? (Enter 5-digit ZIP code – for example, 00544 or 94305)	Open	

Appendix A3. IRB Approval.

PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY



IRB Program
Office for Research Protections

Vice President for Research
The Pennsylvania State University
205 The 330 Building
University Park, PA 16802

Phone : (814) 865-1775
Fax: (814) 863-8699
Email : orprotections@psu.edu
Web : www.research.psu.edu/orp

EXEMPTION DETERMINATION

Date: November 3, 2016

From: Philip Frum, IRB Analyst

To: Haydn Hornstein-Platt

Type of Submission:	Initial Study
Title of Study:	Are Sociopolitical Attitudes Dependent Upon Race of a Given Subject? An analysis of race-dependent variables.
Principal Investigator:	Haydn Hornstein-Platt
Study ID:	STUDY00005944
Submission ID:	STUDY00005944
Funding:	Liberal Arts Undergraduate Studies (UNIVERSITY PARK)
Documents Approved:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Survey (2), Category: Data Collection Instrument • Hornstein-Platt IRB Application (0.01), Category: IRB Protocol • Liberal Arts Funding Application (2), Category: Sponsor Attachment • Liberal Arts Research Statement (0.01), Category: Sponsor Attachment

The Office for Research Protections determined that the proposed activity, as described in the above-referenced submission, does not require formal IRB review because the research met the criteria for exempt research according to the policies of this institution and the provisions of applicable federal regulations.

Continuing Progress Reports are **not** required for exempt research. Record of this research determined to be exempt **will** be maintained for five years from the date of this notification. If your research **will** continue beyond five years, please contact the Office for Research Protections closer to the determination end date.

Changes to exempt research only need to be submitted to the Office for Research Protections in limited circumstances described in the below-referenced Investigator Manual. If changes are being considered and there are questions about whether IRB review is needed, please contact the Office for Research Protections.

Penn State researchers are required to follow the requirements listed in the Investigator Manual ([HRP-103](#)), which can be found by navigating to the IRB Library within CATS IRB (<http://irb.psu.edu>).

This correspondence should be maintained with your records.

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Whose fault is it? A survey experiment examining differences in attribution and support for white and black men.
- RESOURCES FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, Family Practice and Counseling Network** **Summer 2016**
Public Health Intern
Researched and presented to staff the current state of the opioid epidemic in Pennsylvania and integrative care-based solutions
Implemented strategy to reduce opioid prescribing and empower providers with necessary skill set
Observed and assisted with pre-diabetes and diabetes support and education groups
Planned and promoted Patient Appreciation Night
- PUBLIC HEALTH MANAGEMENT CORPORATION, National Nursing Centers Consortium** **Summer 2015**
Community Outreach Intern
Researched relevant community health issues and composed literature reviews
Wrote needs assessments about prominent health issues in Philadelphia for research
Conducted site visits to better understand community nursing and healthcare programs
Crafted and analyzed surveys to improve communication with and support for NNCC partner institutions
- HORNSTEIN, PLATT AND ASSOCIATES** **December 2016- Present**
Intake Coordinator
Updated insurance information via Navinet
Managed patient records through an EHR
Conducted office administrative tasks
- DEMOCRATIC COORDINATED CAMPAIGN, Pennsylvania Democratic Party** **Fall 2016**
Organizing Fellow
Led and trained volunteers in voter registration, canvassing techniques and phone banking
Collected and entered data using VoteBuilder
Engaged with the community through tabling to increase voter turnout
Worked with a team to recruit volunteers and staff publicity events
- WORLD IN CONVERSATION CENTER FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY** **August 2014- January 2015**
Advanced Facilitator
Trained in facilitation skills including rapport building and reflective listening
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Received training in conflict transformation, the Socratic method, and small group management
Helped nurture positive, cohesive relationships of trust that improved interactions between diverse people
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Eco Rep Mentor, Eco Rep
Educated students in residence halls on sustainability
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Documented and analyzed results of various initiatives promoting sustainability
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