

Revitalizing the Measurement of White Americans' Racial Attitudes

A Report to the NES 1985 Pilot Study Committee and NES Board*

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Introduction

From Constitutional arguments over voting rights to contemporary conflicts over affirmative action, race has often occupied the center of American political debate. Over the last three decades particularly, white response to an increasingly outspoken and politically aggressive black population has powerfully shaped the character of American politics, a point established in no small measure by analysis of NES surveys (e.g., Burstein, 1979; Carmines and Stimson, 1980, 1984; Converse, Clausen, and Miller, 1965; Converse, Miller, Rusk, and Wolfe, 1969; Fiorina, 1981; Markus, 1979; Nie, Verba, and Petrocik, 1976; Sears, Tyler, Lau, and Allen, 1980). Read back-to-back, these studies testify to the central place of race in contemporary American politics.

Unfortunately, NES's capacity to illuminate the politics of race has diminished sharply in recent years. Table 1 summarizes questions bearing on racial matters that have made periodic election study appearances. The Table indicates that the NES time series on race policy--where we believe NES's obligation is greatest--has thinned noticeably in the last decade. Questions on school integration, fair employment practices, open housing, and segregation in general have all vanished from the study series. Such disappearances are inevitable over the long haul. They reflect the sweeping changes that have taken place in social practice and public opinion in the United States over the last quarter century (e.g., Schuman, Steeh, and Bobo, 1985). But as questions have dropped out of the election surveys, suitable

Table 1

Opinion Questions on Race in NES

52 54 56 58 60 62 64 66 68 70 72 74 76 78 80 82 84

Group Evaluation

(t-scores)

blacks:	X*	X*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
whites:			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
black militants:						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
civil rights leaders:						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
poor people:								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
people on welfare:											X	X	X	X	X	X

Group Identification

(feels close to)

blacks:								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
whites:								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
poor people:								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Perception of Racial Discrimination

change in blacks' position:					X	X	X	X*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
pace of civil rights movement:					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Policy on Racial Matters

segregation:					X	X	X*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
gov't. assist.:								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
fair employment:	X	X*	X*	X*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
school integ.:		X	X	X	X	X	X	X*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
busing:								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
open housing:					X	X	X	X*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

* Format change.

replacements have not been developed. The result is an emaciated capacity to describe, much less understand, public opinion on race.

This report offers recommendations to revitalize the measurement and interpretation of American opinion on race. It concentrates on the most visible and consequential political manifestations of American racial opinion. What role, if any, do Americans assign to the federal government in the reduction of racial inequalities? To what extent is the government obliged to protect and enhance the opportunities of black citizens in the specific spheres of employment, education, and housing? Does racial discrimination in the past warrant affirmative action programs now? Finally, how can the deep divisions that run through American opinion be understood--why do some Americans bitterly resist alterations in the racial status quo while others angrily demand change?

Our report begins to answer such questions by making detailed use of the 1985 NES Pilot Study. The first part examines opinions on racial issues. The second part takes up the antecedents of such opinions, distinguishing among six alternative explanations. The third and final section draws out the implications of our results for future NES inquiries.

Opinions on Race Policy

Our main obligation is to identify questions that will enable NES to represent faithfully contemporary opinion on racial policy. Such opinion is characterized by considerable complexity and ambiguity, as we will show. Here we will take up, in turn, the measurement of opinions on race policy; their structure; their correlates; their

consequences; and finally, a pair of residual complications.

Measurement

In developing questions on racial policy, we tried to guard against excessive topicality, since topical questions may rapidly become obsolete. At the same time, we tried to avoid excessive generality, since general questions may fly too high above ongoing debates. Wherever possible, we appropriated questions developed and used with profit by others. If good precedents did not exist, we wrote our own questions.

The complete set of policy questions is set out in Table 2. All these questions appeared in the first wave of the Pilot Study (X-section n is 380), scattered across the interview. [1] The questions fall roughly into three sets. The first set attempts to provide a reliable assessment of the public's views regarding the proper role of the federal government in reducing racial inequalities. The questions make no mention of specific policies or programs. The subject is rather whether or not, in a general way, the federal government should intervene to guarantee equal opportunity and to provide assistance to black Americans.

As is indicated in Table 2, whites generally believe that the federal government should ensure equal rights to all citizens: 75.5% say that the government should be doing "a lot" or "quite a bit" "to make sure all citizens, regardless of race, are granted equal rights" (V15). Support for the federal government's role in assuring equal opportunity is somewhat less, however. Slightly more than three quarters of white respondents (75.6%) agreed with the notion that,

Table 2

Opinions on Race Policy

Variable Number, Question and Marginals for
White and Black Respondents (in Percents)

Variable Number	Question	Whites	Blacks
V1	Equal opportunity for blacks and whites to succeed is important but it's not really the government's job to guarantee it. (Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree strongly, or disagree somewhat with this statement?)		
	Agree strongly	34.9	7.4
	Agree somewhat	40.7	14.8
	Volunteered: neither	.9	--
	Disagree somewhat	17.4	18.5
	Disagree strongly	6.1	59.3
V2	If you had a say in making up the federal budget this year, on which of these programs would you like to see spending increased and which decreased --		
	Should federal spending on improving the conditions of black Americans be increased, decreased, or kept about the same?		
	Increased	17.4	92.9
	Kept the same	64.9	3.6
V3	Some people feel that the government in Washington should make every effort to improve the social and economic position of blacks. Others feel that the government should not make any special effort to help blacks because they should help themselves. Do you have an opinion on this issue, or haven't you thought much about this?		
	Yes, have an opinion	81.1	71.4
	No, haven't thought	18.9	28.6

Do you feel the government should help improve the position of blacks, that blacks should help themselves, or is your position somewhere in between?

Government should help	17.7	70.0
Somewhere between	32.0	15.0
Blacks should help selves	50.4	15.0

Should the government help blacks to a great extent or only to some extent? Should the government make any effort at all to improve the position of blacks?

Govt. should help to great extent	4.9	25.0
Govt. should help to some extent	12.9	45.0
Somewhere between	32.3	15.0
Govt. should make modest effort	22.8	10.0
Govt. should make no effort at all	27.0	5.0

V4

In your opinion, does the government make special efforts to improve the social and economic position of blacks, or does it not?

Yes, makes efforts	78.5	48.0
No, doesn't make efforts	21.5	52.0

Does the government help blacks to a great extent or only to some extent? Does the government make any effort at all to improve the position of blacks?

Helps blacks to great extent	27.4	4.3
Helps blacks to some extent	51.5	47.8
Makes (small effort)	13.7	26.1
Makes no effort	7.5	21.7

V5 <Difference score on government help for blacks: What government should be doing minus what government is doing> <Constructed from V3 and V4>

Government makes much more effort than it should	(+4) 12.3	--
	(+3) 18.3	--
	(+2) 22.2	13.3
Government makes as much effort as it should	(+1) 20.2	6.7
	(0) 10.7	40.0
	(-1) 8.3	--
	(-2) 5.2	20.0
	(-3) 2.4	13.3
Government makes much less effort than it should	(-4) .4	6.7

V6 People have different opinions about how much the government in Washington is doing about various things. People also differ about how much they think the government should be doing about these things.

First of all, how much do you think the government is doing to make sure black and white children are permitted to go to the same schools--a lot, quite a bit, a little, or nothing at all?

A lot	32.8	18.5
Quite a bit	42.7	33.3
A little	22.9	33.3
Nothing	1.5	14.8

V7 Now, how much do you think the government should be doing about this--a lot, quite a bit, a little, or nothing at all?

A lot	22.7	57.1
Quite a bit	33.0	35.7
A little	30.5	3.6
Nothing	13.7	3.6

V8 <Difference score on government action on schools> <Constructed from V6 and V7>

Government is doing a lot more than it should	+4	5.6	--
	+3	13.5	--
	+2	13.2	--
Government is doing as much as it should	+1	10.0	--
	0	38.6	40.7
	-1	6.3	18.5
	-2	6.6	11.1
	-3	5.6	25.9
Government is doing a lot less than it should	-4	0.6	3.7

V9 How much do you think the government is doing to make sure that blacks can buy any house on the market that they can afford? (A lot, quite a bit, a little, or nothing at all?)

A lot	25.6	17.9
Quite a bit	34.2	32.1
A little	34.5	39.3
Nothing	5.7	10.7

V10 How much do you think the government should be doing about this? (A lot, quite a bit, a little, or nothing at all?)

A lot	24.8	85.2
Quite a bit	34.5	14.8
A little	28.9	--
Nothing	11.8	--

V11

<Difference score on government action
on housing> <Constructed from V9 and
V10>

Government is doing a lot more than it should	(+4)	2.5	--
	(+3)	8.6	--
	(+2)	8.3	--
Government is doing as much as it should	(+1)	7.6	--
	(0)	49.0	25.9
	(-1)	4.5	25.9
	(-2)	8.9	3.7
	(-3)	10.5	37.0
Government is doing a lot less than it should	(-4)	--	7.4

V12

How much do you think the govern-
ment is doing to make sure blacks
have the same job opportunities as
whites? (A lot, quite a bit, a little,
or nothing at all?)

A lot	34.9	7.1
Quite a bit	38.0	35.7
A little	24.6	46.4
Nothing	2.5	10.0

V13

How much do you think it should
be doing about this?

A lot	25.9	81.5
Quite a bit	35.2	18.5
A little	30.6	--
Nothing	8.3	--

V14

<Difference score on government action
on jobs> <Constructed from V12 and V13>

Government is doing more than it should	(+4)	4.7	--
	(+3)	12.3	--
	(+2)	9.7	--
Government is doing as much as it should	(+1)	6.3	--
	(0)	47.5	18.5
	(-1)	4.1	25.9
	(-2)	6.6	3.7
	(-3)	8.5	44.4
Government is doing much less than it should	(-4)	.3	7.4

V15	How much do you think the government is doing to make sure all citizens, regardless of race, are granted equal rights? (A lot, quite a bit, a little, or nothing at all?)		
	A lot	28.6	21.4
	Quite a bit	34.2	25.0
	A little	34.2	46.4
	Nothing	3.1	7.1

V16	How much do you think it <u>should</u> be doing about this? (A lot, quite a bit, a little, or nothing at all?)		
	A lot	48.5	81.5
	Quite a bit	37.0	18.5
	A little	11.1	--
	Nothing	3.4	--

V17	<Difference score on government action on equal rights> <Constructed from V15 and V16>		
	Government is doing a lot more than it should	(+4) .3	--
		(+3) 1.9	--
		(+2) 2.8	--
	Government is doing as much as it should	(+1) 6.3	--
		(0) 52.8	33.3
		(-1) 7.5	14.8
		(-2) 9.1	3.7
		(-3) 17.8	44.4
	Government is doing much less than it should	(-4) 1.6	3.7

V18

Suppose there is a community-wide vote on a general housing issue. There are two possible laws to vote for. One law says that homeowners can decide for themselves who to sell their houses to, even if they prefer not to sell to blacks. The second law says that homeowners cannot refuse to sell to someone because of their race or color. Which law would you vote for?

Homeowners can decide for themselves	46.3	17.2
Volunteered: neither	.6	3.4
Homeowners cannot refuse to sell	53.1	79.3

V19

Some people say that because of past discrimination against blacks, preference in hiring and promotion should be given to blacks. Others say preferential hiring and promotion of blacks is wrong because it (discriminates against whites/gives blacks advantages they haven't earned). What about your opinion-- are you for or against preferential hiring and promotion of blacks?

For	13.0	68.0
Against	87.0	32.0

Do you favor preferential hiring and promotion strongly or not strongly?
Do you oppose preferential hiring and promotion strongly or not strongly?

Favor: strongly	5.9	64.0
Favor: not strongly	7.1	4.0
Oppose: not strongly	22.0	12.0
Oppose: strongly	64.9	20.0

V20

Some people say that because of past discrimination, it is sometimes necessary for colleges and universities to reserve openings for black students. Others oppose quotas because they say quotas (discriminate against whites/give blacks advantages they haven't earned). What about your opinion--are you for or against quotas to admit black students?

For	26.0	74.1
Against	74.0	25.9

Do you favor quotas strongly or not strongly?
Do you oppose quotas strongly or not strongly?

Favor strongly	8.7	63.0
Favor not strongly	17.4	11.1
Oppose not strongly	20.5	14.8
Oppose strongly	53.4	11.1

although equal opportunity is important, that it is not really the government's responsibility to guarantee it (V1). Providing direct assistance to blacks is not particularly popular, either. Most whites--65 percent--thought that federal spending to improve the condition of black Americans should be kept the same; only 17% recommended more spending (V2). Moreover, a bare majority--50.4%--endorsed the view that the federal government should not make any special effort to assist blacks, that blacks should be self-reliant (V3); and a substantial majority--some 73%--believed that the federal government was providing more assistance than it should (V5).

In short, most whites appear to recognize federal responsibilities in the area of race, but support for government intervention varies sharply. A federal presence in the service of protecting equal rights is widely endorsed; guaranteeing equal opportunity receives less support; providing direct assistance is perhaps less popular still.

A second set of questions refers to the federal government's obligations in specific domains: employment, housing, and education. These questions were intended to capture the equal opportunity agenda of the civil rights movement of the 1950's and 1960's. Whites generally saw a strong federal presence in these domains and many were uncomfortable with it: many thought that the federal government was doing more than it should (42.3% in the case of school integration (V8); 26.8% in the case of housing discrimination (V11); 33.0% in the case of equal employment opportunity (V14). If we consider only those whites who see very large discrepancies between what they want

government to do and what they see government doing in schooling, housing, and employment, then those who see government doing much too much outnumber those who see the government doing not nearly enough--particularly in the domain of schools (19.1% vs. 6.2%) and to a lesser degree, employment (17.0% vs. 8.8%). These differences may reflect the comparative visibility of the controversies over school integration--read racial busing--and employment opportunity--read affirmative action--and the comparative invisibility of struggles over racial discrimination in housing. Finally, whites divide virtually down the middle over fair housing in their communities: 53.1% endorse a law that would stipulate that homeowners cannot refuse to sell their homes to someone because of their race or color; 46.3% endorse a law that would stipulate that homeowners can decide for themselves, and in particular can decide not to sell to blacks simply because they prefer not to (V18).

On balance, then, whites are quite divided over equal opportunity in specific domains. Most see a strong federal presence, and more would prefer to see a reduction of federal effort than an expansion. Resistance to the federal role is strongest in the case of school integration, weakest in the case of housing discrimination, and intermediate in the case of employment opportunity.

A third and final set of questions refers to affirmative action policies. Over the last two decades, the locus of authority and activity on the race policy front has shifted from the federal government to state governments, local communities, and to large private and public institutions. Our two questions on affirmative

action policy reflect this shift. As is indicated in Table 2, such policies elicit strong and widespread opposition. (Note there that each question appeared in slightly different form in the two half-samples; in one half-sample, opposition to affirmative action was justified on the grounds that affirmative action policies constitute opposition to reverse discrimination; in the other, opposition to affirmative action was justified on the grounds that such policies give to blacks advantages they have not earned. We will see later in this section whether these alternative frames were of any consequence to our respondents' opinions on affirmative action.) Extending special preferences to blacks in hiring and promotion decisions was opposed by 87.0% of the whites interviewed in the 1985 NES Pilot Study; 64.9% strongly opposed such treatment (V19). Not quite as many, but still a substantial majority--74.0%--opposed an affirmative action policy whereby colleges and universities would set aside openings for black students (V20). The Pilot Study did occasionally bump into strong supporters of affirmative action, but they were few and far between and were greatly outnumbered by affirmative action's strong opponents--by a margin of more than 10:1 in the case of affirmative action in the workplace and by more than 6:1 in the case of affirmative action in college admissions. To put it mildly, most Americans do not support affirmative action (Lipset & Schneider, 1978; Smith & Klugel, 1986).

On all these questions the differences between the answers given by white and black respondents are huge, as Table 2 also indicates. Blacks unanimously endorsed a strong federal presence in granting equal rights, disagreed sharply with the notion that it is not really the

federal government's job to guarantee equal opportunity, almost unanimously recommended that federal spending to improve the conditions of black Americans be increased, and pushed hard the view that the government in Washington should be making special efforts to assist blacks. Blacks also endorsed a strong federal presence in guaranteeing equal rights in schools, neighborhoods, and the workplace, believed that current government efforts in all three spheres fell way short and strongly supported a fair housing law for their communities. Last and not least, blacks stood firmly behind affirmative action, both in employment and college admissions.

It is of course not surprising that racial differences emerge on these questions. Nevertheless, the magnitude of the differences are eye-popping. For example, whereas just 17.7% of the whites interviewed thought that the government in Washington should make special efforts to improve the social and economic position of blacks, 70.0% of the blacks thought so; while 25.9% of the whites endorsed the view that the government should be doing "a lot" about equalizing employment opportunities, 81.5% of the blacks did so; whereas 64.9% of the whites strongly opposed an affirmative action employment policy, 64.0% of the blacks strongly avored such a policy; and on and on. These differences powerfully recall the Kerner Commission Report's language of "two societies."

Structure

In studies of American public opinion, race policy has been regarded as an exceptional case: compared to opinion in other spheres, opinion on race tends to be more coherent and more stable. For better

or for worse, Americans seem to know rather well what they like and dislike when it comes to policy on race (Converse 1964; Kinder & Rhodebeck 1981; Carmines & Stimson 1983).

We see evidence of this in the Pilot Study as well. Table 3 presents correlations among opinions on race policy for white respondents. (These calculations ignore respondents' views of current government policy; we will take up a parallel analysis based on the differences between respondents' views of what current government policy is and what government policy should be later.)

All the correlations shown in Table 3 are positive; they range from .08 to .63; the median correlation is .27. Although these correlations are very far from perfect, they do indicate a good bit of structure to public opinion on race policy. As a general matter, white Americans seem, on the basis of the Pilot Study results, to possess authentic and coherent opinions about what should be done (if anything) about race.

Most opinions appear to be related at least modestly to most other opinions, with one glaring exception. Views about a law that would prohibit race discrimination in housing in the respondent's own community are only feebly related to opinions on other policy matters: these correlations range downward from .22, with the median correlation being just .14. Put another way, if this question is set aside, then the median correlation in the resulting matrix rises from .27 to .33. These results suggest that the fair housing question really does not belong with the other policy questions. There are good conceptual reasons to think that it does not. Although fair housing belongs to

Table 3

Intercorrelations Among Opinions on Race Policy
 White Respondents (n = 292)
 (Pearson r's)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1:Equal rights	-									
2:Equal opportunity	.20	-								
3:Federal spending on blacks	.20	.35	-							
4:Gov't help to blacks	.21	.39	.48	-						
5:Govt's role in school discrim.	.29	.34	.33	.36	-					
6:Govt's role in housing discrim.	.37	.31	.38	.27	.46	-				
7:Govt's role in job opportunity	.47	.36	.37	.37	.54	.63	-			
8:Community fair-housing law	.19	.22	.13	.14	.14	.13	.17	-		
9:Affirm.action-preferent. hiring	.09	.15	.36	.23	.27	.19	.26	.10	-	
10:Affirm.action-college admiss.	.09	.25	.34	.30	.30	.19	.25	.08	.50	-

the old agenda of the civil rights movement, it alone evokes not the federal government but the local community. Moreover, it alone evokes the competing principal of property rights. Perhaps it should not be surprising that opinions on fair housing are so feebly connected to opinions about the race policies we examined here.

This exception aside, the results in Table 3 suggest that public thinking on race policy is organized into three correlated but distinct packages: one clearly involves affirmative action; another concerns the federal government's responsibilities in the specific spheres of education, housing, and employment; and the third focusses on the federal government's general role in providing equal opportunity and assistance to black citizens. These results are generally consistent with our initial division of opinion questions into three categories. Perhaps the only sharp surprise evident in Table 3 is that opinions about the federal government's role in schools, housing, and employment are tied so tightly to views about the government's general obligation to guarantee equal rights to all citizens.

To examine the structure of (white) public opinion on race policy in a more systematic way, we turned to confirmatory factor analysis, based on Joreskog's maximum likelihood model available in LISREL VI (Joreskog 1969). The model generates maximum likelihood estimates of the reliability of each opinion variable, how well each represents an underlying latent factor, relationships among the latent factors themselves, as well as overall measures of goodness of fit. For convenience, we coded all race policy opinion variables to a zero-one interval, with 1.0 representing the resistance to racial change end of

the continuum and 0.0 representing the support of racial change end. All parameters are maximum likelihood estimates based on the variance-covariance matrix among the ten race policy opinion items.

Our initial model specified a single latent factor. That is, we presumed at the outset that public opinion on race policy is entirely single-minded. Under this assumption, whites support or oppose racial policy consistently, without regard to distinctions between general principals and specific applications, or between the old agenda of the civil rights movement and the contemporary conflict over affirmative action. This specification is clearly wrong. The single factor model generates factor loadings that are all statistically significant, but it fits the variance-covariance matrix poorly: Chi-Square with 35 degree of freedom = 159.87 (prob < .001); adjusted goodness of fit = .827.

Although clearly and decisively wrong, this model makes two helpful points. The first is that, as the correlation matrix results portended, the fair housing referendum question really does not belong with the others. The single factor model produces estimates of the reliabilities of the individual questions that are, with one exception, quite respectable. The exception is fair housing; its estimated reliability--under the assumption that all the race policy items are measuring the same latent factor--is a thoroughly disreputable .057. The second point is more general: it is that white opinion on race policy is not relentlessly single-minded.

A model that fits the evidence better specifies that whites possess distinct but correlated views about particular aspects of

policy on race. More specifically, the model assumes that whites distinguish among, first, the general responsibility of the federal government to provide assistance, grant equal rights, and guarantee equal opportunity to blacks; second, the specific obligations of the federal government to ensure that blacks can attend integrated schools, purchase homes without prejudice, and be free from discrimination on the job; and third, the appropriateness of affirmative action policies in employment and college admissions decisions. (The model sets aside the question regarding fair housing and property rights.) This model fits the variance-covariance matrix much better than did the single-factor model, but leaves plenty of room for improvement: Chi-Square with 24 degrees of freedom=66.97 (prob <.01), adjusted goodness of fit=.906.

The major trouble with this specification is located with the question on the federal government's responsibility to guarantee equal rights to all citizens, regardless of race (V1). The model requires that this question reflect the latent factor of general federal assistance. This seems straightforward enough a requirement, but various diagnostics, as well as inspection of the original correlation matrix, indicate that it is crashingly incorrect. In fact, the question appears to cluster instead with those questions that inquire into the respondents' views of the federal government's specific obligations in the spheres of education, housing, and employment.

There are (at least) two ways to think about this result. Perhaps the public understands discrimination in education, housing, and employment as a matter of rights: the issue then is whether black

children have the right to attend integrated schools, to purchase homes free from discrimination, to pursue livelihoods without bearing the burden of prejudice--and whether it is the government's responsibilities to protect such rights. If this were the case, it would account for the pattern of relationships we see. An alternative interpretation is methodological: perhaps responses to the equal rights question correlate sharply with answers to the education, housing, and employment questions because they share a format in common (refer back to Table 2). Indeed, not only do these questions follow the identical format, they follow one another sequentially in the interview. Respondents were asked about the federal government's responsibility in the domain of schools, housing, employment, and equal rights in immediate succession. Suspiciously enough, the correlation between answers to the equal rights question and answers to the schools, housing, and employment questions decreases monotonically with distance. The three correlations are: .47 (employment), .37 (housing), and .29 (schools). On balance, we favor the methodological explanation.

However it was produced, this surprising result must be taken into account in our factor analysis model. When we do so--by re-specifying the latent variable "home" of the equal rights question--the model fits the data well. The estimated parameters for this specification are shown in Table 4. As is indicated there, the overall fit is excellent: Chi-Square with 21 degrees of freedom = 21.20 (prob = .446); adjusted goodness of fit = .966. Moreover, the pattern of loadings and the correlations among the latent factors support our original expectation

Table 4

Maximum Likelihood Factor Analysis of Opinions on Race Policy
 (Estimates Based on Variance-Covariance Matrix)
 White Respondents

Variable	Factors			Reliability
	(1)	(2)	(3)	
	Coef. S.E.	Coef. S.E.	Coef. S.E.	
Equal rights		.138 (.016)		.267
Equal opportunity	.140 (.029)	.044 (.028)		.294
Federal spending	.212 (.018)			.503
Gov't help	.182 (.017)			.460
Gov't/school discrimination	.040 (.035)	.157 (.026)	.042 (.027)	.417
Gov't/housing discrimination		.231 (.018)		.530
Gov't/job opportunity		.266 (.016)		.763
Preferential hiring			.196 (.020)	.451
Preferential college admiss.			.257 (.025)	.564
			Total =	.973

Chi-Square with 21 degrees of freedom = 21.70 (prob.=.446)

Adjusted goodness of fit = .966

Factor Correlations		
	1	2
2	.619	
3	.609	.383

handsomely. For the most part, the various questions load only on the designated latent factors. The several exceptions are substantively tiny and statistically borderline. Correlations among the latent factors themselves indicate three ~~spheres~~ correlated but distinct packages of opinions on race policy.

Political Correlates

Our next step is to examine the political correlates of opinions on race policy. Our purpose here is to sketch out a rough map of American public opinion in general and to locate race policies on it. Our map contains four regions: political predispositions (party identification and liberal/conservative identification), opinions on social welfare policies (tradeoff between government services and cuts in federal spending, government's role in subsidizing health care, government's obligation to provide employment if necessary), opinions on social issues (abortion, school prayer, government's obligation to increase the economic and social position of women), and opinions on external threats to the United States (cooperate vs. get tough with the Soviets, U.S. involvement in Central America, and spending on defense). All these questions are drawn from the 1984 NES. Table 5 presents the results.

The correlations indicate, first, that Republicans and self-styled conservatives are inclined to oppose federal efforts to assist blacks--in general and in the specific spheres of schooling, housing, and employment--while Democrats and self-styled liberals tend to support such efforts. These differences are slightly larger at the level of general principle than at the level of specific spheres,

Table 5
 Political Correlates of Opinions on Race Policy
 White Respondents
 (Pearson r's)

	Equal Rights	Equal Opportunity	Federal Spending on Blacks	Gov't Help to Blacks	Gov't/School Discrim.	Gov't/Housing Discrim.	Gov't Job Oppor.	Comm.Fair Housing Law	Preferential Hiring	Preferential College Admissions
Party Identification	.23	.12	.31	.21	.15	.16	.22	.09	.14	.06
Liberal/Conservative	.21	.15	.22	.16	.21	.03	.08	.11	.17	.11
Gov't Serv./Spending*	.22	.18	.23	.22	.23	.16	.18	.14	.12	.12
Gov't Health Insurance	.24	-.01	.12	.09	.14	.01	.09	-.00	.03	.03
Gov't Provide Jobs	.33	.22	.20	.26	.37	.23	.30	.11	.13	.10
Abortion	-.06	.00	-.05	-.05	.11	.10	.06	-.02	.07	.02
School Prayer*	.09	.08	.12	.19	.06	.11	.14	-.16	.11	.06
Gov't Help to Women	.27	.31	.29	.35	.18	.20	.24	.10	.11	.17
Cooperate w/Soviet Union	.10	.21	.26	.24	.14	.22	.21	.23	.07	.09
U.S./Central America*	.13	.14	.16	.13	.08	.12	.11	.12	.12	.03
Defense Spending	.11	.24	.25	.21	.10	.15	.14	.17	.21	.06

Note: The political variables all come from 1984 NES.
 * = reflected

though in absolute terms they are never very large. Moreover, they are smaller still for opinions on affirmative action. And this distinction runs through the entire table. In comparison to views about federal responsibilities in the domain of race, opinions on affirmative action share much less in common with views on social welfare policy, social issues, or external threat. Finally, looking across the table, whereas the correlations tend to be a bit higher for party identification than for ideological identification, this tendency reverses for affirmative action. All these results are consistent with the factor analysis findings from the preceding section. Here, too, affirmative action seems to represent a new and distinctive policy problem. If Table 5 is a public opinion map, then views on affirmative action represent a self-contained and rather isolated community (more like Ann Arbor than Boston, say).

Opinions on fair housing are still more isolated, again consistent with the factor analysis results from the preceding section. Such opinions are quite unrelated to political predispositions, opinions on social welfare, or to opinions on social issues. The only connections apparent in Table 5 are found in opinions on external threat:

Americans who advocated getting tougher with the Soviet Union, who pushed for a stronger U.S. presence in Central America, and who recommended increases in the defense budget were inclined to oppose a fair housing law for their communities. Perhaps this implies an ideological connection between the defense of individual property rights on the one hand and a toughminded protection of American interests from foreign imposition on the other. Perhaps the connection

is more personal and metaphorical, involving defense of the community against outsiders--against blacks at the local level and against Communists at the international level. But the main point here is that views on fair housing appear to be quite independent of opinions on policy in general. Fair housing is barely on the map.

In contrast, views on social welfare policy are correlated with views on federal responsibilities in the racial domain. Those who press for a more active involvement on the part of the federal government in the provision of social services, health insurance, and employment also tend to call for a strong federal presence in reducing racial inequalities. The correlations are weakest in the case of health insurance, testifying, perhaps, to the relative invisibility of this issue nowadays. (The sole exception to the pattern of weak relationships suggests that Americans tend to see adequate health care as a right). The correlations are strongest--indeed, the strongest in the entire table--in the case of providing jobs. These results imply that there are ideological undercurrents running through whites' opinions on race policy--currents that involve the desirability and efficiency of government intervention as a general matter along with sympathy for or indifference to the downtrodden.

This last point is suggested as well by the social issues region of Table 5. As is indicated there, opinions on social issues are generally weakly correlated with views on race policy. Two of the three social issues--abortion and school prayer--are simply independent of race issues. However, the third, that concerning the federal government's obligation to enhance the social and economic position of

women, does show consistent and, in a comparative sense, quite powerful relationships with opinions on race policy. As formulated, this question of course taps both of the ideological undercurrents noted above--are women oppressed and therefore entitled to assistance and is the federal government the proper source for such assistance?

Finally, opinions on race are connected in a modest though quite consistent way with opinions on external threat. Americans who advocated a tough posture toward the Soviet Union, who recommended that the United States become more deeply involved in Central America, and who urged increases in the defense budget tended to oppose government efforts to help blacks. The correlations tend to be a bit higher where the issue is the general desirability of federal government intervention, and a bit lower where the issue is the desirability of federal intervention in the specific spheres of schooling, housing, and employment. Such a contrast implies, again, an ideological component to views on race.

Consequences

Our assessment of the political consequences of opinion on race revolves around three possibilities: first, that support for Reagan in 1984 emerged disproportionately from voters who opposed efforts to assist blacks, whether these efforts were pursued by government or took place in the social domains of schools or places of employment; second, that the public's approval of President Reagan's performance had its basis partly in opinions on race policy--that through his programs, appointments, and rhetoric, Reagan drew approval from racial conservatives and disapproval from racial liberals; and third, that

feelings about Reagan and other prominent politicians were affected in varying degrees by opinions on racial matters, with sentiments about Reagan and Jesse Jackson being most affected by such opinions. Gary Hart and Gerald Ford being fairly unprovocative racially, and Walter Mondale and George Bush falling somewhere in between.

This section begins with a discussion of our dependent variables. Next we review our construction of factor scores based on the results from the maximum likelihood factor analysis conducted earlier and explain our development of a composite measure of opinion on race. Then we present our estimation of the political effects of such opinion. Last but not least, we offer a comparison of our new measures to the one(s) already employed by NES.

Dependent measures. All our dependent variables were lifted from the 1984 National Election Study. This makes for a conservative test, but one with real advantages for our analysis. One is that we avoid the problem of missing data that would come from selecting dependent variables from wave 2 of the Pilot Study, since, by definition and design, all our Pilot Study respondents participated in both the pre and post election phases of the 1984 study. This represents a savings of some 60 cases, or a roughly 25% gain in the equations to be reported shortly. The second advantage is to remove the test variables from a survey context that was heavily racial in emphasis. And a third is that, by using test variables taken from the 1984 NES, we return to a political context that we are vitally interested in understanding: that is, the dynamics of political opinion at the moment of choice.

The measure of presidential vote appeared in the post-election phase of the 1984 National Election Study. Based on that measure, 66.9% of white Pilot Study respondents reported voting for Ronald Reagan; 33.1% reported voting for Walter Mondale. (These figures correspond closely to those compiled by the huge New York Times election day exit poll; the Times reported on the morning after the election that the white vote split 66:34.) Whites not only voted in great numbers for Reagan, they also thought well of his performance as president. According to a question that appeared on the pre-election phase of the 1984 National Election Study, 42% of white Pilot Study respondents strongly approved of Reagan's presidential performance; 29.8% approved mildly; and only 18.1% disapproved, about one half of those strongly. Our final test measures, also taken from the pre-election phase of the 1984 NES, are the familiar if not notorious thermometer scale ratings. On the thermometer scale, the white public recorded most affection for Ronald Reagan (average score = 66.1), the least for Jesse Jackson (average score = 42.6), with the other luminaries in between: Gary Hart (63.5), Gerald Ford (58.8), George Bush (56.4), and Walter Mondale (52.8). In the analysis that follows, all these variables were coded on the zero-one interval, with 1.0 representing, in turn, a vote for Reagan, strong approval of Reagan's performance, highest affection rating for Reagan, Bush, and Ford, and lowest affection rating for Jackson, Mondale, and Hart.

Operationalizing opinions on race policy. In order to discover what political consequences, if any, flow from opinions on race policy, we first constructed three factor scores, based on the maximum

likelihood factor analysis described in an earlier section (and summarized in detail in Table 4). The first represents opinion about the proper role of the federal government in providing opportunities and assistance to blacks ("Federal Assistance"); the second represents opinion about the government's obligations to guarantee equal opportunity in the particular domains of education, employment and housing ("Equal Opportunity"); the third represents opinion on affirmative action policies in employment and college admission decisions ("Affirmative Action"). For convenience, each of the three was coded on the zero-one interval, with 1.0 standing for opposition to federal assistance, equal opportunity and affirmative action, and 0.0 standing for support.

The correlations (zero-order) between the various test variables and these three factor scores, along with opinions on fair housing (also coded on the zero-one interval), are shown in Table 6. With one innocuous exception, all the correlations arrayed there are of the proper sign. They are generally modestly-sized, though they diminish appreciably, as we thought they would, in the cases of Ford and Hart. As a general matter, the correlations are strongest for Federal Assistance and Equal Opportunity; they fall off a bit for Affirmative Action; and they fall a good bit more for Fair Housing. Based on these results, and the results of a variety of interim analyses not reported here (and knowing that the modest scope of the Pilot Study affords limited statistical power to estimate the separate effects of the correlated components of opinions on race policy), we decided in the analysis ahead: (1) to set the Fair Housing question aside; and

Table 6

Correlations Between Opinions on Race Policy and
Political Judgments
White Respondents
(Pearson r's)

	Evaluation							
	1984 Vote	Reagan Performance	Reagan	Bush	Ford	Jackson	Mondale	Hart
Federal assistance	-.24	-.34	.29	.20	.04	-.34	-.33	-.06
Equal opportunity	-.30	-.29	.26	.12	-.05	-.30	-.29	-.02
Affirmative action	-.14	-.20	.22	.19	.11	-.20	-.18	-.03
Fair housing	-.09	-.11	.17	.09	.08	-.16	-.14	-.09

(2) to create a composite measure of opinion on race policy, based on the respondent's average score on Federal Assistance, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action ("Race Opinion"). It is this composite measure, which also ranges from zero to one, that will enable us to estimate the political consequences of opinion on race policy.

Specification and estimation. Political judgment is not only a matter of race opinion, of course. In particular, our analysis assumes that political judgments also reflect the state of the national economy, as respondents saw it, the party and religion they embraced, and the policy directions they endorsed outside the racial domain. In equation form:

$$(1) \text{ Political judgment} = b_0 + b_1 \text{ opinions on race policy} + b_2 \text{ party identification} + b_3 \text{ religion} + b_4 \text{ assessment of national economic conditions} + b_5 \text{ opinions on external threat} + b_6 \text{ opinions on domestic welfare} + b_7 \text{ opinions on social issues}$$

Except for opinions on race policy, all right hand side variables are taken from the 1984 National Election Study; all are coded on the zero-one interval. For details on measurement, see footnote 2.

All equations are estimated in a two-stage procedure, with assessments of national economic conditions treated as endogenous and all other right hand side variables treated as exogenous. We assume, that is, that assessments of national economic conditions influence vote, presidential approval and the rest, and that vote, approval and

so on influence how citizens assess the state of the nation's economy. Right-hand side variables in the national economic conditions first-stage equation were education, assessments of personal economic well-being, and assessments of group economic well-being. (The last two are factor scores; for details, see Kinder, Adams & Gronke, 1985). When vote is the dependent variable, we rely on two-stage probit; otherwise we rely on two-stage least squares.

Results. The vote equation results are shown in Table 7. The coefficients there indicate that Reagan's support in 1984 came mainly from Republicans, those who urged a stronger, tougher US presence around the world, who endorsed the conservative position on abortion, school prayer, and federal assistance to women, and who thought the national economy booming. By comparison, the impact of opinions on race policy was apparently modest (probit coefficient = $-.619$, s.e. = $.771$, prob. = $.22$, 1-tailed).

Comparatively modest, but still appreciable. To see this, Table 8 translates the probit coefficients into estimates of the probability that particular types of voters would support Walter Mondale. The translation presumes a Protestant voter with centrist (.5) views on external threat, domestic welfare, social issues, and the national economy. For voters sharing such characteristics, Table 8 reports the estimated probability that they would have supported Mondale in 1984 as a function of their partisanship and their opinions on race policy (with the liberal position assigned a value .2 and the conservative position assigned a value of .8). Those estimates indicate that Mondale does considerably better among voters with liberal views on

Table 7

Estimated Impact of Opinions on Race Policy on 1984 Presidential Vote
White Respondents
(2-stage probit coefficients)

Variable	B	SE(B)
Race policy	-.619	(.771)
Party identification	-1.802	(.293)
External threat	-2.659	(.887)
Domestic welfare	-.027	(.871)
Social issues	1.581	(.708)
National economy	-2.223	(1.129)

Number of cases = 195

Percentage of cases correctly predicted = 75.0

The equation also included a set of 4 dummy variables
representing religion (see text for details).

Table 8

Estimated Vote for Mondale in 1984
White Respondents

	Opinions on Race Policy	
	Conservative	Liberal
Republicans	.033	.071
Independents	.174	.284
Democrats	.484	.633

Estimated vote probabilities are derived from the 2-stage probit equation described in the text.

race policy than among those voters with conservative views on race policy--particularly among Democrats (63.3% vs. 48.4%) and Independents (28.4% vs. 17.4%). Although modest when compared against the impact of party identification or national economic conditions, the difference due to opinions on race policy are politically significant.

No doubt opinions on race policy affect the votes of some citizens more than others. Specifically we looked to see whether the political weight attached to opinions on race would be greater among Southern voters than among voters living outside the South. Race has of course played a more prominent role in Southern politics in general, and this has been true for recent presidential elections and for the 1984 election in particular (Rosenstone 1983, 1985). To see if we could detect this in our data, we re-estimated the vote equation summarized in Table 7, adding a multiplicative term that captures the interaction between current residence (1 if South, 0 otherwise) and opinions on race policy. The results are consistent with the central place of race in Southern history: for voters residing outside the South, $b = -.587$; for voters residing within the South, $b = -1.323$ (1-tailed t-test for the difference between the two coefficients = .760, prob. = .21). By these results, the Reagan-Mondale contest in the South turned substantially on race policy.

The results on voting are mirrored closely by those on presidential performance, shown in Table 9. President Reagan's performance is viewed critically by Democrats, by those who recommend a tender, conciliatory foreign posture, by those who see the national economy sputtering, and--holding constant these considerations--a bit

Table 9

Estimated Impact of Opinions on Race Policy on Assessments
of Reagan's Performance as President
White Respondents
(unstandardized 2-stage least-squares coefficients)

Variable	B	SE(B)
Race policy	-.099	.091
Party identification	-.362	.039
External threat	-.450	.093
Domestic welfare	.094	.096
Social issues	.122	.073
National economy	-.487	.122

Number of cases = 244

R-squared = .633

Standard error = .238

The equation also included a set of 4 dummy variables
to represent religion.

by those who press for racial change. As before, the estimated effect of opinions on race policy is properly-signed, politically sizeable, but not absolutely certain (2s1s coefficient = $-.099$, s.e. = $.091$, prob. = $.15$, 1-tailed).

Table 10 carries our test of the political consequences of opinion on race policy to the public's evaluation of six prominent political figures. The coefficients shown there reveal sharp specificity in the importance of opinions on race policy. Such opinions are utterly irrelevant to the affection the public feels for George Bush and Gerald Ford, are somewhat important for Ronald Reagan and Gary Hart (notice that the sign of the coefficient for Hart means that he is liked somewhat more by racial policy conservatives; from the public's point of view, this may be the significance of the neo in neo-liberal), are quite important for Walter Mondale, and are of overriding importance for Jesse Jackson. From the perspective of measurement and validation, it would be hard to dream up a neater, more encouraging pattern of results.

Table 10 is chocked full of other interesting results, and though they are only obliquely relevant to our immediate purpose, they are worth noting here. First is that the impact of party identification is most pronounced for the two parties' standard bearers--Reagan and Mondale--and diminishes quite sharply elsewhere. In fact, the impact of party vanishes altogether in the case of the public's evaluation of Gerald Ford, testifying perhaps to Ford's innocuous politics, his comparative political invisibility, his clear preference for the fairway over the beltway.

Table 10

Estimated Impact of Opinions on Race Policy on Evaluations of
Prominent Republicans and Democrats
White Respondents
(unstandardized 2-stage least squares coefficients)

Variable	Evaluation of					
	Reagan	Bush	Ford	Jackson	Mondale	Hart
Race policy	.064 (.065)	-.000 (.069)	-.020 (.071)	-.326 (.092)	-.186 (.072)	.099 (.073)
Party ident.	.234 (.028)	.130 (.030)	.043 (.030)	-.107 (.039)	-.177 (.031)	-.108 (.031)
External threat	.338 (.070)	.220 (.072)	.010 (.073)	-.218 (.095)	-.202 (.074)	-.200 (.075)
Domestic welfare	-.071 (.069)	-.007 (.074)	.082 (.075)	-.034 (.099)	.139 (.076)	.154 (.078)
Social issues	-.190 (.052)	-.171 (.056)	-.133 (.057)	.038 (.075)	-.005 (.058)	-.019 (.059)
National economy	.408 (.089)	.333 (.095)	.326 (.097)	.156 (.127)	-.196 (.098)	.041 (.100)
Number of cases	250	246	249	248	249	244
R-squared	.653	.357	.174	.195	.429	.162
Standard error	.173	.184	.188	.245	.190	.192

Each equation also included a set of 4 dummy variables to represent religion.

The results in Table 10 also reveal how completely the Republicans have captured the social issue. The public's views on abortion, school prayer, and the government's responsibilities to women clearly and sharply affect evaluations of Republican luminaries but are quite irrelevant to ratings of prominent Democrats.

In contrast, issues of foreign policy—relations with the Soviets, involvement in Central America, spending on defense—affect Republicans and Democrats alike. Tough-minded citizens are inclined to like Reagan and Bush, while tender-minded citizens are inclined to like Mondale, Jackson, and Hart. (Ford's interest in detente appears to have made this dimension irrelevant to his public standing.)

Table 10 also indicates that while opinions on domestic welfare are generally unimportant to the affection that the public feels toward its leaders, one clear and unsurprising exception is Walter Mondale, testifying perhaps to the Reagan campaign's success in labelling Mondale's politics as "tax and tax, spend and spend". (And of course by announcing that he intended to raise taxes if elected, Mondale may have contributed materially to this result himself).

Elsewhere in Table 10, the impact of national economic conditions was greatest for incumbent President Reagan, fell off only slightly in evaluations of incumbent Vice President Bush (as a general matter, Bush resembles a miniature Reagan), and was halved in evaluations of Walter Mondale. This asymmetry—the state of the economy mattering more to incumbents than to their challengers—replicates results from earlier presidential contests (Kinder & Abelson 1981; Kinder & Kiewiet 1981). The asymmetry is less dramatic here, perhaps because the 1984 contest

was doubly retrospective, involving a judgment not only about the Reagan-Bush stewardship of the economy, but also about the Carter-Mondale years. Consistent with this idea, notice that the state of the economy was irrelevant to public attitudes toward Jackson and Hart.

A final point worth noting pertains to the political effects of religion (included in the equations but not shown in Table 10). Compared to Protestants, Catholics and Jews tended to prefer Mondale and to disapprove of Reagan. But as a general matter, the effects traceable to religion were small and insignificant--with one striking and unsurprising exception: Jews did not like Jesse Jackson ($b = -.212$, $s.e. = .088$, $prob. < .01$).

All these results are beside the immediate point, of course. But they do inspire confidence in our findings generally. There is a lot that is interesting and intelligible running around in Table 9, and that leads us, at least, to take the results that are of immediate relevance--those regarding opinions on race policy--more seriously than we otherwise would. And those results, presented in Tables 7, 8, 9 and 10, testify both to the continuing prominence of race in contemporary American politics, and to the quality of our new measures.

So far, so good. We seem to have learned a good bit about the political consequences of opinions on race policy. But we need to make one final inquiry. We need to ask what we can learn about the political consequences of opinion on race based on our new measures that we could not learn based on the standard policy measures that appear periodically in the National Election Studies. In practice, the

standard measures reduce to one: whether or not the government should make special efforts to help blacks (V3 in Table 3). To compare the new measures with standard practice, then, we re-estimated the effects of opinion on race policy summarized in Tables 7, 9, and 10, substituting this one question for the global measure. We used the question as it appeared in the Pilot Study, to make the comparisons as close as possible. The results are shown in Table 11, which bring together the estimated effects of opinions on race policy on 1984 vote, presidential approval, and evaluations of six leading political figures. For each dependent or test variable, the Table presents a pair of coefficients: one the estimated effect based on the new measures (simply lifted from the three preceding tables), the other the estimated effect based on the NES standard measure.

The differences are dramatic in some instances and negligible in others. They are negligible when the impact of race opinion is either utterly trivial--as in the case of the public's evaluation of George Bush and Gerald Ford--or very substantial--as in the case of the public's evaluation of Jesse Jackson. In between these two extremes, in the middle ground, the differences widen appreciably, and in every case, the standard NES question seriously underestimates the apparent political effect of race opinion. For example, the standard question indicates a substantially weaker effect of opinion on race policy on 1984 presidential vote than do the new measures (-.353 vs. -.619). If both estimates are translated into vote probabilities, it becomes clear that the standard measure reduces by about one half the apparent effect of race policy opinions on the 1984 presidential vote. Furthermore,

Table 11

Estimated Impact of Opinions on Race Policy on Political Judgments,
Comparing Standard NES Measure of Race Opinion
With New Measure of Race Opinion
White Respondents

	1984 Vote#	Reagan Perf.	Evaluation of					Mondale	Hart
			Reagan	Bush	Ford	Jackson			
New measure	-.619 (.771)	-.099 (.091)	.064 (.065)	-.000 (.069)	-.020 (.071)	-.326 (.092)	-.186 (.072)	.099 (.073)	
NES standard	-.354 (.527)	-.072 (.063)	-.045 (.045)	.015 (.048)	-.004 (.049)	-.296 (.062)	-.109 (.050)	-.047 (.050)	

Probit coefficient; others are 2-stage least squares coefficients.

this attenuation worsens in the estimate of Southern voting. Within the South, the estimated effect of opinion on race policy, according to the new measures, is given by -1.323 ; according to the standard measure, the estimated effect is $-.664$. Elsewhere in Table 11, the differences are also noteworthy. On the question of presidential performance, for example, the estimated effect diminishes by about 25% when the standard measure is employed. On the public's evaluation of Reagan and Hart, the estimated effect reverses in sign; for Mondale, finally, the standard measure yields an estimate of the impact of opinion on race policy that is only about one-half that of the estimate yielded by the new measures.

In short, it is sometimes a matter of indifference whether we go first-class or economy, and sometimes it matters enormously.

Complications

Before moving on to take up what the antecedents of opinions on race policy might be, we need to pause here to work through two complications. The first considers the question of what, if anything, is gained by taking into account not only what citizens want government policy to be but also what they believe current policy is. Perhaps it is the difference between the two--between what policy is and what policy should be--that is important for political judgment. The second pursues alternative framings of affirmative action policies. What difference does it make whether affirmative action is portrayed as reverse discrimination on the one hand, or as

Difference scores. Five of the race policy questions ask respondents not only what they would like government policy to be, but also what they believe current policy is. Such questions enable us to create difference scores, each one representing discrepancies between what respondents want from government and what they think they are getting. These created difference scores are shown in Table 2 (V5, V8, V11, V14, and V17). The important questions for us is whether taking into account perception of government policy on race teaches us something valuable. By our analysis, the answer appears to be no.

In general, in all the analyses we have described so far, not much changes when we substitute the five difference scores for their preference only alternatives. And when changes do show up, we tend to regard them as undesirable. For example, correlations between opinions on race policy are mostly unchanged (these results are displayed in Table A3 in the Appendix). The one clear alteration is that opinions on federal assistance to blacks become less distinct from opinions toward the federal government's responsibilities to assure equal opportunity in education, housing, and employment. This change shows up clearly in the results of a confirmatory factor analysis (Table A4). The parameter estimates resemble rather closely those generated by the parallel analysis reported in Table 4, and a three-factor model fits the data well. The one striking difference is that the correlation between the first two factors--federal assistance and equal opportunity--increases sharply, from .619 for preferences (Table 4) to .854 (Table A4), for the difference-score version. Bringing government policy in as a reference point blurs distinctions that the public is

otherwise prepared to make. Next, examining the political correlates of opinions on race policy, comparing preferences with difference scores, leaves little to choose from (Table A5). Sometimes preferences are correlated a bit more sharply; sometimes difference scores show the stronger relationship. Finally, we abandoned running a set of analyses for difference scores to estimate their political consequences, since the factor scores were so highly correlated across the two versions: .87 (Federal Assistance), .73 (Equal Opportunity), and .98 (Affirmative Action). In short, we see little gain, and some loss, in moving to difference scores--a happy result from an accounting point of view.

Affirmative action framing experiment. Affirmative action, like other political issues, can be framed in a variety of different ways, and the differences would seem to matter for public opinion. By investigating what they call the "public culture" of affirmative action--analyzing television news programs, editorial cartoons, opinion columns, news magazines, and the like--Gamson and Modigliani (1984) claim that affirmative action is currently portrayed primarily in terms of reverse discrimination. Formulated in this fashion, the central issue is whether the rights of particular whites are to be sacrificed in order to advance the interests of blacks. The frame of reverse discrimination constitutes a change from the 1960's and early 1970's, when the dominant frame appeared to be "unfair advantage." Like reverse discrimination, unfair advantage also questions whether rewards should be allocated on the basis of race, this time by raising the particular concern of whether blacks are being handed advantages that

they do not deserve.

Under the assumption that an issue's public culture both reflects and shapes popular thinking, we chose to phrase our pair of affirmative action questions in one of two ways. One-half of the Pilot Study respondents were asked affirmative action questions formulated in terms of reverse discrimination (Form A); the other randomly determined half were asked affirmative action questions formulated in terms of unfair advantage (Form B; see Table 2, V19 and V20 for exact wordings).

Table 14 shows whether these alternative frames influenced the support whites gave to affirmative action policies. (From Brehm and Traugott's (1986) analysis, we know that the two half-samples are virtually identical in their demographic and political characteristics). The answer is a resounding no: whites strongly opposed affirmative action in employment decisions and in college admissions quite independently of how the policy was framed. When opposition to preferential hiring and promotion was formulated in terms of reverse discrimination, 67.3% strongly opposed the policy; when formulated in terms of handing advantages to blacks they haven't earned, 62.5% strongly opposed the policy. Likewise for setting aside places for blacks in college admissions: 53.9% of the whites strongly opposed such a policy when framed in terms of reverse discrimination; 52.9% did so when framed in terms of undeserved advantages. Neither difference remotely approaches statistical significance. [2]

This failure to find framing effects may testify to the authenticity and centrality of opinions on affirmative action. White Americans really seem to know what they think about preferential

Table 14

Support for Affirmative Action
 By Question Frame (A vs. B)
 White Respondents (in Percents)

	Preference in Hiring and Promotion		Preference in College Admissions	
	A	B	A	B
Favor strongly	5.6	6.3	9.1	8.3
Favor not strongly	6.8	7.5	15.8	19.1
Oppose not strongly	20.4	23.8	21.2	19.7
Oppose strongly	67.3	62.5	53.9	52.9
Chi-Square:	.82 (prob=.85)		.68 (prob=.88)	

Frame A: "...discriminates against whites ..."

Frame B: "...gives blacks advantages they haven't earned."

treatment--most do not like it at all--and they know this with sufficient clarity that they are not influenced one way or the other by how the interviewer happens to put the question.

Not so fast. Framing did indeed make a difference. We can document this in a variety of ways, beginning with Table 15, which reports correlations between our various measures of opinions on race policy, on the one hand, and the pair of affirmative action questions, on the other, separately within the two half-samples. These correlations reveal that opinions on affirmative action are tied more closely to opinions on race policy in general when they are formulated in terms of undeserved advantage than when formulated in terms of reverse discrimination. The differences run through virtually the entire table and are occasionally substantial. When framed as reverse discrimination, preferential treatment in the workplace correlates with the other race policy questions, on average, .14; when framed as undeserved advantage, the average correlation is .22. The comparable figures for race preference in college admissions are .16 and .27.

The same contrast shows up, though less consistently, in Table 16, which presents the results of the political correlates analysis reported earlier, this time for the two random half-samples separately. As indicated there, the correlations between political views and opinions on affirmative action are generally stronger when framed in terms of undeserved advantages than when framed in terms of reverse discrimination. The correlations bounce around a good bit, but when clear differences emerge, they go uniformly in this direction.

The differences continue in Table 17. Correlations between

Table 15

Correlations Between Opinions on Race Policy and
Opinions on Affirmative Action
By Question Frame (A vs. B)
White Respondents
(Pearson r's)

	Preference in Hiring and Promotion		Preference in College Admissions	
	A	B	A	B
Equal opportunity	.12	.13	.23	.25
Federal spending	.24	.37	.22	.36
Federal spending#	.09	.30	.18	.31
Gov't help blacks	.19	.19	.23	.36
Gov't help blacks#	.03	.16	.04	.29
Equal rights	.08	.13	.09	.17
Gov't/schools	.26	.28	.19	.37
Gov't/housing	.11	.27	.20	.15
Gov't/employment	.17	.26	.18	.32
Fair housing	.09	.12	.02	.11

Frame A = "... discriminates against whites ..."

Frame B = "... gives blacks advantages they haven't earned ..."

#taken from 1984 NES.

Table 16

Political Correlates of Opinions on Affirmative Action
 By Question Frame (A vs. B)
 White Respondents
 (Pearson r's)

	Preference in Hiring and Promotion		Preference in College Admissions	
	A	B	A	B
Party identification	.06	.22	-.05	.18
Liberal/conservative	.14	.13	-.03	.17
Gov't serv./spending#	.11	.14	.03	.20
Gov't health insur.	.09	-.02	.06	-.00
Gov't provide jobs	.16	.10	.13	.07
Abortion	.13	.03	.03	-.03
School prayer#	.06	.05	.04	-.01
Gov't help to women	.12	.11	.11	.22
Cooperate/Soviet Union	-.00	.14	.06	.11
US/Central America#	.16	.09	.00	.06
Defense spending	.14	.30	.05	.08

Frame A = " ...discriminates against whites"

Frame B = " ...gives blacks advantages they haven't earned ..."

#=reflected

Note: The political variables all come from 1984 NES.

opinions on affirmative action and opinions on "implicit race policy"--federal spending on cities, jobs, and welfare--are consistently stronger when affirmative action is framed in terms of undeserved advantage than when framed in terms of reverse discrimination. Indeed, when the central issue is whether affirmative action in employment and college admission decisions should be opposed because such policies constitute reverse discrimination, the correlations essentially disappear. But when the central issue is whether affirmative action policies should be opposed because they hand to blacks advantages they haven't earned, then those who stand against affirmative action tend to be the same people who oppose pouring federal money into cities, jobs, and welfare.

Opposing affirmative action because it gives away favors that blacks have not earned seems to us to involve moral indignation. Such opposition seems "hotter", more visceral, than does opposition based on the perception that affirmative action discriminates against whites. We can test this hunch in a rough and ready way by making use of a new battery of affect questions. In an effort to get at the affective components of opinions on affirmative action, Pilot Study respondents were asked whether they had ever experienced a variety of emotional reactions to the "preferential treatment of blacks"--whether they had ever felt angry, or hopeful, or afraid, and so on through a list of 10 discrete emotions. Table 18 presents the entire list, grouped into positive and negative emotions, and along with it, correlations between each affective reaction and opinion on affirmative action, separately within the two half-samples. These correlations support our hunch. In

Table 17

Correlations Between Opinions on Implicit Race Policy
and Opinions on Affirmative Action By Question Frame (A vs. B)
White Respondents
(Pearson r's)

	Preference in Hiring and Promotion		Preference in College Admissions	
	A	B	A	B
Spending in cities	.13	.25	.03	.18
Spending on jobs	.02	.16	.04	.05
Spending on welfare	.08	.25	.03	.20

Frame A = "... discrimination against whites."

Frame B = "... gives blacks advantages they haven't earned."

Table 18

Correlations Between Affective Reactions to "Preferential Treatment" and Opinions on Affirmative Action
By Question Frame (A vs. B)
White Respondents

	Preference in Hiring and Promotion		Preference in College Admissions	
	A	B	A	B
Angry	-.18	-.26	-.16	-.23
Afraid	-.05	-.13	-.08	-.21
Uneasy	-.13	-.27	-.11	-.19
Disgusted	-.09	-.34	-.07	-.36
Infuriated	-.06	-.23	-.14	-.23
Bitter	-.19	-.13	-.21	-.12
Hopeful	.32	.29	.38	.28
Proud	.29	.13	.12	.21
Sympathetic	.23	.20	.19	.22
Happy	.36	.36	.26	.31

Frame A = "... discriminates against whites"

Frame B = "... gives blacks advantages they haven't earned."

general, positive emotional reactions were correlated quite highly with opinions on affirmative action, and quite independently of how the affirmative action policy was framed. The negative emotions are a different story, however; negative emotions are correlated more strongly with opinions on affirmative action when such policies were framed in terms of undeserved advantage than when framed in terms of reverse discrimination. The difference is particularly acute for "disgusted": respondents who reported feeling disgust about preferential treatment of blacks were much more likely to oppose affirmative action in employment and education--but only when those policies were framed in terms of undeserved advantages (for affirmative action in employment, the two correlations are $-.34$ (B) and $-.09$ (B); for affirmative action in education, the two correlations are $-.36$ (B) and $-.07$ (A)).

As a final patch of evidence on the framing of affirmative action, consider Table 19. Given the preceding results, it will come as no great shock to discover there that opinions on affirmative action are correlated more sharply with a variety of political judgments when framed in terms of undeserved advantages than when framed in terms of reverse discrimination. Votes in the 1984 presidential election, approval of Reagan's performance as president, evaluations of Reagan, Bush, Ford, Jackson, Mondale, and Hart--all are bound up more tightly with opinions on affirmative action policies when framed as undeserved advantages. The differences run uniformly in this direction and they are occasionally considerable.

By now, the evidence is more than waist-deep. Although framing

Table 19

Correlations Between Political Judgments and Opinions on
Affirmative Action By Question Frame (A vs. B)
White Respondents
(Pearson r's)

	Frame	
	A	B
1984 vote	.09	.20
Reagan performance	.07	.33
Reagan evaluation	.15	.27
Bush evaluation	.07	.30
Ford evaluation	.08	.15
Jackson evaluation	-.17	-.22
Mondale evaluation	-.12	-.24
Hart evaluation	.03	-.09

Frame A = "... discriminates against whites."

Frame B = "... gives blacks advantages they haven't earned."

affirmative action in alternative ways does not seem to influence the overall levels of support such policies enjoy, such framing does alter in pervasive ways how people understand and react to the issue. Framed as a choice between repairing the ravages of generations of discrimination and giving away favors that blacks have not earned, affirmative action appears to engage predispositions toward race and toward politics, to elicit negative feelings associated with preferential treatment, and to carry considerable weight in political judgment. Framed as a choice between repairing the ravages of discrimination and sanctioning discrimination against whites, affirmative action does none of these things.

Which frame is better? It might be that the frame of reverse discrimination, which, according to Gamson and Modigliani's (1984) analysis, now dominates the public culture of affirmative action, has indeed trickled down successfully to us ordinary folks. Perhaps we do understand affirmative action in these terms--but these terms remove affirmative action from old and familiar ways of understanding political issues. Hence the low correlations that spill across Tables 14-18. We prefer an alternative interpretation. Although reverse discrimination may dominate elite discussion of affirmative action, that way of thinking has not yet successfully made its way to Peoria (or Ann Arbor, say). We ordinary folks continue to think about affirmative action in old and familiar ways. Elites may have abandoned the theme of undeserved advantages a decade ago, but we have been slow to get the message. Among the consequences of this are the comparatively hefty correlations running through Tables 14-18. The

undeserved advantage frame is better.

Antecedents of Opinions on Racial Policy

A second general priority is to identify the antecedents of public opinion on race. Why do some Americans ferociously oppose government efforts to reduce racial inequalities while others passionately support them? In theoretical terms, this question can be approached in quite different ways. We have identified six, summarized in schematic form in Table 19. Each of the table entries emphasizes a different motive underlying opinion on racial matters, and therefore draws attention to a different key variable.[4] Our intention here is to say a little bit about each theoretical perspective and introduce the questions that we have used to measure each. Having accomplished that, we will then assess how well each performs empirically. How well does each explain the deep divisions that run through American opinion on race policy?

The first perspective, drawn from economic styles of analysis, emphasizes self-interest as the central motive underlying public opinion on race. The general assumption is that people support policies that advance their own material interests and oppose policies that threaten them. The assumption is strong, but the available evidence is weak. Personal racial threats appear to have only faint effects on whites' race-related political attitudes (Gatlin, Giles, and Cataldo, 1978; Kinder and Rhodebeck, 1982; Kinder and Sears, 1981; Kluegel and Smith, 1983; McConahay, 1982, 1985; Sears and Allen, 1984; Sears, Hensler, and Speer, 1979). The case is not entirely closed, however, and because Kinder is among self-interest's loudest detractors, we thought it prudent to pursue the self-interest line a

Table 20

Alternative Theoretical Perspectives

Theoretical Perspective	Central Motive	Key Variable
Instrumental	Advancing self-interest	Personal racial threat
Group conflict	Protecting group privilege	Tangible threats to group
Symbolic racism	Affirming core values <u>and</u> ventilating racist sentiments	Moralistic resentments
Ideological	Ideological deduction	Views of government
Cognitive	Preserving theory	Explanations for racial differences
Cultural	Affirming core values	Individualism, egalitarianism

bit further in the Pilot Study. Table 21 displays two questions that we will use to assess whites' personal vulnerabilities to race policy. The first asks respondents to assess the likelihood that they or anyone in their family would be adversely affected by an affirmative action policy on the job; the second does the same for affirmative action in school admissions. As Table 21 shows, whites perceive such intrusions as quite probable.

Social conflict theory, the second perspective shown in Table 19²⁰, emphasizes group interests. In one version of this perspective--drawn from realistic group conflict theory and the writings of William Graham Sumner--demands and protests by blacks trigger a realistic sense of threat among whites regarding their own group's interests and privileges. In turn, this sense of threat generates whites' opposition to policies advocating change in the racial status quo (e.g., Bobo, 1983). This claim must of course be distinguished from personal racial threat. Social conflict theory emphasizes whites' sense that blacks pose a threat to their collective situation--to their economic position, status, or power.

Questions relevant to this approach were developed by Sears and Jessor and are shown in Table 22. For the most part, we will defer to their more detailed analysis and presentation. Of the six questions presented in Table 22, our analysis will make use of the first four, because these four scale nicely. We coded the individual items to the zero-one interval and then created a composite measure, called "Group Conflict," based on the respondent's average response across the four questions (Cronbach's alpha = .67).

Table 21

Self-Interest
 Questions and Marginals for White Respondents (in Percents)

Question

V1	What do you think the chances are these days that you or anyone in your family won't get a job or promotion while an equally or less qualified minority employee receives one instead? Is this very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, or very unlikely?	
	Very likely	10.1
	Somewhat likely	36.7
	Somewhat unlikely	27.0
	Very unlikely	26.2
V2	What do you think the chances are these days that you or anyone in your family won't get admitted to a school while an equally or less qualified minority employee is admitted instead? Is this very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, or very unlikely?	
	Very likely	3.7
	Somewhat likely	31.5
	Somewhat unlikely	33.0
	Very unlikely	31.8

Table 22

Group Conflict
 Questions and Marginals for White Respondents (in Percents)

Question

V1* What do you think the chances are these days that a white person won't get admitted to a school while an equally or less qualified minority person gets admitted instead? Is this very likely, somewhat likely, or not very likely to happen these days?

Very likely	26.3
Somewhat likely	50.0
Not very likely	23.7

V2* 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 minority employee gets one instead? Is this very likely, somewhat likely, or not very likely to happen these days?

Very likely	24.1
Somewhat likely	55.6
Not very likely	20.3

V3* Think about the opportunities for advancement now available to black people and to white people. These days do you think that whites would have more opportunity to advance than blacks, or would blacks have more opportunity to advance than whites?

Whites have more	56.2
Same	18.9
Blacks have more	24.9

Would you say that whites have much more, or only somewhat more opportunity than blacks?

If you had to choose, would you say that whites would have slightly more opportunity or blacks have slightly more? Would you say blacks would have much more or only somewhat more opportunity than whites?

Whites have much more	17.1
Whites have somewhat more	40.9
Whites have slightly more	14.8
Blacks have slightly more	1.6
Blacks have somewhat more	18.7
Blacks have much more	7.0

V4* I would like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: Affirmative action programs for minorities have reduced whites' chances for jobs, promotions, and admissions to schools and training programs. (Do you agree or disagree?)

Agree	64.2
Disagree	35.8

Do you agree strongly, or not strongly?

Do you disagree strongly, or not strongly?

Agree strongly	23.8
Agree not strongly	40.4
Disagree not strongly	24.2
Disagree strongly	11.5

V5 Think about your own opportunities for advancement in society compared to the opportunities available to most black people. These days, do you think you have more opportunity to advance, or less opportunity to advance than most black people?

More	67.5
Same	19.6
Less	13.2

Would you say you would have much more, or only somewhat more opportunity than blacks?

If you had to choose, would you say that you would have slightly more opportunity or blacks have slightly more?

Would you say most blacks would have much more or only somewhat more opportunity than you?

R has much more	16.0
R has somewhat more	51.9
R has slightly more	16.0
Blacks have slightly more	2.7
Blacks have somewhat more	9.9
Blacks have much more	3.4

V6 If opportunities for white people in general were to improve over the next few years, do you think that your own opportunities would get better, get worse, or stay about the same?

Get better	22.8
Same	75.4
Get worse	1.9

Do you think they would get much better, or only somewhat better?

Do you think they would get much worse, or only somewhat worse?

Get much better	2.2
Get somewhat better	20.5
Same	75.4
Get somewhat worse	1.5
Get much worse	.4

* = part of scale ("Group Conflict").

"Group Conflict" is probably too sweeping a tag for this scale. Three of the four questions focus on affirmative action policies (V1, V2, and V4), and three of the four focus almost entirely on economic competition (V2, V3, and V4). A high score on "Group Conflict" signifies that affirmative action policies are pervasive, that society allocates employment and educational opportunities and resources to blacks while denying them to equally or better-qualified whites, that the "opportunity society" is a reality for blacks and a hollow fiction for whites. With these qualifications and concretizations in mind, we will continue to refer to the scale as representing group conflict, the sense that blacks threaten whites' collective interests.

The sociocultural position claims that resistance to change in the racial status quo derives from symbolic racism: "a blend of anti-black affect and the kind of traditional American moral values embodied in the Protestant Ethic" (Kinder and Sears, 1981, p.416). Symbolic racism is the conjunction of racial prejudice and traditional American values. It is neither racism, pure and simple, nor traditional values, pure and simple, but rather the blending of the two. It is rooted both in racial fears and stereotypes and in deep-seated feelings of social morality. In this view, opposition to racial change has little to do with the tangible threats blacks might pose to personal life, and a great deal to do, instead, with prejudice and values.

To put it gently, considerable controversy currently surrounds the definition and measurement of symbolic racism (e.g., Kinder, 1986; Kinder and Sears, 1981; Bobo, 1983; Schuman, Bobo, and Steeh, 1985; Sears and Kinder, 1985; Sniderman and Tetlock, 1986). Table 23

presents the questions we included in the Pilot Study in an effort to capture this apparently elusive concept, drawn from earlier studies (particularly Kinder & Sears 1981).

Because we conceive of symbolic racism as the conjunction of prejudice and values, our questions deliberately mix racist sentiments and traditional American values, particularly individualism. As Table 23 reveals, the questions are characterized in the first place by their abstraction: the questions focus upon blacks as a social category and upon society and government as a whole. They also share a moral tone--the sense that blacks are too demanding, that they have been handed advantages, that hard work, self-discipline, and sacrifice somehow no longer count for much. Finally, none refers to any tangible threat that blacks might pose to a white's personal situation. The threat that blacks pose in these questions is symbolic, involving a violation of cherished values. These questions generally scale well; consequently, we created a composite index, called "Symbolic Racism," based on the respondent's average reply across five of the six questions shown in Table 23 (Cronbach's alpha = .62). [5]

A fourth possibility is that general ideological differences underlie public opinion on race. In this view, support for or opposition to the federal government's efforts to reduce racial inequalities may partly reflect preferences about government intervention in general. Americans who approvingly regard government as an instrument of social change may be inclined to welcome government intervention specifically on behalf of blacks. In contrast, Americans who see government as a nuisance, trampling upon individual rights and

Table 23

Symbolic Racism
 Questions and Marginals for White Respondents (in Percents)

Question

Now I am going to read several statements, as I did earlier. As you did before, please tell me whether you agree or disagree.

V1* Most blacks who receive money from welfare programs could get along without it if they tried.

(Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree strongly, or disagree somewhat with this statement?)

Agree strongly	19.8
Agree somewhat	49.6
Neither agree nor disagree	1.1
Disagree somewhat	22.9
Disagree strongly	6.5

V2 Blacks shouldn't push themselves where they're not wanted.

(Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree strongly, or disagree somewhat with this statement?)

Agree strongly	15.1
Agree somewhat	31.7
Neither agree nor disagree	1.1
Disagree somewhat	37.0
Disagree strongly	15.1

V3* Over the past few years, blacks have gotten less than they deserve.

(Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree strongly, or disagree somewhat with this statement?)

Agree strongly	8.4
Agree somewhat	31.7
Neither agree nor disagree	1.5
Disagree somewhat	36.3
Disagree strongly	22.1

V4* Government officials usually pay less attention to a request or complaint from a black person than from a white person.

(Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree strongly or disagree somewhat with this statement)?

Agree strongly	4.7
Agree somewhat	25.2
Neither agree nor disagree	.8
Disagree somewhat	41.3
Disagree strongly	28.0

V5* Irish, Italian, Jewish and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors.

(Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree strongly, or disagree somewhat with this statement?)

Agree strongly	28.7
Agree somewhat	50.4
Neither agree nor disagree	1.1
Disagree somewhat	14.9
Disagree strongly	4.9

V6* How much discrimination against blacks do you feel there is in the United States today, limiting their chances to get ahead? Would you say a lot, some, just a little, or none at all?

A lot	21.8
Some	58.3
A little	17.7
None at all	2.3

* = part of scale ("Symbolic Racism").

intruding upon private life, may be predisposed to object to government policies designed to improve the position of blacks as a matter of principle (Kessel, 1972; Kuklinski and Parent 1981).

To expect most--or even many--Americans to arrive at their opinions on racial policy by first consulting their broad views on government may seem quite unrealistic. Such an expectation is dramatically at odds with the conclusion of four decades of public opinion research that the typical American is quite innocent of such general views (Converse, 1964, 1975; Kinder, 1983). But ideological differences may contribute to opinions on racial policy among the politically sophisticated and influential, so the hypothesis seems well worth pursuing here.

As we define it, ideological views of government have three components: identification as a liberal or as a conservative (Sniderman, Brody, and Kuklinski, 1984; Conover and Feldman, 1981), judgments about the power of the federal government (Jackman, 1981; Kuklinski and Parent, 1981), and the view that collective problems are solved better at the local level. Table 24 presents the relevant questions and marginals.

A fifth perspective maintains that the racial policies Americans endorse are molded by the theories of racial differences they hold. If people see racial differences as ordained by God, then they may think it is pointless for government to intervene. If they see racial differences stemming from the failure of blacks to apply themselves, then they may regard government assistance to blacks as immoral. If they see racial differences as a result of generations of

Table 24

Views of Government
Questions and Marginals for White Respondents (in Percents)

Question		
<hr/>		
V1	In general, people getting together in their own communities can solve their problems better than the government in Washington can.	
	Agree strongly	44.6
	Agree somewhat	43.5
	Neither agree nor disagree	1.1
	Disagree somewhat	9.7
	Disagree strongly	1.1
V2	Some people are afraid the government in Washington is getting too powerful for the good of the country and the individual person. Others feel that the government in Washington is not getting too strong. Do you have an opinion on this or not?	
	Yes	60.7
	No	39.3
	What is your feeling, do you think the government is getting too powerful or do you think the government is not getting too strong?	
	Government too powerful	54.9
	Other, depends	1.9
	Government not getting too strong	43.2
V3	In general, when it comes to politics, do you usually think of yourself as a <u>liberal</u> , a <u>conservative</u> , a <u>moderate</u> , or what?	
	Yes, liberal	17.5
	Yes, moderate	34.0
	Yes, conservative	38.4
	No, never	4.1
	Don't know, no understanding	6.0

discrimination, then they may urge government assistance in compensation. In short, how people explain disparities between blacks and whites in income, status, and power may profoundly affect the degree to which they support government efforts to narrow racial differences (Apostle, Glock, Piozzo and Suelzle, 1983; Kluegel & Smith, 1986; Sniderman and Hagan, 1985).

Here we examine two versions of this approach. The first focusses on the explanations people endorse for racial differences specifically--why "white people seem to get more of the good things in life ...than black people do." A set of questions designed to measure such explanations is shown in Table 25. (If these questions look familiar, it may be because they appeared in the 1972 National Election Study.) Following the lead of Sniderman and Hagan (1985), we created four types, each representing a distinctive class of explanation for racial differences. The first is the individualist, who agrees with the notion that blacks don't try hard enough (V3 in Table 25) and denies that racial differences can be traced to white exploitation (V1); the diametrically opposed progressive, who subscribes to the view that racial differences are due to exploitation (V1) and denies the view that such differences can be explained by failures of character on the part of blacks (V3); the fundamentalist, who believes that racial differences are the handiwork of God's divine plan (V2), and not produced by either white exploitation (V1) or black indolence (V3); and finally, the historicist, who claims that racial differences are the result of generations of slavery and discrimination (V4), not white exploitation (V1), God's divine plan (V2), or black indolence

Table 25

Explanations for Racial Differences
Questions and Marginals for White Respondents (in Percents)

Question

In past studies, we have asked people why they think white people seem to get more of the good things in life in America--such as better jobs and more money--than black people do. These are some of the reasons given by both blacks and whites. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with each reason for why white people seem to get more of the good things in life.

- V1 A small group of powerful and wealthy white people control things and act to keep blacks down.

(Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree strongly, or disagree somewhat with this reason for why white people seem to get more of the good things in life?)

Agree strongly	8.2
Agree somewhat	36.0
Neither agree nor disagree	.4
Disagree somewhat	33.3
Disagree strongly	22.1

- V2 The differences are brought about by God; God made the races different as part of His divine plan.

(Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree strongly, or disagree somewhat with this reason for why white people seem to get more of the good things in life?)

Agree strongly	16.5
Agree somewhat	16.1
Neither agree nor disagree	1.1
Disagree somewhat	16.9
Disagree strongly	49.4

V3 It's really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if blacks would only try harder they could be just as well off as whites.

(Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree strongly, or disagree somewhat with this reason for why white people seem to get more of the good things in life?)

Agree strongly	21.3
Agree somewhat	38.1
Neither agree nor disagree	.7
Disagree somewhat	27.6
Disagree strongly	12.3

V4 Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class.

(Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree strongly, or disagree somewhat with this reason for why white people seem to get more of the good things in life?)

Agree strongly	23.5
Agree somewhat	48.1
Neither agree nor disagree	.4
Disagree somewhat	13.4
Disagree strongly	14.6

V5 Black Americans teach their children values and skills different from those required to be successful in American society.

(Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree strongly, or disagree somewhat with this reason for why white people seem to get more of the good things in life?)

Agree strongly	10.5
Agree somewhat	35.9
Neither agree nor disagree	3.5
Disagree somewhat	38.3
Disagree strongly	11.7

V6 Blacks come from a less able race and this explains why blacks are not as well off as whites in America.

(Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree strongly, or disagree somewhat with this reason for why white people seem to get more of the good things in life?)

Agree strongly	3.7
Agree somewhat	16.1
Neither agree nor disagree	.7
Disagree somewhat	30.0
Disagree strongly	49.4

(V3). Based on these coding rules, we found that 35.8% of the Pilot Study respondents are individualists, 20.8% are progressives, just 2.3% are fundamentalists, 12.5% are historicists, and 29.6% fall into none of the four categories. [6] In the analysis to come, we represent explanations for racial differences as a set of four dummy variables, with the suppressed reference group made up of those respondents who appear in none of the four pure types.

The second version investigates the citizen's explanations for poverty, employing a question battery developed and used effectively by Kluegel and Smith (1986). With one exception, the questions that make up this battery make no explicit reference to race; they focus instead on why "there are poor people in this country." The full battery is shown in Table 26. Just as in Kluegel and Smith's work, we find that responses to these questions scale crisply into two factors, one that focuses on internal explanations for poverty (lack of ability, loose morals, etc.), which we call Internal (Cronbach's alpha = .69) and the other that focuses on external explanations for poverty (low wages, failure of the educational system, etc.), which we call External (Cronbach's alpha = .70).

A final perspective takes the affirmation of core values to be the major motive underlying opposition to racial change. In this view, policies are supported or opposed to the degree they are seen as enhancing or violating cherished values, particularly individualism and egalitarianism. Thus it has been argued that whites support programs that foster equal opportunity for blacks out of a commitment to egalitarianism, but out of a commitment to individualism oppose

Table 26

Explanations for Poverty
 Questions and Marginals for White Respondents (in Percents)

Question

Here are some reasons some people give to explain why there are poor people in this country. The first reason is "lack of effort by the poor people themselves." Do you think this is an extremely important, very important, not very important, or not at all important reason for why there are poor people in this country?

V1* Lack of effort by the poor themselves

Extremely important	12.2
Very important	46.2
Not very important	30.5
Not at all important	11.1

V2* Lack of thrift and proper money management by poor people

Extremely important	13.3
Very important	56.8
Not very important	25.0
Not at all important	4.9

V3* Lack of ability and talent among poor people

Extremely important	11.0
Very important	58.3
Not very important	24.6
Not at all important	6.1

V4* Loose morals and drunkenness

Extremely important	12.7
Very important	39.3
Not very important	37.1
Not at all important	10.9

V5	Sickness and physical handicaps	
	Extremely important	7.1
	Very important	56.0
	Not very important	34.2
	Not at all important	2.6
V6#	Low wages in some businesses and industries	
	Extremely important	12.9
	Very important	70.5
	Not very important	15.2
	Not at all important	1.5
V7#	Failure of society to provide good schools for many Americans	
	Extremely important	12.8
	Very important	52.3
	Not very important	28.9
	Not at all important	6.0
V8#	Prejudice and discrimination against blacks.	
	Extremely important	5.0
	Very important	49.2
	Not very important	40.1
	Not at all important	5.7
V9#	Failure of private industry to provide enough jobs	
	Extremely important	9.4
	Very important	55.8
	Not very important	31.3
	Not at all important	3.4
V10#	Being taken advantage of by rich people	
	Extremely important	10.9
	Very important	33.1
	Not very important	47.7
	Not at all important	8.3
V11#	Just bad luck	
	Extremely important	4.9
	Very important	25.4
	Not very important	59.3
	Not at all important	10.4

* = part of scale ("Internal").

= part of scale ("External").

programs that guarantee racially equal results (Lipset & Schneider, 1978; Feldman, 1983a, 1983b).

Lucky for us, NES had the foresight to commission developmental research in the area of core values, with specific attention to egalitarianism and economic individualism (this developmental work is described in Feldman 1983b). The fruits of these labors are presented in Tables 27 (Egalitarianism) and 28 (Economic Individualism). In the Pilot Study data, both sets scaled adequately: Equality (Cronbach's $\alpha = .55$); Individualism ($\alpha = .61$).

What is most striking about our catalogue of antecedent variables--self-interest, group conflict, symbolic racism, ideological views of government, explanations for racial differences, explanations for poverty, egalitarianism, and economic individualism--is how ignorant we are of the relationships among them. Each theoretical perspective has its promoters and a patch of supporting evidence. But we have little research that explores in a serious way how the various key variables might be related to one another. Are the explanations that whites develop for racial differences anything more than a cover for symbolic racism? Are the threats that whites see blacks posing to their collective interests empirically distinguishable from the moralistic resentments they express when they see blacks violating cherished values? More generally, are the various antecedents, which seem conceptually distinct, also empirically distinct?

The short answers are: yes, yes and yes. The acid test here is supplied by examining how well the full set of antecedent variables explains differences in opinion on race policy. To what extent do such

Table 27

Egalitarianism
Questions and Marginals for White Respondents (in Percents)

Question		
<hr/>		
Now I am going to read several statements as I did before. After each one, please tell me whether you <u>agree</u> or <u>disagree</u> with the statement.		
V1*	This country would be better off if we worried less about how equal people are.	
	Agree strongly	24.3
	Agree somewhat	44.0
	Neither agree nor disagree	1.1
	Disagree somewhat	17.5
	Disagree strongly	13.1
V2*	If people were treated more equally in this country we would have many fewer problems.	
	Agree strongly	30.5
	Agree somewhat	41.4
	Neither agree nor disagree	.8
	Disagree somewhat	20.7
	Disagree strongly	6.8
V3*	It is not really that big of a problem if some people have more of a chance in life than others.	
	Agree strongly	12.0
	Agree somewhat	41.4
	Neither agree nor disagree	1.1
	Disagree somewhat	31.2
	Disagree strongly	14.3
V4*	Our society should do whatever is necessary to make sure everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed.	
	Agree strongly	45.0
	Agree somewhat	43.1
	Neither agree nor disagree	.4
	Disagree somewhat	10.8
	Disagree strongly	.7

V5* We have gone too far in pushing equal rights in this country.

Agree strongly	23.4
Agree somewhat	37.4
Neither agree nor disagree	.4
Disagree somewhat	24.5
Disagree strongly	14.3

V6* One of the big problems in this country is that we don't give everyone an equal chance.

Agree strongly	12.4
Agree somewhat	28.9
Neither agree nor disagree	.8
Disagree somewhat	42.9
Disagree strongly	15.0

* = part of scale ("Equality").

Table 28

Economic Individualism
Questions and Marginals for White Respondents (in Percents)

Question		
<hr/>		
Now I am going to read several statements as I did before. After each one, I would like you to tell me whether you <u>agree</u> or <u>disagree</u> with the statement.		
V1*	Most people who do not get ahead in life probably work as hard as people who do.	
	Agree strongly	23.5
	Agree somewhat	28.7
	Neither agree nor disagree	.4
	Disagree somewhat	29.1
	Disagree strongly	18.3
V2*	Any person who is willing to work hard has a good chance of succeeding.	
	Agree strongly	54.1
	Agree somewhat	37.3
	Neither agree nor disagree	.4
	Disagree somewhat	6.3
	Disagree strongly	1.9
V3*	Even if people try hard they often cannot reach their goals.	
	Agree strongly	33.5
	Agree somewhat	50.9
	Neither agree nor disagree	.4
	Disagree somewhat	11.5
	Disagree strongly	3.7
V4*	Most people who don't get ahead shouldn't blame the system; they have only themselves to blame.	
	Agree strongly	19.5
	Agree somewhat	46.4
	Neither agree nor disagree	0.0
	Disagree somewhat	25.5
	Disagree strongly	8.6

V5* Hard work offers little guarantee of success.

Agree strongly	8.2
Agree somewhat	22.8
Neither agree nor disagree	.4
Disagree somewhat	36.7
Disagree strongly	31.8

V6* If people work hard they almost always get what they want.

Agree strongly	17.7
Agree somewhat	41.0
Neither agree nor disagree	0.0
Disagree somewhat	30.1
Disagree strongly	11.3

* = part of scale ("Individualism").

differences in opinion reflect self-interest, group conflict, symbolic racism, and all the rest?

The dependent variables in this analysis are the three factor scores described earlier: "Federal Assistance", "Equal Opportunity", and "Affirmative Action". These will be the main focus of the analysis ahead. However, because we are interested in gauging the ability of the antecedent variables to explain public opinion toward a range of policy questions, we will make use of three opinion scales, also introduced earlier: "Domestic Welfare", "Social Issues", and "External Threat". (For details on their composition and creation, see footnote 2.)

The results from our meat-axe analysis are reported in Table 29. The table presents unstandardized ols coefficients, derived from regressing each of the six dependent variables, in turn, on the full set of antecedents, from self-interest through core values. This analysis of course ignores relationships among the antecedent variables and presumes that the antecedent variables are exogenous. Both moves make us nervous, but we will nevertheless crash ahead.

Consider first the three left-hand columns in Table 29, those that present the estimated effects of the various antecedent variables on opinion toward race policy. (All the variables are coded on the zero-one interval.) Looking down the three columns, several casualties become apparent, self-interest perhaps the most conspicuous. Of the six coefficients representing the effects of self-interest, 5 are sufficiently tiny to not even make the table (because they are less than their standard errors), and the sixth, which does make the table,

Table 29

Antecedents of Policy Opinion
White Respondents
(unstandardized ols regression coefficients)

Antecedents	Federal Assistance	Equal Opportunity	Affirm. Action	Domestic Welfare	Social Issues	External Threat
Self-interest						
Employment	--	--	--	--	-.058 (.047)	--
Education	--	--	-.072 (.043)	--	.051 (.049)	--
Group conflict	-.202 (.046)	-.183 (.068)	-.266 (.063)	--	.119 (.071)	-.156 (.058)
Symbolic racism	-.299 (.059)	-.325 (.088)	-.110 (.081)	.105 (.067)	--	-.079 (.075)
Views of gov. Liberal	--	-.085 (.040)	-.055 (.037)	-.048 (.030)	-.090 (.042)	--
Conservative	--	--	--	.036 (.025)	--	.037 (.028)
Innocent	-.066 (.032)	-.097 (.048)	-.065 (.045)	-.044 (.037)	--	-.100 (.041)
Community	-.125 (.040)	-.116 (.060)	-.076 (.056)	-.141 (.045)	--	--
Federal power	--	-.044 (.036)	--	--	--	--

Table 29 (continued)

	Federal Assistance	Equal Opportunity	Affirm. Action	Domestic Welfare	Social Issues	External Threat
Explanations for Racial Differences						
Individualist	.060 (.024)	.040 (.036)	.123 (.033)	.051 (.027)	--	--
Progressive	--	--	--	--	--	--
Fundamentalist	--	--	--	-.081 (.069)	--	--
Historicist	--	--	--	.041 (.035)	--	--
Explanations for Poverty						
Internal	--	--	.081 (.061)	--	-.121 (.069)	--
External	.077 (.059)	--	--	.128 (.066)	--	--
Core Values						
Equality	-.189 (.058)	-.222 (.086)	-.140 (.080)	-.352 (.065)	-.417 (.090)	-.146 (.074)
Individualism	--	.083 (.081)	--	.116 (.062)	--	.074 (.070)
N of cases	255	255	248	255	255	255
R-squared (adj)	.492	.260	.270	.277	.143	.106
S.E.	.14	.21	.19	.16	.22	.18

Note: "--" means that the coefficient < standard error.

is nevertheless small. Self-interest, as measured here, has little to do with opinions on race policy.

Nor, evidently, do white Americans deduce their opinions on racial matters from their general views about government. Opinions about whether or not the federal government is growing too powerful are generally quite irrelevant to opinions on race policy. The estimated effects of ideological identification are not inspiring either. Liberals tend to support government efforts to assure equal opportunity in education, housing, and employment more than do moderates (the suppressed reference group), but this is a small difference. Moreover, conservatives differ from moderates not at all, on any of the three measures of opinion on race policy. Actually, it is the "ideological innocents"--those who volunteer that they never use the vocabulary of liberal, moderate, and conservative, or appear so confused that the interviewer concludes that they have absolutely no understanding of this terminology--who differ reliably and consistently on race policy. Compared to moderates, ideological innocents tend to support federal assistance, equal opportunity, and affirmative action. The one clear spark in this region of Table 29 is situated within views about community decision-making. White Americans who said that problems could generally be solved better at the community level than from Washington were more likely to oppose assistance to blacks. The differences are consistent, sizeable, and particularly sizeable when, naturally enough, the race policy in question explicitly involves the intervention of the federal government. [7]

It is also clear that the explanations white Americans develop for

poverty have little (direct) force over their opinions on race policy. Coefficients in this region of the table are conspicuous primarily for their absence; the two coefficients that do show up indicate a small effect, perhaps no effect at all. So whether poverty is seen as a reflection of the depravity of the poor or of the collapse of society is evidently of little moment for opinions about policy and race.

Perhaps this failure reflects the fact that explanations for poverty make no explicit reference to race, and our equations are full of potential antecedent variables that do. Perhaps. But how white Americans explain racial differences specifically do not seem to matter much for their opinions on race policy, either. Those who push progressive, or fundamentalist, or historicist explanations for racial differences are indistinguishable in their opinions on race policy. Individualists--those who explain racial differences by denying the significance of exploitation and emphasizing instead indolence on the part of blacks--do differ consistently, the only bright spot in this part of the table. Individualists tend to oppose federal assistance to blacks, question the government's role in assuring equal opportunity, and especially, stand against affirmative action.

We have not touched upon them yet, but there are powerful effects apparent in Table 29. Group conflict supplies one such set. Those who saw blacks getting ahead and whites shunted aside were as a consequence more likely to take a hard line on race policy. The estimated effects shown in Table 29 are substantial for all three race opinions, and especially substantial in the case of affirmative action. This is not surprising--recall that the questions that go into the group conflict

scale concentrate the respondent's attention rather narrowly on affirmative action--but it is a bit troubling. The assumption of exogeneity seems most unrealistic here. Perhaps the estimated effect is so large because our analysis in effect runs independent and dependent variables together.

Another set of substantial effects in Table 29 is due to symbolic racism. The mix of racial prejudice and traditional American values that symbolic racism attempts to capture has evidently much to do with the opinions white Americans express on race policy. Symbolic racism registers especially heavily in opinions about federal assistance to blacks and the government's obligations to assure equal opportunity. Indeed, the effects associated with symbolic racism are the largest in both equations. The impact of symbolic racism diminishes appreciably in the prediction of opinions on affirmative action--but in some ways this is an illusion.

Remember that affirmative action policies were framed either as reverse discrimination or as undeserved advantage. With this in mind, and with the hunch that symbolic racism resonates much more with the moralism and indignation of undeserved advantage than with the principle of reverse discrimination, the affirmative action equation summarized in Table 29 was re-estimated, within separate half-samples for each of the two versions. The results are striking. When framed in terms of reverse discrimination, affirmative action is predicted not at all by symbolic racism. In fact, the relevant coefficient actually takes the wrong sign: $b=.077$, $s.e.=.113$. When framed in terms of undeserved advantage, however, affirmative action is predicted

powerfully by symbolic racism--more powerfully by symbolic racism than by anything else save perhaps group conflict. Now the relevant coefficient is given by: $b = -.212$, $s.e. = .111$. [8]

Finally, Table 29 also reveals that opinions on race policy are reflections in important ways of core values--particularly the value of equality. Egalitarians were more likely to support federal efforts to provide assistance to blacks, much more likely to press the government to assure equal opportunity in education, housing, and employment, and somewhat more likely to endorse affirmative action policies. To our sharp surprise, the impact of economic individualism paled by comparison. Only one coefficient makes it into the table, and it is not reliably different from zero. Perhaps the impact of individualism has already been registered in Table 29, carried by symbolic racism and individualistic explanations for racial differences. No such excuses need be offered on behalf of equality. In the collision over race policy between the two values that have run most prominently through the American political tradition, equality appears to carry the greater weight.

In sum, white Americans' opinions on race policy appear to reflect primarily: (1) perceptions of conflict between blacks and whites (group conflict); (2) moralistic resentments that mix racial prejudice and traditional American values (symbolic racism); and (3) commitment to equality as a general social principle (equality).

So much for opinion on race policy. What about opinions on government spending, the propriety of school prayer, the advisability of further US involvement in Central America, and more? The answers

are spelled out in the right-hand columns of Table 29. The coefficients presented there indicate (moving quickly now, as we are running out of everything, thank goodness) that the effects of group conflict and symbolic racism, so prominent in the explanation of opinion on race policy, now diminish precipitously. It would be troubling if this did not happen. Group conflict and symbolic racism were invented to explain racial attitudes; if they also explained opinions toward the Soviet Union, we, along with many others, would wonder what it was that we were measuring. No such specificity need we append to the effect of equality. As Table 29 shows, equality comes booming through in the explanation of opinions on domestic welfare and social issues. If anything, the impact of equality actually increases over the considerable impact it registered on race policy.

With our last gasp, we pushed the antecedents question one step back--that is, we estimated the antecedents of symbolic racism and of group conflict. These provisional, quarter-baked results are shown in Table 30. They suggest that the causes of symbolic racism are quite different from the causes of group conflict, and in ways that seem intelligible. Symbolic racism is rooted primarily in what could be called ideology. It is tightly bound up with broad ideas about society--about equality, individualism, and poverty--and has relatively little to do with the realism provided by everyday experience, as represented by self-interest. In contrast, group conflict appears to be deeply rooted in self-interest--those who feel vulnerable to the intrusions of affirmative action programs themselves also see racial conflict as pervasive--but not tied much to larger ideas about

Table 30

Antecedents of Symbolic Racism and Group Conflict
White Respondents
(unstandardized ols regression coefficients)

	Symbolic Racism	Group Conflict
Self-Interest		
Employment	.137 (.034)	.212 (.041)
Education	.019 (.036)	.216 (.043)
Views of Government		
Liberal	-.074 (.032)	-.052 (.038)
Conservative	-.001 (.026)	-.017 (.032)
Innocent	-.012 (.039)	-.099 (.047)
Federal Power	.026 (.029)	.100 (.058)
Community Problem- Solving	-.007 (.048)	.071 (.035)
Explanations for Poverty		
Internal	.086 (.053)	.026 (.063)
External	-.193 (.069)	.001 (.083)
Core Values		
Equality	.313 (.067)	.219 (.080)
Individualism	-.168 (.064)	.059 (.077)
N of cases	259	258
R-squared (adjusted)	.252	.293
S.E.	.17	.21

government and society. These results imply that opinions on race policy are fed by two quite different streams, one more symbolic and psychological, the other more realistic and social.

Recommendations

(revised in light of Pilot Study Committee discussions)

Knowing what we know now about the measurement and meaning of public opinion on race--white public opinion on race--what should we do? This final and mercifully short section draws out the implications of our results for future NES studies. Our recommendations touch three areas: opinions on race policy, antecedents of opinions on race policy, and racial differences.

Opinions on Race Policy

Our first priority is to establish and sustain a respectable complement of questions regarding public opinion on race policy. As things stand now, a single question--"Should the government in Washington make every effort to improve the social and economic position of blacks and other minority groups or should minorities help themselves?"--bears this large burden. We have no objection to this question; indeed, our analysis confirms its excellence. Our objection is to it standing alone. We have seen that relying on this single question leads to serious underestimates of the political consequence of opinion on race policy. Moreover, undertaking time series analysis based on a single item is always perilous, but especially so here. Evidence compiled from NORC, Gallup, and NES indicates that white Americans' attitudes on race have moved simultaneously in various directions over the last two decades: toward racial equality as a

matter of principle, away from racial equality on some matters of policy, and holding steady on others (Smith and Sheatsley, 1984; Schuman, Steeh, and Bobo, 1985). Attempting to chart such movement with a single question is pathetic.

With the Pilot Study results in hand, we are now in a position to recommend a set of questions that should enable NES (1) to measure with some fidelity the complexity and ambiguity that characterize white public opinion on race; (2) to estimate well the political consequences of opinion on race policy; and (3) to track the movement of public opinion over time. We recommend that beginning with the 1986 study, NES surveys should include:

a. 3 questions that tap the theme of general federal assistance:

- i. should the federal government make special efforts to help blacks? (V3 in Table 2).
- ii. should federal spending on blacks be increased? (V2).
- iii. federal government's responsibility to guarantee equal opportunity (V1).

These questions form a clean and distinct package. They follow diverse and unusually efficient formats. They are sufficiently general to resist obsolescence. They are correlated with other views on politics in intelligible ways. They predict political judgments well. And

they reflect clearly the dynamics of racial prejudice, traditional American values, group conflict, and views about the remoteness and inefficiency of the federal government, as various theories demand.

Depending on your accounting system, this request entails an increase of 1 or 2 items. Of the three questions recommended here, the first is already NES core; the second could become a 7 second addition to the federal spending battery which appears to us to be quasi-core; only the third is brand new.

b. 2 questions that tap the new politics of race, affirmative action:

- i. preferential hiring and promotion (V19).
- ii. preferential college admissions (V20).

Both these questions are new to NES.

They form a coherent package of opinions. Such opinions are correlated with but distinct from opinions about the federal government's general responsibilities to black citizens. In general, they share the virtues enumerated above: when

framed appropriately, they are tied in with other views on politics, they predict political judgments well, and they can themselves be explained rather fully and quite intelligibly. We think it essential to measure contemporary manifestations of political conflict over race. These two questions appear to us to do the job nicely.

If forced to choose between the two frames, the questions should be framed as a choice between redressing past discrimination and giving advantages to blacks they have not earned, under the assumption, supported by results reported earlier, that this framing corresponds more closely to the way most people actually think about affirmative action. We would prefer, however, not to be forced to choose. That is, we recommend continuing the framing experiment in 1986, under the assumption that the two frames represent alternative and plausible ways of thinking about affirmative action.

- c. 2 questions that tap the federal government's responsibilities to guarantee equal opportunity in specific domains, the "old" politics of race:
 1. [employment]. Some people say that

if black people are not getting fair treatment in jobs, the government in Washington ought to see to it that they do. Others feel that this is not the federal government's business...(and so on; election study appearances in 64, 68, 72, and 74).

ii. [education] Some people say that the government in Washington should see to it that white and black children go to the same schools. Others claim that this is not the government's business...(and so on; this question is a slightly modified and modernized version of a question that appeared in the election studies in 64, 66, 68, 70, 72, 74, 76, 78).

This is an important theme, but as you can see, we are not prepared to argue that the questions we tried out in the Pilot Study relevant to this theme (V6-V17) should be included in future NES surveys. Our failure of nerve has several sources: asking about what current policy is and what policy should be appears by our analysis to be a waste of resources; asking about both may induce response set problems; and it may be that asking the preference questions alone without the corresponding perception questions

alters what is being asked of respondents sufficiently that our Pilot Study results may not be a good base to predict how such questions would behave in a full blown study. But the major reason for our hesitation is that, from our point of view, past election studies provide perfectly servicable questions, and in the central domains of employment and education. The two questions shown above possess several compelling virtues: on face validity grounds, they measure the equal opportunity agenda of the civil rights movement at least as well as the questions we tried out in the Pilot Study; they have performed well in previous research--the "pilot" developmental research has been done (e.g., Carmines & Stimson 1983, 1984; Jackman 1981); and last but hardly least, including them in future NES studies would allow the resumption of their time-series, which is at the core (get it?) of the NES mission.

Antecedents of Opinions on Race Policy

Our results here emphasize the importance of racial prejudice and traditional American values, group conflict, local control, and equality as a social principle as explanations for opinion on race policy. The results appear to be clear and straightforward, our recommendations are less so.

Suppose NES were to move more decisively into the business of

explaining public opinion. (We would like to see this happen, moreover, it seems to us that it is happening: witness the exciting developmental research on core values, morality, and political knowledge.) Suppose also that one corner of public opinion that NES hoped to be able to explain concerned race policy. Under such conditions, our recommendations would be clear and straightforward.

Such a study should include:

- i. measures of group conflict (V1-V4 in Table 22).
- ii. measures of symbolic racism (V1, V3-V6 in Table 23).
- iii. a measure of local control (V1 in Table 24).
- iv. measures of equality (V1-V6 in Table 27; these questions are very likely to become core and so will be included as a matter of course in future NES studies--at least we very much hope they will become core, based on what found in the Pilot Study).

If NES decides to move no further in this direction, or decides that race is not worth special attention, then these recommendations seem luxurious, even to us. We believe that NES should move in this direction, that race is worthy of special attention, and that, should the split-sample design being talked about for 1986 be realized, that 1986 is the place to begin.

Racial Differences

To the extent that our interest is to examine the structure and impact of white racial attitudes exclusively and the antecedents to white opinion on race in particular, the narrow focus of the Pilot Study on the opinions of white respondents is appropriate. To the

extent that our focus is on the American public more generally, on the racial character of American elections, on the dynamics of the political relationship between white and black Americans, or on the opinions of black Americans themselves, the limited size of the Pilot Study sample constrains our ability to make recommendations to NES about the promise of the various measures we tested. Table 2 attests to the stark differences in the ways that blacks and whites respond to questions involving racial policy. We were unprepared for the magnitude of these differences, and their appearance here both suggests to us a caution to hold in mind when investigating American public opinion and leads us to put forward a recommendation based on this single result.

In examining the opinions of white Americans exclusively, we--consciously or unconsciously--imply that white opinion constitutes the standard for public opinion in America. This is obnoxious, and it obviously deprives us of any very detailed understanding of the ways that Americans other than white Americans think about race. It may further deprive us of the ability to apprehend the more subtle elements of the way racial attitudes influence politics: we may leave out what might constitute one of the most important correlates of or antecedents to opinion, the relationship between the attitudes and activism of white and black Americans. Black and white Americans speak to each other in some ways (or should we say, eyeing Table 2, speak past each other), but in ways we cannot assess without asking the same questions of white and black Americans. Asking some of the questions that we investigated closely in the Pilot Study, of a decent-sized sample of

black Americans, might provide some hint into what takes place in the "dialogue" between white and black America over racial policy and politics more generally. Given the limited size of the Pilot Study, we cannot offer any speculations about exactly what such an enterprise might yield, yet we want to record our sharp interest in carrying out such an enterprise in the future--say 1986, for starters.

Footnotes

1. The percentages presented in Table 2 exclude don't know responses. Such responses never exceeded 5 percent on any one question. Across all questions shown in Table 2, don't know responses averaged 1.9%.

2. Our measure of national economic conditions is based on a maximum likelihood factor analysis of the full battery of economic questions included in the the 1984 National Election Study. It depends primarily on answers to three questions about the national economy (one global, one concerning employment, and the third about inflation), coded on the zero-one interval, with 1.0 representing the rosy end of the continuum and 0.0 representing the gloomy end (see Kinder, Adams, & Gronke 1985 for details).

Our measure of party identification is built out of the standard series. It distinguishes among Democrats (Strong Democrats, Weak Democrats, and Leaning Democrats, coded 1), Independents with no partisan leanings (coded .5), and Republicans (Strong Republicans, Weak Republicans, and Leaning Republicans, coded 0).

We also created three measures of opinions on government policy on matters other than race. The first, External Threat, is

based on answers given to three questions: one having to do with whether government spending on defense should be increased or decreased, another with whether the United States should become more or less involved in the internal affairs of Central America, and the third with whether the United States should cooperate more or become tougher in its dealings with the Soviet Union. The second, Domestic Welfare, is also based on answers to three questions: one that asks respondents to choose between an increase in government services as against cuts in spending, the second asks whether medical expenses should be subsidized by government or covered by private plans, and the third asks whether the government in Washington should provide a job and a good standard of living for every citizen or whether citizens should make their own way. The third, Social Issues, is also based on answers to three questions: one that asks whether government assistance to women should be increased or decreased, the second whether or not prayer should be permitted in public schools, and the third asks about the legality of abortion. Respondents who said they didn't know or who admitted that they hadn't thought about an issue were coded into the middle position. All three indexes reflect average responses across the three questions, coded onto the zero-to-one interval, with 1.0 representing the conservative position and 0.0 representing the liberal.

Finally, in earlier analysis, our equations also included several demographic facts of potential political importance; sex,

region, and religion. Of these, only religion proved to be significant, and so is included in the final versions of our equations. Religion is represented as a set of four dummy variables, each coded 0, 1: Catholic, Jew, None, Other. (Protestant is the suppressed or should we say repressed reference group).

With the exception of the race opinion variables, all variables, dependent and independent, are drawn from the 1984 National Election Study.

3. In contrast to the results shown in Table 13, the support black respondents gave to affirmative action was noticeably influenced by the question frames. Blacks supported preferential employment practices overwhelmingly when the issue was posed in terms of reverse discrimination (90%), but only narrowly when posed in terms of undeserved advantages (53.3%) a statistically significant difference (Chi-Square with 1 degree of freedom = 3.71, prob. = .05). Similarly though less dramatically, blacks supported colleges setting aside places for blacks more when the opposition to the policy was justified in terms of reverse discrimination (83.3%) than when justified in terms of undeserved advantages (66.7%), a difference that does not reach statistical significance (Chi-Square with 1 degree of freedom = .96, prob. = .33). These contrasts are based, perhaps precariously, on a mere handful of black respondents. Nevertheless, they suggest to us that raising

the issue of undeserved advantage so starkly, as our questions do, may make it difficult for black respondents to express their felt support for affirmative action.

4. In an earlier proposal to the NES Board, we identified yet another theoretical perspective, the "psychodynamic." This position treats political opinions as though they are the playthings of the mind's inner conflicts. It is illustrated best by The Authoritarian Personality (Adorno et al, 1950), which insisted that political beliefs, and racial prejudices in particular, are deeply entwined with personality, by Lane's (1962) account of working class men coping with the burdens of freedom, and by Sullivan and colleagues (Sullivan, Marcus, Feldman, and Pierson, 1981) analysis of the psychological roots of political intolerance. Notwithstanding these admirable illustrations, we excluded the psychodynamic perspective from consideration here on two grounds: because there is as yet no convincing evidence linking psychological insecurities to opinions on racial policy specifically and because we would rather devote our limited resources to the more proximal and explicitly political antecedents of public opinion on race set out in Table 20.

5. The inclusion of V6 in the symbolic racism scale supports McConahay's (1982, 1986) insistence that symbolic racism be defined in part by the belief that racial discrimination is a thing of the past.

6. In their analysis of the 1972 National Election Study, using the same questions and the identical coding rules, Sniderman and Hagan (1985) uncovered fewer progressives (11.1% vs. our figure of 20.3%) and historicists (9.1% vs. 12.5%), about the same number of individualists (37.1% vs. 35.8%), a few more people who fall into none of the four types (35% vs. 29.6%), and many more fundamentalists (7.8% vs. 2.3%). These differences probably reflect both the liberalization of racial opinion between 1972 and 1985-1986 and differences in the two samples.

7. Contrary to expectation, none of the effects just described was changed when the equations were re-estimated, this time including only the college educated. We did so with the expectation that the effects due to general views about government would be enhanced among the college-educated, who presumably are more likely actually to possess such views. Our expectation proved to be utterly incorrect

8. In the interests of parsimony, variables that clearly had no effect on opinions toward affirmative action were first deleted from the equations. Except for the sharp difference in the impact due to symbolic racism, noted in the text, the two equations yielded similar estimates.

Table A3

Intercorrelations Among Opinions on Race Policy
Whites
(Pearson r 's)

	1	2*	3	4*	5*	6*	7*	8	9	10
1:Equal rights	-	.04	.19	.25	.15	.18	.24	.06	.14	.06
2:Equal opportunity*	.20	-	.39	.36	.31	.30	.35	.26	.14	.26
3:Federal spending on blacks	.20	.35	-	.53	.34	.43	.51	.15	.35	.35
4:Gov't help to blacks*	.21	.39	.48	-	.44	.55	.55	.16	.30	.37
5:Govt's role in school discrim.*	.29	.34	.33	.36	-	.46	.56	.14	.29	.28
6:Govt's role in housing discrim.*	.37	.31	.38	.27	.46	-	.66	.22	.31	.41
7:Govt's role in job opportunity*	.47	.36	.37	.37	.54	.63	-	.20	.34	.36
8:Community fair-housing law	.19	.22	.13	.14	.14	.13	.17	-	.09	.11
9:Affirm.action-preferent. hiring	.09	.15	.36	.23	.27	.19	.26	.10	-	.48
10:Affirm.action-college admiss.	.09	.25	.34	.30	.30	.19	.25	.08	.50	-

*Correlations below the diagonal ignore respondents' views of current government policy (N=292); correlations above the diagonal include, where available, the differences between respondents' views of what current government policy is and what government policy should be (N=230).

Table A4

Maximum Likelihood Factor Analysis of Opinions on Race Policy
 (Estimates Based on Variance-Covariance Matrix)
 White Respondents

Variable	Factors			Reliability
	(1)	(2)	(3)	
	Coef. S.E.	Coef. S.E.	Coef. S.E.	
Equal opportunity	.156 (.021)			.245
Federal spending	.216 (.020)			.491
Gov't help	.176 (.015)			.584
Gov't/school discrimination		.147 (.015)		.408
Gov't/housing discrimination		.170 (.013)		.599
Gov't/job opportunity		.200 (.014)		.729
Preferential hiring			.172 (.020)	.417
Preferential college admiss.			.245 (.056)	.553
			Total =	.959

Chi-Square with 17 degrees of freedom = 20.91 (prob.=.231)

Adjusted goodness of fit = .956

Factor Correlations		
	1	2
2	.854	
3	.657	.618

Table A5

Political Correlates of Opinions on Race Policy
 White Respondents
 (Pearson r's)

	Equal Rights	Equal Rights#	Gov't Help to Blacks	Gov't Help to Blacks#	Gov't/ School Discrim.	Gov't/ School Discrim.#	Gov't/ Housing Discrim.	Gov't/ Housing Discrim.#	Gov't/ Job Oppor.	Gov't/ Job Oppor.#
Party Identification	.23	.29	.21	.29	.15	.18	.16	.18	.22	.22
Liberal/Conservative	.21	.18	.16	.18	.21	.22	.03	.10	.08	.12
Gov't Serv./Spending*	.22	.24	.22	.28	.23	.25	.16	.23	.18	.23
Gov't Health Insurance	.24	.20	.09	.09	.14	.13	.01	-.03	.09	.10
Gov't Provide Jobs	.33	.23	.26	.27	.37	.25	.23	.21	.30	.23
Abortion	-.06	.24	-.05	-.01	.11	.09	.10	.02	.06	-.04
School Prayer*	.09	.09	.19	.24	.06	.09	.11	.15	.14	.16
Gov't Help to Women	.27	.18	.35	.33	.18	.19	.20	.20	.24	.22
Cooperate w/Soviet Union	.10	.07	.24	.32	.14	.13	.22	.31	.21	.27
U.S./Central America*	.13	.11	.13	.17	.08	.13	.12	.09	.11	.13
Defense Spending	.11	.15	.21	.29	.10	.19	.15	.17	.14	.21

Note: The political variables all come from 1984 NES.

* = reflected

= difference score.

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