

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF WHITE YOUTHS' RACIAL ATTITUDES: EVIDENCE FROM A NATIONAL SURVEY

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INTRODUCTION

Examinations of white's racial attitudes have played a prominent role in the sociological literature on race and ethnic relations. This focus on white's racial attitudes can be traced to Gunnar Myrdal's classic work *An American Dilemma* (1944, li) in which he focused on "what goes on in the minds of white Americans." Today, the sociological literature abounds with studies investigating the social determinants of white's racial attitudes. For the most part, however, these studies have focused exclusively on adults' racial attitudes. With some notable exceptions, there is less information available about the social determinants of young whites' racial attitudes.

This omission is an especially serious one because previous research suggests that late adolescence and young adulthood represent an important period for forming enduring attitudes. As the final report for President Clinton's Initiative on Race (1998, 8) states "young Americans are this nation's greatest hope for realizing the of goal of one America. Young people must be engaged in efforts to bridge racial divides and promote racial reconciliation." Ignoring youth's "perceptions and voices" is, as one recent study of young people succinctly

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ated, a mistake (Miller & Clark, 1997, 262). Unfortunately, we know far too little about the social determinants of white youth's racial attitudes and thus even less about the possible future of race relations in the United States.

Studying white youth's racial attitudes today is not only important so that we may understand their unique perspectives but also because doing so provides an opportunity to gain insight into larger racial processes. A number of researchers have recently argued that white's negative racial attitudes have shifted from overt expressions to more subtle and covert forms (Bonilla-Silva & Lewis, 1999; Bobo & Smith, 1999; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1991; McConahay, 1986). Bobo and Kluegel (1997, 95) describe the shifting pattern in this manner,

As Jim Crow racism lost its embeddedness in the U.S. economic and political institutions, its ideological tenets increasingly came to be seen as inconsistent with U.S. values. Accordingly, support for Jim Crow items on national surveys progressively declined through the 1960s and 1970s.

Authors have variously named these new forms of racism (e.g. "new racism," "symbolic racism," "color-blind racism," "laissez-faire racism," "aversive racism," "modern racism") but all agree that traditional measures of racial attitudes cannot capture them (Bobo, Kluegel & Smith, 1997; Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000; Gould, 1999; Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986; McConahay, 1986). Thus, for example, while some argue that traditional survey items show an overwhelming liberalization in racial thinking, these authors argue instead that the change in racism and racial attitudes is one of kind rather than of degree. If these arguments are correctly documenting new patterns in racial attitudes, we should be able to see such patterns in studies of youth. This is true, in large part, because as some have put it, late adolescence constitutes "the impressionable years" when attitudes are most susceptible to influence (Alwin & Krosnick, 1991; Alwin, Cohen & Newcomb, 1991; Krosnick & Alwin, 1989) and when the sociocultural environment may be most powerful in terms of having a lasting impact across the life span (Schuman & Scott, 1989). Thus studies of young whites' racial attitudes offer a way of testing new theories about shifting patterns of white racial attitudes, to do this however, they must include both traditional and contemporary measures.

This article examines the multiple potential sources of white youth's racial attitudes. It extends previous research by using both national data and a broader range of measures (i.e., contemporary and traditional) of racial attitudes than have been used in the past. Furthermore, by considering the influence of each social determinant on white youth's racial attitudes singularly and in combination I follow closely the guide outlined by Gordon Allport (1954, 218) against looking for the sources of negative racial attitudes in a "single

sovereign explanation." The two specific questions that guide this study are: (1) What are the social determinants of white youth's racial attitudes today? (2) Are the associations between the social determinants and white youth's racial attitudes similar or different for traditional and contemporary racial attitudes?

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Previous investigations have identified a number of important social determinants of white youth's racial attitudes (Bullock, 1976, 1978; Johnson & Marini, 1998; Patchen, 1982; Regens & Bullock, 1979; Scott & McPartland, 1982; St. John, 1975; Useem, 1972).¹ These social determinants can be classified into three categories: (1) social background, (2) social values, and (3) academic orientation. In the following section, I briefly discuss each factor and suggest how it is related to white youth's racial attitudes.

Social Background

Gender

A number of studies have shown that males tend to be more racially prejudiced than females (Bullock, 1976, 1978; Dentler & Elkins, 1967; Essed, 1997; Furnham & Gunter, 1989; Gottlieb & TenHouten, 1965; Johnson & Marini, 1998; Patchen, 1982; Scott & McPartland, 1982; Useem, 1972). These differences have been found in cross-national surveys, national surveys, regional surveys, and even ethnographic studies of students. For example, one recent ethnographic study found "that racial insults, in both same-gender and cross-gender situations, mostly involve white adolescent males" (Essed, 1997, 149). Not all studies, however, have found gender differences. For example, other work (both ethnographic and survey) has found that gender and racial attitudes are unrelated among white youth (Regens & Bullock, 1979; Pinderthughes, 1997).

Socioeconomic Status

Socioeconomic status (SES) as measured by educational attainment is positively related to racial attitudes, such that a higher level of educational attainment is associated with lower racial prejudice (Schaefer, 1996; Schuman, Steeh, Bobo & Krysan, 1997). Previous research on young whites' racial attitudes typically support the general finding that high socioeconomic status is associated with lower racial prejudice (Bullock, 1976, 1978; Dentler & Elkins, 1967; Glock, Wuthnow, Piliavin & Spencer, 1975; Regens & Bullock, 1979; Scott & McPartland, 1982; Useem, 1972). However, some research has found no

association between SES and white youth's racial attitudes (Lombardi, 1963; Armor, 1972). It is unclear why these disparate findings occurred.

Urbanicity

Louis Wirth's (1938) classic statement, "Urbanism as a way of life," argued that urbanism, measured in terms of population size, increased tolerance (see also Milgram, 1970; Stouffer, 1955). Research that has examined urban-rural differences in white adults' racial attitudes has found that residents of large urban areas are more racially tolerant than are residents of rural areas (Abrahamson & Carter, 1986; Tuch, 1987; Wilson, 1985). However, because research on white youth's racial attitudes has frequently been limited to a specific locale (e.g. Bullock, 1976; Olsen, 1997; Patchen, 1982; Pinderhughes, 1997), little is known about urban-rural differences in young white's racial attitudes. The evidence that is available is consistent with findings for white adults (Bullock, 1978; Regens, & Bullock, 1979).

Region

Numerous studies have shown important regional differences in white adult's racial attitudes (Abrahamson & Carter, 1986; Glaser, 1994; Middleton, 1976; Schuman, Steeh, Bobo & Krysan, 1997; Tuch, 1987; Tuch & Martin, 1997; Wilson, 1986). In general, southerners are more racially prejudiced than are non-southerners. Regional differences in white youth's racial attitudes have not been examined in part again because most studies of white youth's racial attitudes focus on a specific geographic location or area (Bullock, 1976; Olsen, 1997; Patchen, 1982; Pinderhughes, 1997; Schofield, 1982; Wells & Crain, 1997). The one study that has used nationally representative data found that white southern students were more racially intolerant than their northern counterparts (Scott & McPartland, 1982).

One weakness in this literature is that most studies have treated the southern region as a monolith. There is increasing evidence from studies of white adult's racial attitudes that such treatment is problematic (Glaser, 1994; Tuch & Martin, 1997). Since the early works of Dollard (1937), Davis, Gardner and Gardner (1941), Johnson (1941), and Key (1949) the "black belt" or "deep south" has been characterized as having a distinctive racial climate. According to Key (1949, 5) "it is the whites of the black belt who have the deepest and most immediate concern about the maintenance of white supremacy." Historically, the Deep South has had a higher rate of minority lynchings, higher proportion of African American residents, and more racially conservative whites than the peripheral states. Recent investigations continue to support such a distinction (see Glaser, 1994; Tuch & Martin, 1997).

Social Values

Political Ideology

Not surprisingly, prior research has shown that the politically conservative are more racially prejudiced than are their liberal counterparts (Carmines & Stimson, 1989; Kinder & Sanders, 1996; Sniderman & Piazza, 1993; Sniderman, Tetlock, Carmines & Peterson, 1994). In contrast, one recent study has not found the above pattern, Abramowitz (1994) found little evidence of an association between white racial attitudes and political orientation. Though most of this research has been conducted among adults, there is evidence that young people are increasingly politically aware and active (Hepburn, 1985; Kinder & Sears, 1985; Sigel & Hoskin, 1981; Travers, 1982). In fact, the limited information we have available on white youth's racial attitudes shows that the politically conservative express greater racial intolerance (Johnson & Marini, 1998; McClelland & Auster, 1990).

Religiosity

Despite the fact that several of the world's major faiths ascribe to the principle that people should accept others unconditionally, without regard to their race, prior research shows that religious people are more prejudiced than are non-religious people (Allport & Kramer, 1946; Allport, 1966; Allport & Ross, 1967; Batson & Ventis, 1982; Batson & Burris, 1994; Gorsuch, 1988; Gorsuch & Aleshire, 1974).

In contrast, most previous research on young people's religiosity has found no association between religiosity and racial prejudice (Lombardi, 1963; Patchen, 1982; Useem, 1972). However, these studies either utilized limited measures of religiosity (e.g. church attendance) or focused solely on denominational affiliation. These measures are problematic in light of the simple fact that many young people have little control over their denominational affiliation or whether or not they attend church. As one recent study noted, "children normally adopt the given religion(s) and denomination(s) of their parents, rather than converting to something else or constructing a purely personal religion. Any changes will usually come in adolescence and adulthood" (Furnham & Stacey, 1991, 113). On the other hand young people are likely to have control over their assessment of religion's importance to them.

In fact, research has found that religious importance is a more reliable indicator of adolescent religiosity than is church attendance (Benson, Donahue & Erickson, 1989; Johnstone, 1992). The distinction here between young people's self-reported religious importance versus self-reported religious attendance and affiliation is consistent with Allport and Ross' (1967) distinction between extrinsic (i.e. institutionalized or utilitarian) versus intrinsic (i.e.

interiorized or committed) religiosity. Allport (1954, 451-456) hypothesized that an institutionalized religious orientation (e.g. extrinsic religiosity) would increase racial prejudice whereas an interiorized religious orientation (e.g. intrinsic religiosity) would reduce racial prejudice. Opposed to studies using extrinsic measures of young people's religiosity (e.g. attendance and affiliation) those using intrinsic measures of religiosity (e.g. religious importance) have found quite different patterns of association. For example, two studies that used an intrinsic measure of young people's religiosity found a positive association between religiosity and racial tolerance (Bullock, 1976; Johnson & Marini, 1998). Higher levels of religiosity (using a combination of religious importance and preference) were associated with greater racial tolerance.

Academic Orientation

Academic Achievement (Grades)

Students of high academic achievement generally have more positive racial attitudes (Bullock, 1976; Dentler & Elkins, 1967; Glock, Wuthnow, Piliavin & Spencer, 1975; Regens & Bullock, 1979; Singer, 1967; St. John, 1975; Useem, 1972). Bullock (1976, 280) explains these patterns stating, "perhaps poor [achieving] students, like lower-status people, feel more threatened." Consistent with this view is other work that shows that downward mobility in academic status is associated with increased racial intolerance (Glock, Wuthnow, Piliavin & Spencer, 1975; Lombardi, 1963). However, other studies have found that academic achievement was not related to racial prejudice (Patchen, 1982). One recent study of high achieving white students (i.e. grade point average of a "B" or higher) found that racial prejudice had increased between 1997 and 1998 (Blair, 1998). Thus, there is some evidence to suggest that the relationship between academic achievement and white youth's attitudes is diminishing or possibly reversing.

Academic Track

If academic achievement is associated with white youth's racial attitudes academic tracking is also likely to be related. Academic tracking refers to the grouping of students in classes according to academic achievement. Academic tracking is important because it oftentimes leads to resegregation by race in schools (see Epstein, 1985; Oakes, 1985; Patchen, 1982; Schofield, 1989). In light of the important role of academic tracking in American high schools and its influence on resegregation by race within schools, it is important to investigate the relationship between academic tracking and white youth's racial attitudes. To date, relatively little is known about the relationship between academic tracking and white youth's racial attitudes.

Educational Aspirations

White students' concern for doing well in school is also related to their racial attitudes. For instance, past research has shown that white students that have aspirations to attend a four-year college were more racially tolerant than their peers who did not have such aspirations (Glock, Wuthnow, Piliavin & Spencer, 1975; Patchen, 1982). Although achievement and aspirations are collinear, previous research has shown that controlling for academic achievement does not significantly reduce the association between academic aspirations and white youth's racial attitudes. Therefore, in the present study I examine the relationship between college aspiration and white youth's racial attitudes.

*Truancy*²

There is some evidence linking poor school attendance and/or dropping out to white youth's racial attitudes (Macleod, 1995; Patchen, 1982; Pinderhughes, 1997; Wang, 1994). For instance, one recent study of white youth's racial attitudes found that, "school-attending white young people interviewed at two separate high schools in southern Brooklyn displayed significantly more tolerant attitudes than did at-risk teenagers who had dropped out of school (Pinderhughes, 1997, 93)." Moreover, recent research shows that poor school attendance is an important precursor to, or risk factor for, dropping out (Jordan, Lara & McPartland, 1996; Voelkl, Welte & Wiecek, 1999). In the realm of race relations it is important to note that many young whites who are involved in overtly racist organizations, such as the skinheads, also attend school irregularly or have dropped out altogether (see Finnegan, 1998; Wooden, 1995).

Conceptual and Methodological Limitations

Overall, previous research on the social determinants of young white's racial attitudes has several important drawbacks. First, when young people's racial attitudes have been examined, the focus has largely been on younger children (Connolly, 1998; Holmes, 1995; Schofield, 1982; Troyna & Hatcher, 1992). As Pinderhughes (1993, 480) explains, "little has been written about adolescence, although this is obviously a crucial period for identity development and attitude formation." Second, when studies focus explicitly on white youth's racial attitudes they tend to be based on case studies or representative samples from a geographically limited area that are not well suited for generalizing to the nation as a whole (e.g. Bullock, 1976; Crull & Burton, 1985; Glock, Wuthnow, Piliavin & Spencer, 1975; Lombardi, 1963; Olsen, 1997; Patchen, Hoffman & Brown, 1977; Patchen, 1982; Pinderhughes, 1997; Schofield, 1982; Wells & Crain, 1997). Third, most of the studies examining the social determinants of white

youth's racial attitudes are more than a decade old (Bullock, 1976, 1977, 1978; Chesler, Wittes & Radin, 1968; Glock, Wuthnow, Piliavin & Spencer, 1975; Lombardi, 1963; St. John, 1975; Patchen, 1982; Regens & Bullock, 1979; Scott & McPartland, 1982; Useem, 1972). In fact, the only *national* study to explore the social determinants of white youth's racial attitudes, that I was able to identify, is nearly two decades old (see Scott & McPartland, 1982). Fourth, because the data are a decade or two old much of this work has exclusively focused on measures of traditional racial attitudes. In light of increasing evidence that the expression of racial attitudes has shifted from overt (e.g. traditional) to covert (e.g. contemporary) forms, there is reason to question the reliability of previous research findings which rely solely on traditional measures (Bobo, Kluegel & Smith, 1997; Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1991; Kinder & Sanders, 1996; Pettigrew, 1985; Sears & Kinder, 1971). In sum, as a result of these limitations, much of what is known regarding white youth's racial attitudes is regionally specific, unreliable, does not generalize to the larger white adolescent population, and is not current – a fact that is increasingly problematic given the rapid changes in the racial demography of the U.S.

Measuring Contemporary Racial Attitudes among White Youth

As stated earlier, several authors have recently suggested that we need to reconceptualize and refine our measurement of racial attitudes to incorporate the changing forms of their expression (Bobo, Kluegel & Smith, 1997; Bonilla-Silva & Lewis, 1999; Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1991; McConahay, 1986). For example, Lawrence Bobo and his colleagues have defined these new forms as "laissez-faire racism." They, as well as many others, have argued that in order to tap into these new racial forms, we need to use new measures. Traditional measures of racial attitudes only capture old forms. Thus, they do not tell us whether or not there is more or less racism, just whether there is more or less of a particular kind. Moreover, whites' "resistance . . . to ameliorating the U.S. racist social conditions and institutions (Bobo, Kluegel & Smith, 1997, 16)" is increasingly being expressed in passive and less explicit ways. For instance, large numbers of whites recognize the persistence of racial inequality but are unwilling to support – i.e. passively resist – any actions that seek to redress this inequality. As opposed to in the past when white resistance was overt and often loud, if not violent, today most white resistance is covert and passive. In many ways, racial apathy may be an especially good way to conceptualize this contemporary form of white racial resistance – what Bobo and his colleagues have labeled *laissez-faire racism*. The connection that I am making here between racial apathy

and racial attitudes is not new. In Daniel Katz's (1960) classic statement entitled "The functional approach to the study of attitudes" he writes,

Most research on attitudes has been directed at beliefs concerning the undesirable character of minority groups or of deviants, with accompanying feelings of distrust, contempt, and hatred. Many attitudes, however, are not the projection of repressed aggression but are expressions of apathy or withdrawal. The individual protects himself from a difficult or demanding world and salvages his self-respect by retreating within his own shell (Katz, 1960, 182).

Here Katz argues that apathy is not truly a lack of opinion about a group, but an expression of a particular kind of dislike. As one recent analyst pointed out, "very often, when people say they don't feel anything . . . it can mask and underlie great cruelty . . . [and] can shape how [individuals] behave in powerful ways (Johnson, 1997, 66)." If Bobo, Bonilla-Silva, Kinder and others are correct that in the current post-civil-rights moment a subtle and covert racial rhetoric has largely replaced the overt expression of racial animus then racial apathy may in fact be one form in which racial distaste is now expressed.

This is likely to be especially true for white youth. As opposed to their parents, members of the baby boom generation, who grew up during a period in which there was increased societal wide social liberalism and overt discrimination against racial minorities, today's white youth grew up during a period of increased social conservatism. Omi and Winant (1994, 113) have described the social climate during this period as being dominated by "a new mood of 'social meanness' . . . [where] many Americans resented having to provide for the 'underprivileged'" – especially racial minorities. Here I am building on previous political socialization research that argues that the historical era and the sociopolitical context in which adolescence are socialized influences their political views and thus creates distinctive differences among birth cohorts (Alwin, Cohen & Newcombe, 1991; Alwin, 1998; Jennings & Niemi, 1975). Therefore, this pattern of passive and covert expressions of white resistance or *laissez-faire racism* – what I will measure here as racial apathy – is likely to be more pronounced among younger whites than older ones.

HYPOTHESES

Based on the existing literature, I formulated several hypotheses about the social determinants of white youth's racial attitudes.

H₁. I hypothesize that males will be more racially intolerant than females.

H_2 . I hypothesize that white youth with more well-educated parents will be more racially tolerant than their peers whose parents are less well-educated.

H_3 . I hypothesize that white youth residing in the "Deep South" will be more racially intolerant than their peers living outside of the "Deep South."

H_4 . I hypothesize that white youth located in urban areas will be more racially tolerant than their peers living outside of urban areas.

H_5 . I hypothesize that politically conservative white youth will be more racially intolerant than their politically liberal peers.

H_6 . I hypothesize that more religious white youth will be more racially tolerant than their less religious peers.

H_7 . I hypothesize that high achieving white youth will be more racially tolerant than their low achieving peers.

H_8 . I hypothesize that white youth enrolled in the "college prep" track will be more racially tolerant than their peers enrolled in lower academic tracks (e.g. general and vocational).

H_9 . I hypothesize that white youth who aspire to attend college will be more racially tolerant than their peers who do not.

H_{10} . I hypothesize that white youth who miss school often will be more racially intolerant than their peers who do not.

H_{11} . I hypothesize that the social determinants of white youth's racial attitudes will be more strongly linked to traditional forms of racial attitudes (e.g. social distance attitudes) than contemporary forms of racial attitudes (e.g. racial apathy and concern for race relations).

Consistent with this view, I also expect the explanatory power (i.e. R-square) of the social determinants will be larger for traditional prejudice than for contemporary prejudice. This is expected because I argue that the expression of contemporary prejudice is more generally held (i.e. hegemonic) across various subgroups of white youth today than is the expression of traditional prejudice (see Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000; MacLeod, 1995; Pinderhughes, 1997; Wellman, 1993). Consequently, subgroup differences should be more apparent on traditional rather than on contemporary measures of racial attitudes.

METHODS

Sample

In order to test these hypotheses I use data from the 1998 University of Michigan's Monitoring the Future Survey (MTF). MTF is a repeated cross-sectional survey of high school seniors that has been conducted annually since 1975. In the spring of each year, high school seniors complete a questionnaire focused largely on drug use, which also includes a wide range of items concerning student's racial attitudes, interracial contact, and perceptions of race relations. The design and methods of the study are summarized briefly below; a more detailed description is available elsewhere (see Bachman, Johnston & O'Malley, 1996). Each year, a three-stage national probability sample is drawn from the 48 coterminous states, and questionnaires are administered in approximately 135 high schools (Kish, 1965). First, particular geographic regions are selected; next, schools are selected; and finally, students are selected from within each school. This procedure has yielded nationally representative samples of approximately 16,000 high school seniors annually since 1975.

Students complete self-administered, machine readable questionnaires during a normal class period. In 1998 the questionnaire response rate was 85%. Absence on the day of data collection is the primary reason that students are missed; it is estimated that less than 1% of students refuse to complete the questionnaire. While approximately 16,000 respondents are surveyed each year, for the purposes of this analysis, the format of the questionnaire results in a sample size that is only about one-sixth this size (six different questionnaire forms are used each year, each administered to a random one sixth of the sample, prior to 1989 MTF used only five forms). While sociodemographic measures appear in all forms, other items of interest for the present study, such as student's racial attitudes and perceptions of race relations appear in only two forms: form 3 (approximate $N = 1,721$) and form 5 (approximate $N = 1,733$); accordingly, analyses presented here are based on a random one-third of the total sample. All analyses use sample weights to take into account school sample sizes, as well as variations in selection probabilities that occurred at earlier stages of the sampling procedures.³ Given the focus of the present paper on white youth's racial attitudes, only data from white youth are analyzed.

Social and Demographic Characteristics of Sample

Demographically, the sample is quite diverse. The sample contains equal numbers of young men and women. There is also considerable variability in these

white youth's parents' education; however, a majority of their parents have at least completed high school and a substantial proportion have some college experience or more. In terms of region, 7% of the white youth live in the Deep South, a little more than a quarter reside in the Outer South (28%) and Midwest (31%) respectively, approximately 16% live in the West, and another 18% live in the Northeast. A little less than a quarter of white youth live in large urban areas (Metropolitan Statistical Areas or MSAs), approximately half live in medium sized MSAs, 13% live in small cities, and another 14% reside in either small towns or rural communities. In terms of political ideology, most white youth consider themselves politically moderate (42%), approximately 29% are conservative, and another 29% are liberal. According to the data a majority of white youth are somewhat religious. For example, 58% report that religion is either "very important" or "pretty important." A little less than one in five of white youth (17%) report having grades of "Ds and Cs," 49% "Bs," and 34% "As" in high school. In addition, a majority report being enrolled in college preparatory classes (58%), another third are enrolled in general education (28%), and 14% are enrolled in vocational classes. Given the levels of academic achievement reported, it is not surprising that three quarters of these white youth expect to attend a four-year college or university (76%). Finally, the majority of the white youth surveyed report never having missed a day of school in the past academic year (66%). Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for the dependent and independent variables used in this study.

MEASURES

Dependent Variables

Five dependent variables are used to investigate white youth's racial attitudes, including attitudes toward integration, attitudes toward segregation, assessment of black-white relations, concern for race relations, and racial apathy.

*Social Distance Attitudes*⁴

Racial prejudice contains both cognitive and affective dimensions (Allport, 1954). Yet, according to Pettigrew (1997, 76) researchers over the last couple of decades have "focused almost exclusively on the cognitive component of [racial] prejudice." Pettigrew (1997, 89) further argues that "the reassertion of emotion into the study of prejudice represents a more comprehensive approach." Social distance sentiment is an important affective component of racial prejudice (see Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1980; Bobo & Hutchings, 1996; Bogardus, 1925, 1928, 1933, 1967; Schuman, Steeh, Bobo & Krysan, 1997). The Monitoring the Future

Table 1. Means, Ranges, and Standard Deviations of Measures Used in Analyses.

Variables	Range	Mean	S.D.
Integration	(1-4)	3.20	0.55
Segregation	(1-4)	2.84	0.75
Racial Apathy	(1-5)	2.29	1.01
Concern for Race Relations	(1-4)	2.54	1.01
B/W Relations worse	(1-5)	2.37	0.99
Gender (1=Male)	(0-1)	0.50	0.50
Parents' education	(1-5)	3.17	1.10
Northeast	(0-1)	0.18	0.39
Midwest	(0-1)	0.31	0.46
West	(0-1)	0.16	0.36
Outer South	(0-1)	0.28	0.45
Deep South	(0-1)	0.07	0.25
Urbanicity	(1-5)	3.80	1.04
Political Ideology	(1-5)	2.97	1.04
Religious Importance	(1-4)	2.68	1.02
Grades	(1-3)	2.17	0.70
Academic Track	(1-3)	2.44	0.72
College Aspirations	(1-4)	3.19	1.05
Truancy	(1-5)	1.70	1.19

Survey contains eleven social distance items which parallel items included in several other regional and national surveys (see Bogardus, 1925, 1928, 1933; 1967; Crull & Burton, 1985; Bobo & Hutchings, 1996; Schuman, Steeh, Bobo & Krysan, 1997; Owen, Eisner & McFaul, 1981; Smith & Dempsey, 1983; Wilson, 1996). These social distance items ask white youth how they personally would feel or act in particular situations that involve interracial contact (for exact wording of questions see the Appendix). Three domains for interracial contact are considered here: schools, neighborhoods, and informal social activities (see Schuman, Steeh, Bobo & Krysan, 1997). Respondents were asked to rate on a four point Likert-type scale a series of statements as not at all acceptable, somewhat acceptable, acceptable, and desirable:

- (1) "Not at all acceptable" was defined as "I'd avoid this if I possibly could."
- (2) "Somewhat acceptable" was defined as "I could live with this but not be happy about it."
- (3) "Acceptable" was defined as "This would be O.K., or I'd be neutral about this."
- (4) "Desirable" was defined as "I'd really like this."

Exploratory factor analysis was conducted because there were eleven social distance items in the MTF survey and it was presumed that they represented one latent construct, namely racial attitudes. An oblique, common factor analysis with Maximum Likelihood (ML) extraction was used and it extracted two factors with eigenvalues greater than one. According to Table 2, seven items load strongly and positively on the first factor labeled integration ($\alpha = .92$). The integration factor accounted for 43.8% of the common variance. The remaining four items load strongly and positively on the second factor labeled segregation ($\alpha = .89$).⁵ The segregation factor accounted for 13.6% of the common variance. It should be noted that although the integration and segregation factors constitute separate dimensions of racial prejudice, and can be empirically differentiated, they are not completely distinct. For example, the interfactor correlation is not small ($\phi = -.47$). I decided, however, to keep the factors separate because of recent survey results which showed that 68% of white youth

Table 2. Maximum Likelihood Common Factor Analysis Using Oblique Rotation: Racial Attitude Items (1998 Monitoring the Future Survey).

Items	Pattern Matrix	
	Integration	Segregation
having close personal friends of another race	0.781	— ^a
having a job supervisor of another race	0.766	—
having a family of a different race live next door	0.784	—
having some of your future children's friends be of another race	0.723	—
having a job where some employees are of a different race	0.795	—
living in an area where some neighbors are of a different race	0.828	—
some of your future children's schoolmates are of another race	0.787	—
future children's friends be all of your race	—	0.622
having a job where all employees are of your race	—	0.855
all your neighbor's are your race	—	0.894
all of your future children's schoolmates are of your race	—	0.858
Variance accounted for:	43.8	13.6
Cronbach's Alpha	0.92	0.89
Chi-square (64) = 6209.78***		
Factor Correlation (b)		
Factor I	Factor I	Factor II
Factor I	1.00	—
Factor II	-0.47	1.00

Note: ^a items that had weak factor loadings on a specific factor are excluded for clarity of presentation purposes.

supported the "separate but equal" (i.e. "having the races live apart is okay") (see also Pinderhughes, 1993). Given the rather large proportion of white youth reporting being comfortable with segregation it is important to consider the segregation and integration dimensions separately.

Racial Apathy

Racial apathy is measured by one item in the MTF survey. Respondents were asked to rate on a five point Likert-type scale the following statement: Maybe some minority groups do get unfair treatment, but that's no business of mine. Possible responses ranged from "disagree" (1) to "agree" (5). High scores represent greater racial apathy.

Concern about Race Relations

This is measured by one item in the MTF survey. Respondents were asked to rate on a four point Likert-type scale the following statement: Of all the problems facing the nation today, how often do you worry about race relations. Possible responses ranged from "never" (1) to "often" (4).

Assessment of Black-White Relations

This is measured by one item in the MTF survey. Respondents were asked to rate on a five point Likert-type scale the following statement: "Thinking about the country as a whole, would you say relations between white people and black people have been getting better, getting worse, or staying pretty much the same?" Possible responses ranged from "better" (1) to "worse" (5).

Independent Variables

Social background

Four measures of social background were measured in this study: gender, parent's socioeconomic status, urbanicity, and region. Gender is coded 1 = Male, 0 = Female. Parental education is an average of father's and mother's educational attainment using the following scale: 1 = completed grade school or less, 2 = some high school, 3 = completed high school, 4 = some college, 5 = completed college, 6 = graduate or professional school after college. Urbanicity consisted of five categories, ranging from farm to large urban area. Region consisted of five categories, including the Northeast, North Central, Outer South (i.e. North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, Kentucky), Deep South (i.e. Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina), and West. In multivariate analysis "Deep South" is the excluded category.

Social values

Two measures of social values were measured in this study: political ideology and religiosity. Political ideology was measured by the following question: How would you describe your political beliefs? Response categories ranged from "very conservative" (1) to "very liberal" (6).⁶ Because previous research has found that religious importance is a more reliable indicator of adolescent religiosity than is self-reported church attendance (Benson, Donahue & Erickson 1989; Johnstone, 1992) I used a single item to measure Religiosity: How important is religion in your life? Possible responses ranged from "not important" (1) to "very important" (4).⁷

Academic orientation

Four measures of academic orientation were measured in this study: grades, academic track, college aspirations, and truancy.⁸ Grades were measured using student's self-report of average grades in high school.⁹ *Academic Track* was also measured using student's self-report of the high school curriculum in which they were enrolled. Possible categories from which students chose were: "other" (1), "vocational/technical" (2), "general" (3), and "college prep" (4).¹⁰ *College aspirations* were measured by the following item: How likely is it that you will graduate from college (four-year program)? Students chose from the following alternatives: "definitely won't" (1); "probably won't" (2); "probably will" (3); and "definitely will" (4). *Truancy* was measured by the following question: During the last four weeks, how many whole days of school have you missed because you skipped or "cut?" Possible responses ranged from 1-5, where 1 = none, 2 = 1 day, 3 = 2 days, 4 = 3 days, and 5 = 4 or more days.

Analysis Strategy

The overall goal of the analyses was to assess the relationship between the theoretically relevant social determinants and white youth's racial attitudes as well as whether or not the influence of the social determinants differ for traditional and contemporary racial attitudes. To achieve this goal, two sets of analysis were conducted. Bivariate associations (one-way analysis of variance) between each social determinant and white youth's racial attitudes are presented. Next, using multivariate analyses (OLS regression analysis) I examine the simultaneous influence of the social determinants on white youth's racial attitudes.

Table 3a. Mean Racial Attitudes by Social Background Factors: White Youth, 1998.

Social Determinants	Integration	Segregation	Racial Apathy	Race Relations	Concern about Black/White Relations Worse
Gender	3.37	2.72	2.08	2.65	2.37
Female	3.04	2.93	2.51	2.42	0.00
Male	0.30***	0.14***	0.18***	0.12***	0.00
Parents' Education	3.17	2.96	2.47	2.66	2.49
1.0-2.0 (Low)	3.09	2.91	2.41	2.45	2.40
2.5-3.0	3.21	2.87	2.35	2.56	2.40
3.5-4.0	3.21	2.87	2.35	2.56	2.40
4.5-5.0	3.21	2.87	2.35	2.56	2.40
5.5-6.0 (High)	3.39	2.54	2.08	2.59	2.29
Region	3.28	2.78	2.22	2.51	2.24
Northeast	3.14	2.95	2.39	2.44	2.40
Midwest	3.40	2.53	2.17	2.35	2.23
West	3.15	2.89	2.29	2.69	2.46
Outer South	3.03	2.97	2.30	2.92	2.54
Deep South	0.19***	0.19***	0.06	0.16***	0.10***
Urbanicity	2.84	3.24	2.32	2.27	2.71
Rural	3.10	3.08	2.46	2.52	2.58
Small town	3.22	2.88	2.36	2.47	2.34
Small City	3.23	2.79	2.26	2.56	2.29
Other MSA	3.23	2.74	2.23	2.62	2.41
Large MSA	0.16***	0.17***	0.06	0.07*	0.11***

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ (two tailed tests).

College Aspirations	2.87	3.02	2.94	2.42	2.61
Definitely Not	2.87	3.02	2.94	2.42	2.61
Probably Not	3.08	2.97	2.64	2.42	2.46
Probably Will	3.21	2.79	2.33	2.48	2.38
Definitely Will	3.29	2.79	2.06	2.62	2.29
η	0.25***	0.12***	0.25***	0.09**	0.10***
Truancy	3.24	2.81	2.24	2.54	2.36
Never	3.20	2.85	2.37	2.55	2.33
One day	3.12	2.96	2.22	2.68	2.33
Two days	3.01	3.03	2.52	2.43	2.32
Three days	3.04	2.92	2.47	2.27	2.59
Four or more days	0.13***	0.08*	0.07	0.08*	0.06

* $d > 0.05$ ** $p > 0.01$, *** $d > 0.001$ (two tailed tests).

Table 3b. Continued

Social Determinants	3.06	2.71	2.33	2.63	2.46
Very Conservative	3.06	2.71	2.33	2.63	2.46
Conservative	3.10	2.99	2.47	2.48	2.43
Moderate	3.23	2.82	2.23	2.61	2.32
Liberal	3.34	2.64	2.00	2.72	2.33
Very Liberal	3.37	2.53	1.88	2.92	2.27
η	0.20***	0.18***	0.14***	0.10*	0.06
Religious Importance	3.21	2.68	2.42	2.47	2.44
Not important	3.22	2.85	2.35	2.42	2.45
A little important	3.16	2.88	2.42	2.60	2.29
Pretty important	3.20	2.91	2.06	2.64	2.35
Very important	0.05	0.10***	0.13***	0.09**	0.07
η	3.06	2.90	2.57	2.30	2.46
Ds and Cs	3.06	2.90	2.57	2.30	2.46
Bs	3.18	2.85	2.29	2.58	2.35
As	3.30	2.80	2.12	2.62	2.34
η	0.15***	0.05	0.13***	0.11***	0.05
Academic Track	2.99	3.00	2.76	2.43	2.60
Vocational	3.13	2.90	2.50	2.41	2.42
General	3.28	2.77	2.08	2.63	2.28
College Prep	0.19***	0.12	0.22***	0.10***	0.11***
η					

Table 3b. Mean Racial Attitudes by Social Values and Academic Orientation Factors: White Youth, 1998.

RESULTS

Bivariate Results

Tables 3a and 3b present information pertinent to evaluating the bivariate relationships of each social determinant and each outcome measure.

These results show gender effects on four of the five outcome measures. For example, white males have lower mean levels than white females on the integration scale and the concern for race relations measure. They also have higher mean levels on the segregation scale and racial apathy measure. In short, consistent with previous research white males are more racially intolerant than white females (Bullock, 1976, 1978; Essed, 1997; Johnson & Marini, 1998; Patchen, 1982; Scott & McPartland, 1982). This pattern is true for both traditional and contemporary measures of racial attitudes. In addition, as indicated by the η [eta] coefficients at least one traditional (integration) measure of racial attitudes has medium effect sizes.¹¹

Socioeconomic status has long been presumed to influence white youth's racial attitudes (Bullock, 1976, 1978; Regens & Bullock, 1979; Scott & McPartland, 1982; Useem, 1972). Consistent with this view I found that socioeconomic status as measured by parent's education reduced racial intolerance in its traditional and contemporary forms. White youth who had parents with high levels of education also had higher mean levels of integration, as well as lower mean levels of segregation and racial apathy. Despite these relationships being highly statistically significant, in general, the effect sizes for socioeconomic status were small.

Regional differences in white youth's racial attitudes were also found, however, only for the traditional racial attitude scales (i.e. integration and segregation) and on concern for race relations; in both cases the effect sizes were small. Consistent with earlier sociological research (Dollard, 1937; Davis, Gardner & Gardner, 1941; Johnson, 1941; Key, 1949), white youth living in the "deep south" had the least favorable attitudes toward integration, most favorable attitudes toward living, studying, and working in segregated environments, were most concerned about race relations and believed black/white relations were getting worse.

Researchers have long observed that urban residents are more tolerant than rural residents (Milgram, 1970; Stouffer, 1955; Wirth, 1938). Consistent with previous work, urban white youth show greater racial tolerance than rural white youth (see also Bullock, 1976, 1978; Regens & Bullock, 1979). Again, the effect sizes for the association between urbanicity and traditional racial attitudes were small. Similar to the results for regional differences there was no

association between urbanicity and racial apathy. There was a trivial effect size for the other measure of contemporary racial attitudes, concern for race relations.

According to Table 3b, politically conservative white youth are less racially tolerant than politically liberal white youth. Although the effect sizes are small, these results are consistent with previous research (see McClelland & Auster, 1990).

The relationship between religiosity and white youth's racial attitudes provided more mixed results. For example, consistent with some previous research that found no association between religiosity and racial attitudes among white youth (Patchen, 1982; Useem, 1972) this study finds that for integration attitudes there is no statistical relationship between religiosity, as measured by religious importance, and white youth's racial attitudes. However, there was a statistically significant link between religious importance and segregation attitudes; the results run counter to the direction observed in two previous studies that found that young whites who were more religious were also more racially tolerant (see Bullock, 1976; Johnson & Marini, 1998).¹² It should be noted that these results are more in line with research among adults which has consistently found that religious people are more prejudiced than are non-religious people (Allport & Kramer, 1946; Allport & Ross, 1967; Batson & Ventis, 1982; Batson & Burris, 1994; Gorsuch, 1988; Herring & Amisssah, 1997). The results show that white youth who report religion is important in their lives have the most favorable attitudes toward living, studying, and working in segregated environments. This apparently counter intuitive finding might be related to the fact that places of worship, at least in the U.S., are some of the most racially segregated institutions (Gallup, 1997).¹³

Therefore, young whites exposed to this type of "hyper-segregation" in church might develop a view of racial segregation as benign. It must also be acknowledged that in terms of effect sizes the effect is small. In contrast to the findings for segregation attitudes, I find that young whites that are more religious are less racially apathetic and more concerned about race relations. In short, the results for contemporary racial attitudes provide some limited support for Allport's (1954) hypothesis that an interiorized religious orientation (e.g. religious importance) reduces racial prejudice.

Similar to findings of most past research, I find that high achieving white youth (i.e. high grades) are more racially tolerant (see Bullock, 1976; Regens & Bullock, 1979; St. John, 1975). These small effects are discernible for at least one measure of traditional racial attitudes and both measures of contemporary racial attitudes. If academic achievement is associated with white youth's racial attitudes academic tracking is also likely to be related. To the best of my knowledge there has been no empirical investigation of this

relationship. The present study found that white youth that were enrolled in the college prep track were also more racially tolerant. This effect was true across all outcomes. Consistent with prior research I also found that white youth that aspire to attend a four-year college were more racially tolerant than their peers who did not have such aspirations (Glock, Wuthnow, Piliavin & Spencer, 1975; Patchen, 1982).

While there exists few previous empirical investigations of the relationship between truancy and racial attitudes this study found a statistical link between truancy and white youth's racial attitudes. Specifically, white youth that never miss school are more racially tolerant than those whom miss school four or more times. Although these are rather small effects, they are statistically significant for both measures of traditional and one measure of contemporary racial attitudes. These results provide an important national level baseline data for the association between truancy and white youth's racial attitudes.

Multivariate Results

Several of these social determinants are, of course, correlated. Therefore the next step is to construct a multivariate regression model of the social determinants of white youth's racial attitudes.¹⁴ More specifically, Table 4 shows the results for the regression of traditional and contemporary measures of racial attitudes on social background, social values, and academic orientation factors. I present the standardized regression coefficients in order to facilitate the interpretation of the relative effects of the social determinants. I examined each regression model for evidence of multicollinearity and influential observations. These and other robustness tests yielded no evidence suggesting a problematic model specification.

In general, the bivariate and multivariate results are quite consistent. There are two exceptions that are worth highlighting. First, once other factors are controlled, parents' education does not matter. Second, there is no statistically significant difference between high and low achieving white youth once I control for other factors. This finding is consistent with recent evidence that showed an increase in racial prejudice among high achieving white students (Blair, 1998). Thus, if racial prejudice is rising among high achieving students it is also likely that the association between achievement and racial prejudice that has been found in previous research could be diminishing as high achieving white youth become more similar to low achieving white youth in their racial outlook. In general, these multivariate analyses reveal that racial intolerance is more common among white youth that are male, southern (especially residents

Table 4. Standardized Parameter Estimates for Regression of White Youth's Racial Attitudes on Social Background, Social Values, and Academic Orientation (1998 Monitoring the Future Survey).

	Racial Attitudes			
	Integration	Segregation	Racial Apathy	Contemporary Concern about Race Relations
Social Background				
Gender				
Male	-0.233***	0.141***	0.114***	-0.092***
Female (omitted category)	—	—	—	—
Parents' Education				
Region	-0.033	-0.044	-0.005	-0.014
Northeast	0.182***	-0.127*	-0.043	-0.208***
Midwest	0.170***	-0.092	-0.043	-0.208***
West	0.294***	-0.261***	-0.050	-0.239***
Outer South	0.185***	-0.144**	-0.040	-0.152***
Deep South	—	—	—	—
(omitted category)	—	—	—	—
Urbanicity	0.067*	-0.101***	-0.023	0.067*
Social Values				
Political Ideology	0.111***	-0.043	-0.078**	0.074*
Religious Importance	-0.040	0.107***	-0.055	0.060
Academic Orientation				
Grades	0.008	0.065	0.009	0.009
Academic Track	0.014	-0.043	-0.189***	0.047
College Aspirations	0.153***	-0.025	-0.128***	-0.007
Truancy	-0.086**	0.066*	0.019	-0.030
N	1,436	1,436	1,470	1,470
R ² (adj.)	0.173	0.102	0.051	0.045

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ (two tailed tests).

of the Deep South), from rural areas, politically conservative, religious, and truant.

Taken in their entirety, the regression results generally support my hypothesis that the theoretically relevant social determinants more strongly affect traditional racial attitudes than contemporary racial attitudes. For instance, according to Table 4 the adjusted R-squares for both traditional measures of racial attitudes were seventeen and 10% respectively, in contrast, the adjusted R-squares for both contemporary prejudice measures were 5% and 4% respectively. In short, the

adjusted R-squares for the traditional racial attitude items were two to three times that for the two contemporary racial attitude items.

In addition, as hypothesized most of the social determinants of white youth's racial attitudes were more strongly linked to traditional racial attitudes than to contemporary racial attitudes. For instance, the association between gender and both measures of traditional racial attitudes were stronger than the association between gender and both measures of contemporary racial attitudes. In fact, the effect of gender on the various traditional and contemporary racial attitudes can be placed on a continuum: from the integration attitude scale where there is a medium effect size for gender; through segregation attitudes and racial apathy where there is a small effect size; to concern for race relations where gender has a statistically significant but trivial effect size. Region is related to each traditional measure of racial attitudes but only one measure of contemporary racial attitudes. A similar pattern is seen for the influence of urbanicity, religious importance, and truancy on young whites' racial attitudes. There were two relationships that remained statistically linked across both traditional and contemporary measures of racial attitudes: political ideology and college aspirations. Although in both instances the standardized coefficients were larger for measures of traditional racial attitudes than for contemporary racial attitudes. Remarkably, these results are also consistent with previous research that used entirely different measures of traditional and contemporary racial attitudes (Bobo & Kluegel, 1997). There was one result that did not support my hypothesis. One indicator of academic orientation, academic track, was not statistically linked to either traditional measure of white youth's racial attitudes but was linked to racial apathy.

Overall, these results reveal that although subgroup differences remain alive and well for measures of traditional racial attitudes, it is not the case for contemporary measures of racial attitudes. This entire set of results informs an emerging line of thinking about the consolidation of a *laissez-faire* racial ideology during the post-civil rights era, which according to my results has progressively solidified itself among white youth.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study differs from most of the earlier research on white youth's racial attitudes in two important ways. First, it uses recent, nationally representative data of white youth's racial attitudes and includes a broader range of measures of racial attitudes (e.g. traditional and contemporary measures) than earlier studies. Secondly, and perhaps most importantly, this study introduces a new measure of contemporary racial attitudes, namely racial apathy. Given the paucity of

empirical analyses and even fewer new theoretical formulations in more than a decade; the results of this study on youth's racial attitudes deserve serious consideration.

With regard to the study's first goal, to investigate the relationships between the social determinants and white youth's racial attitudes, I was able to confirm some results of earlier research. The results revealed that all three factors – social background, social values, and academic orientation – relate to white youth's racial attitudes. For example, men, southern youth, rural youth, politically conservative youth, religious youth, and truant youth generally are more racially prejudiced than their female, non-southern, urban, politically liberal, non-religious, and non-truant counterparts.

With regard to the study's second goal – to compare the influence of the social determinants on white youth's racial attitudes across measures of traditional and contemporary racial attitudes – I was able to use measures of racial attitudes which have not been previously used in studies investigating white youth to shed further light on recent theoretical arguments about the shifting nature of white's racial attitudes in general. The results lend additional support to what is quickly becoming the new paradigm for the study of white's racial attitudes. For instance, the results confirmed my hypothesis about the differential influence of the social determinants on white youth's traditional and contemporary racial attitudes. Moreover, these results suggest that a reliance on traditional measures of racial attitudes no longer provide an accurate portrait of whites' racial attitudes, especially young whites' racial attitudes. In this regard, my rationale for including both traditional and contemporary racial attitudes was well founded. Although this study fills an important gap in our knowledge about young whites' racial attitudes, it also raises several additional issues for future theory and research. First, future research should broaden the conceptualization and measurement of white youth's racial attitudes.

My approach to measuring contemporary racial attitudes among young whites is admittedly different from that used by others (Bobo & Kluegel, 1997; Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000; Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986; McConahay, 1986). It focuses on the implicit and passive way in which today's young whites express their unwillingness to support actions to redress racial inequality, namely racial apathy. In fact, the work presented here relies heavily on the early thinking of Daniel Katz (1960) in that racial apathy is conceptualized to be a central element of negative racial attitudes. As Bobo, Kluegel and Smith (1997, 41) notes, "a large number of white Americans have become comfortable with as much racial inequality and segregation as a putatively nondiscriminatory polity and free market economy can produce." Thus many young whites today acknowledge persistent racial inequality but are unconcerned and in many instances unwilling

to do anything to redress these patterns of inequality (for similar findings see Bonilla & Forman, 2000). In light of the results found here, future investigations should develop multiple-item measures of racial apathy. The omission of such measures from future research on whites' racial attitudes will possibly limit our understanding of their attitudes.

Second, future studies should explicitly investigate social trends in young whites' racial attitudes. To date, most of the existing literature that has explored social trends in racial attitudes has focused exclusively on adults (for an exception see Tuch, Sigelman & MacDonald, 1999).¹⁵ Future research would examine whether or not the shifts in white adults' expression of negative racial attitudes are also apparent among white youth. More importantly, this research would be expressly focused on testing the basic hypothesis that racial attitudes have changed, shifting from traditional to contemporary forms.

Third, as our understanding of the sources of white youth's racial attitudes improves, future research needs to shift to exploring the cohort- and period-related implications of the emerging debate over the "new racism." For instance, it would be useful to investigate if the societal-wide changes in the expression of racial attitudes have had a larger impact on young whites than on older whites. That is, white youth's racial attitudes today could reflect cohort-specific socialization or more generalized contextual influences experienced by all regardless of cohort membership.

Finally, given previous research showing that the socio-cultural environment may be most powerful in influencing attitudes during late adolescence and young adulthood, future inquiries should investigate the role that schools and the media play in influencing young white's racial attitudes. For example, is the racial composition of the schools young whites attend related to their racial attitudes? If so, what characteristics of the school might explain why school racial composition matters for their attitudes. Alternatively, to what extent has the overrepresentation of racial minorities reflecting middle-class status on prime-time television (see Entman & Rojecki, 2000) influenced many young whites today to reject actions to redress racial inequality (i.e. to become racially apathetic)? The findings presented in this chapter, as well as future research designed to answer the questions above, will further our understanding of young whites' racial attitudes and the future of U.S. race relations.

NOTES

1. Because high school seniors are the focus of this study modifications were made to measures in order to have developmentally appropriate measures. For example, grades, academic track, and college aspirations were measures of "educational attainment" since

all the students in my sample were high school seniors. Social class background was measured by averaging the student's mother and father education.

2. An argument can be made for treating truancy as an outcome variable. However, there are equally compelling reasons for keeping it on the right side of the equation. For example, prior work has treated truancy as theoretically and causally prior to racial prejudice (Macleod, 1995; Patchen, 1982; Wang, 1994). Second, given that this study focuses on high school seniors, there is reason to believe that the extent of racial prejudice might be underestimated due to the omission of high school drop-outs. Keeping truancy in my models allows me to mitigate this potential bias because previous work has shown that truancy is an important precursor to dropping out of high school (Voelkl, Welte & Wiczorek, 1999), especially for whites (Jordan, Lara & McPartland, 1996). Thus, if we assume that truants and dropouts have similar racial attitudes (there is empirical evidence from Macleod (1995) and Pinderhughes (1997) to support such an assumption) the inclusion of a measure of truancy in the present analysis should reduce bias associated with omitting high school drop-outs. Therefore, while the endogeneity problem is of some concern here it is superseded by a concern for presenting an analysis that is consistent with previous model specifications and that minimizes bias associated with omitting drop-outs.

3. The complex sampling design employed in this study means that the actual sampling variance may be larger than the variance expected from a simple random sample. Frequently this also means that standard errors reported from conventional statistical packages (e.g. SPSS and SAS) will underestimate the true sampling variability. Therefore, I used standard errors adjusted utilizing the Taylor series linearization method (for a discussion of this method see Lehtonen & Pahkinen, 1995).

4. When measuring racial attitudes it is important to draw a distinction between questions that consider commitments to abstract principles (social norms) and those that consider desires for one's own life (personal preferences) (for a discussion of this distinction see Schuman, Steeh, Bobo & Krysan, 1997, Chapters 1 and 7). As Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) have shown, personal preferences are most relevant for individual behavior. In addition to their relevance for behavior, American youth's personal preferences also have been shown to be more reliable over time than general attitudes toward social norms (Brackbill, 1974). Therefore, in this study I use social distance items aimed at eliciting white youth's personal desires and preferences regarding social distance between the races. Several recent studies have also used social distance attitudes as one measure of racial prejudice with some success (Dyer, Vedlitz & Worchel, 1989; Herring & Amisshah, 1997; Johnson & Marini, 1998; Schuman, Steeh, Bobo & Krysan, 1997; Smith & Dempsey, 1983; Wilson, 1996).

5. This factor structure is consistent with Johnson and Marini's (1998) confirmatory factor analyses of the same items.

6. Supplemental analyses revealed that on all outcome variables no statistically significant difference existed between the "very conservative" and "radical" categories. As a result I combined these categories into "very conservative."

7. Given the different theoretical expectations for the two variables (i.e. religious importance and religious attendance) in the research literature (see Allport, 1954; Allport & Ross, 1967) and their high degree of collinearity ($r = 0.72$) in the present study I chose the measure that has been shown to be most reliable among adolescents instead of combining them into a single scale or examining their influence separately. Future research should investigate these issues further.

8. Some argue that each of these items are measuring the same underlying dimension. An examination of their intercorrelation, however, shows only moderate associations ($r = 0.33$ between grades and academic track, $r = 0.34$ between grades and college aspirations, and $r = 0.50$ between academic track and college aspirations). In addition, one claims that these "academic orientation" items really measure "social class." Again, an examination of the intercorrelation between parent's educational attainment and the academic orientation measures reveals small to moderate associations ($r = 0.19$ between grades and social class, $r = 0.22$ between academic track and social class, and $r = 0.32$ between college aspirations and social class).

9. Previous research shows that student's self-reported grades and their actual grades taken from official school records are strongly correlated ($r = 0.80$) (see Donovan & Jessor, 1985; Dornbusch et al., 1987). In addition, this variable was highly skewed with most students reporting grades of As and Bs. Because there were so few students reporting Ds this category was combined with Cs in order to have enough students within each category to conduct reliable statistical analyses. Therefore, the recoded academic track measure consisted of three categories: "1" (Cs and Ds), "2" (Bs) and "3" (As).

10. Supplemental analyses revealed that on all outcome variables no statistically significant difference existed between the "vocational/technical" and "other" categories. As a result I combined these categories into "vocational."

11. Standard deviation units, or effect sizes, provide a common metric for evaluating results both within and across studies. For substantive interpretations I rely on the standards described by Rosenthal and Rosnow (1991) for effect sizes (ES): $ES \leq 0.10$ are considered trivial, $ES \leq 0.20$ are considered small, effects ≤ 0.50 are considered medium, and effects ≥ 0.50 are considered large (see also Cohen, 1988). There are two types of effect sizes: variance accounted for measures (e.g. R-squared [R²], eta-squared [η^2], omega-squared [ω^2], rho [p], or eta [η]) or standardized difference measures (e.g. standardized differences in means) (for further discussion see Cohen, 1988). I rely on the latter effect sizes here.

12. It should be noted that these results are more in line with research among adults which has consistently found that religious people are more prejudice than non-religious people. (Allport & Kramer, 1946; Allport & Ross, 1967; Batson & Ventis, 1982; Batson & Burris, 1994; Gorsuch, 1988; Herring & Amisssah, 1997).

13. This is most likely to be the case since in the present study religious importance and church attendance are highly correlated ($r = 0.72$).

14. Regression models for the outcome variable "Black/White Relations Worse" were omitted given the weak bivariate associations reported in Tables 3a and 3b. These results are available from the author.

15. However, this study only reported trends for young whites' social distance attitudes and made no attempt to link these social trends to the existing debate on the changing nature of whites' racial attitudes.

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APPENDIX

Question Wording for Measures of Racial Attitudes

Measures of Racial Attitudes

Attitude towards Integration

- How would you feel about having close personal friends of another race?
(Not at all acceptable = 1; Somewhat acceptable = 2; Acceptable = 3; Desirable = 4)
- How would you feel about having a job with a supervisor of a different race?
(Not at all acceptable = 1; Somewhat acceptable = 2; Acceptable = 3; Desirable = 4)
- How would you feel about having a family of a different race (but same level of education and income) move next door to you?
(Not at all acceptable = 1; Somewhat acceptable = 2; Acceptable = 3; Desirable = 4)
- How would you feel about having some of your future children's friends be of other races?
(Not at all acceptable = 1; Somewhat acceptable = 2; Acceptable = 3; Desirable = 4)
- How would you feel about having a job where some employees are of a different race?
(Not at all acceptable = 1; Somewhat acceptable = 2; Acceptable = 3; Desirable = 4)
- How would you feel about living in an area where some of the neighbors are of other races?
(Not at all acceptable = 1; Somewhat acceptable = 2; Acceptable = 3; Desirable = 4)
- How would you feel about having your future children go to schools where some of the children are of other races?
(Not at all acceptable = 1; Somewhat acceptable = 2; Acceptable = 3; Desirable = 4)

Attitude towards Segregation

- How would you feel about having your future children's friends be all of your race?
(Not at all acceptable = 1; Somewhat acceptable = 2; Acceptable = 3; Desirable = 4)
- How would you feel about having a job where all the employees are of your race?
(Not at all acceptable = 1; Somewhat acceptable = 2; Acceptable = 3; Desirable = 4)
- How would you feel about living in an area where all the neighbors are of your race?
(Not at all acceptable = 1; Somewhat acceptable = 2; Acceptable = 3; Desirable = 4)
- How would you feel about having your future children go to schools where all the children are of your race?
(Not at all acceptable = 1; Somewhat acceptable = 2; Acceptable = 3; Desirable = 4)