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White Racial Identity, Party Identification, and Party Affect: An Experiment in Priming

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The notion of white racial identity is a fairly new one, especially in relation to political science. This study works to explore how white racial identity is used in identifying with and evaluating political parties through an experimental survey conducted using Mechanical-Turk®, in which subjects were given one of five conditions (one control and four stimulus) and then asked about party identification and party affect. I find that importance of race for personal identity is strongly related to strength of partisanship, positive affect for the Republican Party, and conservative ideology. These results reflect similar findings by other authors (Mendelberg 2001; Jackson 2011).
The ever-increasing minority populations in the United States and decline in proportional representation of whites (Vickerman 2007) is leading whites to examine their own racial identity as they are introduced to “the increased prominence of non-whites in various public spheres” (Hughey 2010, 1291). This creates a society where “whiteness renders itself more visible and less of a synonym for invisible normality” (Hughey 2010, 1291). In this new era of American racial identity, with a more dynamic view of ‘whiteness’, the political sphere may be ready to change: in particular, partisanship and party affection of whites based on racial identity.

This study aims to investigate the link between white racial identity and partisanship and the ability of party identification and party affect to be manipulated vis-à-vis racial identity. If there is indeed a link and party identification can in fact be manipulated through racial cues we as a nation may see a shift in the political sphere of America, affecting communications, campaigns, and public opinion.

Racial identity has been shown to be a strong predictor of vote choice (Graves & Lee 2000; Jackson 2011), issue preference (Graves & Lee 2000), and party identification (Nyugen & Lee 2009) among minority groups – Latinos and Asians respectively. Given the research of Vickerman (2007) and Hughey (2010) presented above it would follow that whites may adhere to the model set by racial minorities – described by Graves and Lee (2000); Green, Palmquist, and Schickler (2002); Nyugen and Lee (2009); and Jackson (2011). This is encouraged by the increases in white racial identity over the past four decades (Wong & Cho 2005, 705).

In this study I focus on the effects of white racial identity on party identification and party affect when people are primed to affiliate whites with a party or to affiliate an out-group (blacks) with a party through a survey experiment. I randomly assign respondents to five groups. Subjects read articles that suggest a relation between whites or blacks and the Republican or Democratic Party: a control group does not read an article. The articles [3] provide information from reputable sources (i.e. Pew Research, Gallup, Brookings Institute) to make the connection between race and party. This use of real data from reputable sources and a control group work to eliminate the shortcomings of previous experiments that are noted by Boudreau and MacKenzie (2013):

1) The lack of implications of the information for the subjects
2) The lack of a control group

Real data from notable and widely publicized sources is also used in hope of improving “believability” of the articles.

Additional attention is paid to education and political knowledge levels of subjects due to the evidence that subgroups of whites are affected differently by priming and information (Kam 2005; Arceneaux 2008; Bullock 2011; Boudreau & MacKenzie 2013; Weber et al 2014).

**Racial Identity**
Racial identity is a subcategory of social identity – a concept defined by Tajfel (1970). Firstly ‘social identity’ “…describes those aspects of a person’s self-concept based upon their group memberships together with their emotional, evaluative and other psychological correlates,” (Turner & Oakes 1986, 240). The theory is that “people are motivated to seek positive social identity by comparing in-groups favourably with out-groups,” (Turner & Oakes 1986, 240).

This anti-individualistic theory works to explain why certain large-scale uniformities in social behavior exist and how they come into being (Turner & Oakes 1986). Tajfel explains that the creation and use of one’s social identity take place over three steps: 1) “Social Categorization” (Tajfel 1982, 20) in which individuals recognize groups and categorize them; 2) “Social Identity” (Tajfel 1982, 24) in which individuals adopt the group they perceive themselves to belong to as part of their identities; and 3) “Social Comparison” (Tajfel 1982, 24) where as a new member to the ‘in-group’ one compares his or her own group to others. The social identity theory created and refined by Tajfel, Turner, and Oakes is directly applicable to the research question at hand. It offers reasoning for why racial identity may affect party affiliation and affection. It also provides a layout for the progress of white racial identity through the steps put forth by Tajfel (1982).

Whites created categorizations long ago, but because white was normalized as a racial category there was no need for the second step in Tajfel’s sequence. Now that whites are being pushed to recognize their racial group (Vickerman 2007; Hughey 2010) the second step is taking place. Through the articles I work to induce the third step.

Much of the research on white racial identity comes from psychologists (Helms 1984; Helms & Carter 1990; Helms 1996; Carter, Helms, & Juby 2004). The authors of these studies work to define how whites come to identify with their race in a manner similar to Tajfel. These studies of “whiteness” have provided the framework for much of the work in political psychology regarding white racial identity, though it is difficult to define.

In Politics

There exists limited literature on white racial identity in politics, and the literature that does exist is mainly enveloped in race relations (Kinder & Sears 1981; Giles & Hertz 1994; Green, Staerkle, & Sears 2006; Huber & Lapinski 2006; King & Wheelock 2007; Hughey 2010; Weber, Lavine, Huddy, & Federico 2014). This research is integral to the study’s focus on effects of out-group affiliation with a party, but it is not complete. Special deference is given to Giles and Hertz (1994), whose study “Racial Threat and Partisanship”, gives reason to study out-group affiliation. Their finding of aversion by whites to align with other races is corroborated by other studies (Kinder & Sears 1981; Green et al. 2006; also see Knowles, Lowery, Shulman, & Schaumberg 2013). This literature is largely focused on policy, which necessitated references to other bodies of literature needed to be referenced.
Research on the effects of racial identity on politics is much more prevalent among studies of minority groups (i.e. blacks, Latinos, and Asians) (Graves & Lee, 2000; Green, Palmquist, & Schickler 2002; Nguyen & Garand 2009; Jackson 2011). A study of the 1996 federal Senate election in Texas found that, in the election at hand, ethnicity had effects on partisanship and issue positions (Graves & Lee 2000).

Green, Palmquist, and Schickler found that identifying with a political party – as part of one’s social identity – drastically influenced the way that person voted and how they perceived the world (2002). Green et al make a bold point in the introduction to the book: “Of the seemingly ‘fundamental’ social identities, only race is a powerful predictor of electoral choice,” of course excluding one’s party identification (2002).

Research was then furthered through focus on a specific racial group, Asians (Nyugen & Lee 2009). They observed non-partisanship among Asians, where Asian Americans are less likely than the general American population to identify with a party, or even as independent (Nyugen & Lee 2009).

Definitive evidence for a linkage between racial identity and party affect (through vote choice) from a study of Latinos in California provides the basis for this study (Jackson 2011). Jackson finds that strong Latino identity increases responsiveness of individuals to information that associates the racial in-group with a political candidate - and implicitly a party – even changing vote preference from solid for one candidate to moderately strong for the other candidate in the Democratic condition (Jackson 2011, 711). I seek to find if whites exhibit similar patterns with regard to party identification and party affect using both in-group and out-group affiliations.

Hypotheses

I aim to examine a few different questions in this study and make predictions about the answers to those questions. Some of the questions and predictions have been alluded to already, but will be made explicit hereafter.

Firstly, I expect that subjects with stronger white racial identity (explained in methods section) will be stronger partisans - populating the tails of a 7-point party identification Likert scale in greater proportions - than subjects with weaker white racial identity. Jackson observes this in her study of Latinos (2011, 707). I will test this with the control group. This seems to be a reasonable prediction because if someone has a strong affiliation with their race, it would follow that they are strongly attached to other aspects of their identity as well.

Secondly, I predict that strong white racial identity and perception of racial in-group party affiliation - via the article - will produce more positive affect for the implicated party than in the control. If true this would manifest itself in a higher group mean score on the feeling thermometer for a party in the group that read the article affiliating whites with said party than the mean feeling thermometer score for that party in the control, holding strength of racial identity constant between whites with weaker white racial identity.
the groups. This hypothesis is defined this way to give
deferece to the existing literature, mainly Jackson
(2011), which suggests this to be the case. However, it
cannot be disregarded that racial identity works
differently across races (e.g. the difference between
black racial identity and Asian racial identity when it
comes to politics – see Nyugen and Lee, 2009).

Thirdly and finally, I anticipate that strong
white racial identity and perception of racial out-
group (blacks) party affiliation – via the article -
will produce less positive affect for the implicated
party than in the control. Lower scores on party
feeling thermometers for the party associated with
blacks in the article than the control should evidence
this among those with strong white racial identity.

**Survey Design and Measures**

The entire survey is made available in the appendix
[1], but I will use this section to give some
background to decisions made involving the survey
and some information about the data collection.

**Design**

Self-identified white Americans of voting age with
Internet access, using *Amazon Mechanical-Turk®* and
*Reddit®*, responded to the survey hosted on
*Qualtrics®*; data was also collected by *Qualtrics®*.

The demographics of the survey participants
are skewed from actual demographics of white
Americans on the whole [4], excepting for political
ideology. There are significant gaps in income, age,
and sex.

1,006 subjects completed the survey. These
subjects were evenly distributed across five groups:
control receiving a non-stimulus; and those receiving
stimulus of whites identifying with the Democratic
Party, receiving stimulus of whites identifying with
the Republican Party, receiving stimulus of blacks
identifying with the Democratic Party, and receiving
the stimulus of blacks identifying with the Republican
Party; (see Table 1) . Stimuli consisted of pseudo
news articles. The format of these articles and outline
of each was kept consistent across groups with only
minimal information changing – template in appendix
[2]. Additionally, a picture of the affiliated party’s
symbol (an elephant or donkey) was positioned at the
top of the article. For more information the articles are
available in the appendix [3]: (differences are bolded).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party Associated with Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONTROL GROUP</strong> (N=207)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Whites</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article (n=197)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White-Dems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White-Reps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article (n=195)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blacks</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article (n=198)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black-Dems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black-Reps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article (n=209)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 A chi-square test shows that all control independent variables (i.e. age,
sex, political knowledge, ideology, etc.) were distributed among the
groups in a balanced manner. The results of these chi-square tests are
available upon request.
Dependent Variables

After the stimulus, all groups are asked a series of questions that work to help answer the questions postulated in the hypothesis section.

Firstly they were asked about their party identification using a seven-point Likert scale: question wording from the ANES (2012, 55-56). This variable was used to evaluate the first hypothesis.

They were then asked to rate the Democratic then Republican Party using a feeling thermometer. The wording for the question was again pulled from the ANES (2012, 26-27). These variables were used to evaluate the second and third hypotheses: dependent on article content.

None of the above variables were asked pre-stimulus to avoid self-verification bias: a bias in which one wants their self-conception to match the perceptions that others have; in this case not wanting surveyors or analysts to see them as irrational for changing responses (Swann, Rentfrow, & Guinn 2003).

Independent Variables

Questions intended to be used as independent variables were placed before stimulus to avoid any effects that the articles may have had on responses – including demographic descriptors.

Demographic questions include age, sex, highest achieved education level, household income level (there is a “Prefer not to answer” option for this); and political ideology – on a seven-point Likert scale where 1 is “Strong Liberal” and 7 is “Strong Conservative”.

Subjects were then asked a series of six political knowledge questions covering a variety of topics (e.g. political history, representation of parties, terms, et cetera). These questions were included for purpose of control: if a person has a high level of political knowledge they will likely know that the information in the article does not portray the whole picture and is “cherry-picked”.

Questions addressing the respondent’s racial identity were replicated from those used in the “American Mosaic Project Survey, 2003” (Hartmann, Gerteis, & Edgell): a survey used for other studies of whiteness (Croll 2007; King & Wheelock 2007; Hartmann, Gerteis, & Croll 2009). These questions include: “How important is your racial (or ethnic) identity to you? Very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not important at all?” measured on a four-point scale; and “How important was your racial (or ethnic) identity growing up?” also measured on a four-point scale.

Methods

In order to examine the predictions posited I first needed to run an ordered logistic regression of strength of partisanship on a dummy variable within the control group: “Racedum” – where 1 is equal to having answered the question of racial importance
either as “very important” or “somewhat important”, and 0 is equal to having answered that question with “not very important” or “not important at all”, while controlling for other factors (Model 1, Table 2). I then ran another ordered logistic of strength of partisanship, for the control group on “RaceImp”: which is coded so that 1 is equal to having answered the question of racial importance either as “very important”, 2 is equal to having answered the question of racial importance either as “somewhat important”, 3 is equal to having answered the question of racial importance either as “not very important”, and 4 is equal to having answered the question of racial importance either as “not important at all”, again controlling for other variables (Model 2, Table 2). A graph of the relation is shown in Figure 1 [5].

I then ran an OLS regression of the Democrat (Model 1, Table 3) and Republican (Model 2, Table 3) feeling thermometers on the dummy variable for racial importance to identity (“Racedum”) and the treatment group (control, white Democrats, white Republicans, black Democrats, and black Republicans), and the interaction between the two and controls2.

Results

The data provided for mixed results, which are explored below, but should be evaluated askance because of the differences between the sample for this study and the demographics of the white population in the United States [4].

Racial Importance on Strength of Partisanship

My first hypothesis predicted a positive relationship between the levels of importance one puts on their race in defining their identity. The data support this hypothesis. As we can see in both models on Table 2, there is a strong and statistically significant relationship between racial importance as a function of identity and the strength of partisanship.3

Racial Importance, Priming, and Party Affect

My second and third hypotheses predicted a relationship between party affect dependent on an interaction between the stimulus given to subjects and the subjects’ level of racial importance. This hypothesis was rejected by both of the models. The models, instead, show that high levels of racial importance carried the actual effect of the interaction. This was the product of running regressions using solely the interaction term (i.e. without the variables making up the interaction separately) and having the effect of each stimulus be statistically significant at the p< .05 level when “Racedum” was equal to 1 (high racial importance). Another regression was then run with both parts of the interaction separated out as individual independent

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2 Ideology was eliminated as a control due to severely correlation with the feeling thermometers: .6 for the Democrat feeling thermometer and .651 for the Republican feeling thermometer, respectively.

3 A flip in the direction of the coefficients for “Racedum” and “RaceImp” is caused by the manner in which they are coded: this is described above.
variables in addition to their inclusion in the model via the interaction. This showed that the interaction and the stimulus, on its own, were statistically insignificant, while having high racial importance was still significant, (Figure 2), [7] [8]. Even this was only true for Republican feeling thermometer (Table 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partisanship Level</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Racedum</td>
<td>0.586*</td>
<td>-0.380*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.273)</td>
<td>(0.157)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RaceImp</td>
<td>-0.277**</td>
<td>-0.286**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.087)</td>
<td>(0.088)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology</td>
<td>0.025*</td>
<td>0.027*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.012)</td>
<td>(0.012)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Sum</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.126)</td>
<td>(0.126)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.025*</td>
<td>0.027*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.012)</td>
<td>(0.012)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>0.591*</td>
<td>0.531*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.285)</td>
<td>(0.285)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>0.036</td>
<td>0.034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.044)</td>
<td>(0.044)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>0.068</td>
<td>0.070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.107)</td>
<td>(0.106)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=199</td>
<td>N=198</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo R2</td>
<td>0.0492</td>
<td>0.0495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log likelihood</td>
<td>-260.16734</td>
<td>-258.65947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>° p&lt; .1, * p&lt; .05, ** p&lt; .01, *** p&lt; .001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2

Validity of the Null

This finding is a robust one. I analyzed the data - testing for effect of group and racial importance and their interaction – using a multitude of techniques that all resulted in the same findings shown by the regression. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed to test for difference in means for the feeling thermometers for both Democrats and Republicans. In these ANOVA tests, I used “Racedum”, the group (i.e. the stimulus given), and the interaction between the two [6]. None of the groups or groups interacted with “Racedum” were statistically significant, while “Racedum” alone was significant in every for every group when looking at feelings for Republicans. It was not significant in any model when examining feelings for Democrats. This perfectly correlates with the results from the regression run (Table 3).

I also did path analysis, which looks to examine direct and indirect effects of independent variables. This also showed that group played no role in evaluation of the political parties, while “Racedum” had both direct, and mild indirect effects in a subject’s evaluation of the Republican Party for every group. This was not the case when evaluating the Democratic Party. Again, these results align with those provided by the regression (Table 3).⁴

The effect solely being linked to feelings about the Republican Party is likely due to the fact that the sample was heavily skewed towards liberalism and the overwhelming amount of liberal subjects were unlikely to move existing positions about a party they

⁴ Due to the nature of path analysis, 8 different tables would need to be added to show this result. Therefore, they will be available upon request.
already affiliated with. This corresponds well with the difference in the amount of variance explained by each model (Table 3).

Interestingly, the relationship between high racial importance and affect for the Republican Party was positive, and significant, while the relationship between high racial importance and affect for the Democratic Party was negative, although insignificant.

### Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Democrat Feeling Thermometer</th>
<th>Republican Feeling Thermometer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Race Importance</td>
<td>-1.260 (3.867)</td>
<td>12.354** (3.680)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Dems</td>
<td>-0.831 (3.750)</td>
<td>1.501 (3.569)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Reps</td>
<td>-2.370 (3.627)</td>
<td>3.419 (3.462)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Dems</td>
<td>0.182 (3.707)</td>
<td>2.662 (3.537)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Reps</td>
<td>-3.006 (3.512)</td>
<td>3.975 (3.358)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Race Importance # Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 # White Dems</td>
<td>3.193 (5.543)</td>
<td>-1.253 (5.249)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 # White Reps</td>
<td>2.421 (5.629)</td>
<td>-0.754 (5.355)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 # Black Dems</td>
<td>1.231 (5.528)</td>
<td>3.075 (5.256)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 # Black Reps</td>
<td>3.624 (5.578)</td>
<td>-0.898 (5.310)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Sum</td>
<td>-0.315 (0.775)</td>
<td>-4.792*** (0.735)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>0.800 (0.648)</td>
<td>0.660 (0.612)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>-0.506 * (0.285)</td>
<td>1.004*** (0.271)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (yrs.)</td>
<td>-0.175* (0.073)</td>
<td>0.226** (0.069)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>8.949*** (1.893)</td>
<td>-3.935* (1.803)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>52.640*** (5.510)</td>
<td>33.946*** (5.211)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N = 957</td>
<td>N = 948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R² = .033</td>
<td>R² = .125</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<.1, * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001

Additionally, when a regression of ideology is run on racial importance, controlling for other factors, racial importance is positively related to conservatism and is statistically significant [9].

All of these additional tests are necessary to substantiate the claim of a null finding with regards to the interaction between stimulus and racial importance, as well as stimulus alone. The congruity of the findings among all the tests serves as a strong basis for the null evaluation.

### Meaning

These results lead to a questioning of the story told by Hughey (2010), where whites with strong racial identity occupy both white supremacist groups, as well as anti-racist groups. Hughey’s story implies a spread of whites with high racial importance across the spectrum of political ideology, from extremist conservatism to strong liberalism. However, these data show a strong relationship between strong racial identity and conservatism – both through affect for the Republican Party and ideology.

### Discussion

There are mixed results embedded in these data. On the one hand, we have a replication of the results produced by Jackson (2011), where high racial importance is correlated in a significant manner with strong party affiliation. On the other hand, the results show no significant effect of priming racial identity.

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5 Evidenced by the high correlation between ideology and party identification examined above.

6 Remember that the racial importance variable is coded inversely, so this apparent negative relation in the table and graph is actually positive.
Priming Racial Identity in Whites

through information on affect for political parties, results produced by Jackson (2011) with Latinos in California. Additionally, the strong correlation between importance of race in identity and conservative ideology runs counter to qualitative data presented by Hughey (2010). Both of these results may be viewed as troubling in regard to the worth or validity of this study. They may be viewed more accurately, however, as vindicating.

Firstly, the failure of this study to show that whites are using racial cues to evaluate the party, beyond their own idea of how important race is to their identity, may be not be a failure at all. It is completely plausible, and perhaps even likely, that although whites are increasingly identifying with their race and declaring it to be an important piece of their social identity (Wong & Cho 2005), that this identity importance is not equivalent to the identity importance of minority groups. This seems to be probable even – considering that the rise in importance of race to social identity in whites is recent, while minorities have been using race as an important part of their identity structure for a long time (Wong & Cho 2005). It also reflects a conclusion drawn by Tali Mendelberg in The Race Card: that explicit racial appeals do not prime racial resentment in opinion formation, but that implicit appeals do (2001). The theoretical reasoning behind this is that citizens reject explicit appeals on the basis that they violate social norms (Mendelberg 2001, 4).

Additionally, the results running counter to Hughey’s (2010) makes sense when considering the historical context of strong white racial identity (which is different from white ethnic identity, e.g. Italian, Irish, English, German, etc.), where strong white racial identity is linked to white supremacist groups and anti-immigration movements (old and modern). These are historically conservative positions and the data suggest that strong white racial identity has translated into modern conservative ideology.

Limitations

This study was limited in several ways. Most importantly were the demographics of the subject pool. A high proportion of young, liberal males, who had lower household incomes than the average white American, certainly tainted the results. The sample was also more highly educated than the average white American.

Another issue was that this survey experiment was administrated online, with limited supervision of participants. This limited supervision may have allowed subjects to rush through an article without thoroughly reading it. This is a likely issue considering the financial incentive for Mechanical-Turk® to finish tasks quickly. Subjects also may have quickly looked up answers to political knowledge questions due to a social desirability effect, once again skewing the results.

Thirdly, because of the medium the survey was administrated through, I was unable to ask the same question before and after the stimulus. The relatively short time period for tasks on Mechanical-Turk® prevented me from doing this.
Conclusion

This study shows that white racial identity is in fact important to a larger segment of the population than many people would believe. I was also able to show that strong white racial identity is related to strong levels of partisanship: replicating results with a Latino sample (Jackson 2011). Unfortunately I was unable to show that whites use explicit racial cues in information to effect change in opinion on political party the way that Latinos do (Jackson 2011), but I provided reasoning as to why that may be. Additionally, this result coincides with the findings of Mendelberg (2001).

This work provides a foundational premise for two important ideas. Firstly, that even though white racial identity is on the rise, campaigns may not be able to use cues about whites to their advantage. This being action through inaction is the less interesting of the two ideas.

The second, and much more valuable, idea is that the Republican Party can work to incorporate minority racial groups (e.g. blacks, Latinos, Asians) into the party coalition without fear of repercussions stemming from reactions of existing whites with strong racial identity. The results of my regressions show that racial importance is strongly linked to strength of partisanship and that racial importance interacted with a racial cue – concerning white and black affiliation with a party – is not significant. This means that the Republican Party doesn’t need to fear losing its existing white, solid Republican base due to inclusion of minority groups.

Further work on this topic is necessary, and likely upcoming. Exploration of white racial identity and ideology could yield interesting results, given some of the existing literature and its opposition to the data in this study. Works produced in the future would be well off to try a similar study to this with a more representative sample, in a lab, and ideally with a lag so that replica questions could be asked pre and post-stimulus. This would require a greater amount of funding, or the availability of a subject pool similar to that of many psychology departments.
References:


Appendix

1. Are you over 18 years old?
   a. Yes
   b. No
      i. Move on if yes

2. What is your race/ethnicity?
   a. Black / African American
   b. Asian / Pacific Islander
   c. White / Caucasian
   d. Native American
   e. Other
      i. Move on if white

3. Are you a United States citizen?
   a. Yes
   b. No
      i. Move on if yes

4. What is your age in years?
   a. Slider to select age

5. What is your sex?
   a. Male
   b. Female

6. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? If currently enrolled, highest degree received.
   a. 8th grade or lower
   b. Some high school, no diploma
   c. High school, diploma or the equivalent (for example: GED)
   d. Some college, no degree
   e. Associate / Technical degree
   f. Bachelor’s degree
   g. Master’s degree
   h. Professional degree
   i. Doctoral degree

7. What is your total household income?
   a. Less than $10,000
   b. $10,000 to $19,999
   c. $20,000 to $29,999
   d. $30,000 to $39,999
   e. $40,000 to $49,999
   f. $50,000 to $59,999
   g. $60,000 to $69,999
   h. $70,000 to $79,999
   i. $80,000 to $89,999
   j. $90,000 to $99,999
   k. $100,000 to $149,999
   l. $150,000 or more
   m. Prefer not to answer

8. Generally speaking, how would you describe your political ideology?
   a. Strong conservative
   b. Weak conservative
   c. Moderate leaning conservative
   d. Moderate
   e. Moderate leaning liberal
   f. Weak liberal
   g. Strong liberal
9. You will now be asked questions about American politics, please answer the next questions without using the help of the Internet or any outside resources.

10. Which political party has a majority in the Senate?
   a. Democratic Party
   b. No party holds a majority
   c. Republican Party
   d. Don’t know

11. What is the name of the Vice President of the United States of America?
   a. Paul Ryan
   b. Eric Cantor
   c. Al Gore
   d. Joe Biden
   e. Don’t know

12. Which of the following is guaranteed by the 1st Amendment of the Constitution?
   a. The right to bear arms
   b. Protection against improper search and seizure
   c. Freedom to peaceably assemble
   d. Protection against being compelled to provide self-incriminating testimony
   e. Don’t know

13. What is the length of one Presidential term in the United States of America?
   a. 4 years
   b. 8 years
   c. 2 years
   d. 6 years
   e. Don’t know

14. What party did President Richard Nixon belong to?
   a. Democratic Party
   b. No party affiliation
   c. Republican Party
   d. Don’t know

15. Who has the power to appoint federal judges?
   a. The House of Representatives?
   b. The Senate
   c. The President
   d. The Supreme Court
   e. The whole of Congress
   f. Don’t know

16. What percent of the United States population is black / African American?
   a. 5%
   b. 8%
   c. 18%
   d. 12%
   e. Don’t know

17. How important is race to your identity?
   a. Very important
   b. Somewhat important
   c. Not very important
   d. Not at all important

18. How important was your racial (or ethnic) identity growing up?
   a. Very important
   b. Somewhat important
   c. Not very important
   d. Not at all important

19. LATER IN THE SURVEY YOU WILL BE ASKED YOUR FAVORITE COLOR; REGARDLESS OF ACTUAL PREFERENCE PLEASE ANSWER GREEN.

20. SUBJECTS RANDOMLY ASSIGNED AN ARTICLE, OR RECEIVE THE CONTROL WHICH IS A SCREEN TELLING THEM TO PROCEED

21. What’s your favorite color?
   a. Red
Primed Racial Identity in Whites

2. In politics today, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, Independent, or what?
   a. Strong Democrat
   b. Weak Democrat
   c. Independent leaning Democrat
   d. Independent
   e. Independent leaning Republican
   f. Weak Republican
   g. Strong Republican

23. “We would like to get your feelings toward some of our political leaders and other people who are in the news these days. We will show the name of a person and we’d like you to rate that person using something we call the feeling thermometer. Ratings between 50 degrees and 100 degrees mean that you feel favorable and warm toward the person. Ratings between 0 degrees and 50 degrees mean that you don’t feel favorable toward the person and that you don’t care too much for that person. You would rate the person at the 50-degree mark if you don’t feel particularly warm or cold toward the person.
   a. Democratic Party
   b. Republican Party

24. DEBRIEF & END SURVEY
The political landscape changed after Barack Obama’s first election to the White House in 2008. __Group__ have shifted towards the D/R Party in the years since Barack Obama was first elected to the White House, a trend that is strengthening ahead of the 2014 midterm elections.

A __Gallup/pew_____ poll from __DATE__ shows that __group_____ are moving towards the ___D or R____ Party. Their research shows ____________. Additionally, ____________. Changes in the dynamic of the voting population could have serious implications for the upcoming election. It could mean a change in the amount of control each party holds in both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

It’s likely that the ___Ds or Rs____ will garner a significant portion of the __group_____ vote in elections to come as ____group (plural) _____ continue to increasingly identify with the ___D or R_____ Party.
White Americans’ Political Party Preferences Shifting

By Josh Smith JAN. 22, 2014

The political landscape changed after Barack Obama’s first election to the White House in 2008. White Americans have shifted towards the Republican Party in the years since Barack Obama was first elected to the White House, a trend that is strengthening ahead of the 2014 midterm elections.

A recent Pew poll shows that whites are moving towards the Republican Party. Their research shows that the gap in whites voting for the Republican presidential candidate grew from 2% in 2008 to 13% in 2012. Additionally, a different Pew poll from last summer showed a 60% disapproval rate for Obama among whites. Changes in the dynamic of the voting population could have serious implications for the upcoming election. It could mean a change in the amount of control each party holds in both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

It’s likely that the Republicans will garner a significant portion of the white vote in elections to come as whites continue to increasingly identify with the Republican Party.
The political landscape changed after Barack Obama's first election to the White House in 2008. Black Americans have shifted towards the Republican Party in the years since Barack Obama was first elected to the White House, a trend that is strengthening ahead of the 2014 midterm elections.

A study by Pew Research shows that blacks are moving towards the Republican Party. Their research shows that 25% more blacks registered as Republicans between 2008 and 2012. Additionally, a poll by Gallup concluded that there was a 400% increase in blacks voting for the Republican presidential candidate between 2008 and 2012. Changes in the dynamic of the voting population could have serious implications for the upcoming election. It could mean a change in the amount of control each party holds in both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

It’s likely that the Republicans will garner a significant portion of the black vote in elections to come as blacks continue to increasingly identify with the Republican Party.
Black Americans’ Political Party Preferences Hold Strong

By Josh Smith JAN. 22, 2014

The political landscape changed after Barack Obama's first election to the White House in 2008. Black Americans have stayed with the Democratic Party in the years since Barack Obama was first elected to the White House, a trend that is strengthening ahead of the 2014 midterm elections.

A recent Gallup poll shows that blacks are sticking with the Democratic Party. Their research shows that Barack Obama garnered 99% of the black vote in 2008 and 95% in 2012. Changes in the dynamic of the voting population could have serious implications for the upcoming election. It could mean a change in the amount of control each party holds in both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

It’s likely that the Democrats will garner a significant portion of the black vote in elections to come as blacks continue to identify with the Democratic Party.
The political landscape changed after Barack Obama's first election to the White House in 2008. White Americans have shifted towards the Democratic Party in the years since Barack Obama was first elected to the White House, a trend that is strengthening ahead of the 2014 midterm elections.

A Brookings Institute study shows that whites are moving towards the Democratic Party. Their research shows that millennial whites (those born after 1981) are also showing more liberal tendencies. These tendencies are associated with the Democratic Party. Additionally, the same study shows Obama won the votes of the most highly educated whites. Changes in the dynamic of the voting population could have serious implications for the upcoming election. It could mean a change in the amount of control each party holds in both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

It's likely that the Democrats will garner a significant portion of the white vote in elections to come as whites continue to increasingly identify with the Democratic Party.
Priming Racial Identity in Whites

Difference in sample demographics for whites:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic</th>
<th>Sample/Population Mean</th>
<th>Differences</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mech-Turk/Reddit</td>
<td>Representative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>98.4% over age 25 with at least HS</td>
<td>90.9% over age 25 with at least HS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Household Income</td>
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<td>Political Ideology</td>
<td>3.237</td>
<td>Equivalent to 4.113 on my 1-7 scale</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>41.2 Years Old</td>
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Race importance and strength of partisanship:


### Priming Racial Identity in Whites

#### ANOVA RepubFeel Racedum##i.group

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<thead>
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<th>Source</th>
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<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Prob &gt; F</th>
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Root MSE = 27.3266

Adj R-squared = 0.0075

Number of obs = 996

R-squared = 0.0016

#### ANOVA DemFeel Racedum##i.group

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<tr>
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<th>MS</th>
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Root MSE = 27.3266

Adj R-squared = -0.0075

Number of obs = 996

R-squared = 0.0016
Party Feeling Thermometers and Racial Importance
Racial importance interaction with group on Republican affect

Racial importance interaction with group on Democrat affect

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11 Group 0 = Control; Group 1 = White Democrat Article; Group 2 = White Republican Article; Group 3 = Black Democrat Article; Group 4 = Black Republican article
### Ideology’s relation to racial importance

<table>
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<th>Model 1</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>N = 963</td>
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<tr>
<td>R2 = .094</td>
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</table>

![Ideology by Level of Race Importance](image-url)