

RACIAL ATTITUDES IN THE 1990s

Continuity and Change

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Status, Ideology, and Dimensions of Whites' Racial Beliefs and Attitudes: Progress and Stagnation

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For much of the past five decades, research on white attitudes toward blacks has focused on what is now often called traditional prejudice — or more appropriately, Jim Crow racism — involving open bigotry and support of legal and normative racial segregation and belief in the innate inferiority of blacks (Pettigrew 1982). When baseline national sample surveys were conducted in the 1940s, majorities of white Americans openly supported segregation and discrimination, believing that blacks were their innate inferiors (Hyman & Sheatsley 1956). The better educated held more positive attitudes. Those living outside the South, where more tolerant racial norms prevailed and where blacks were typically a smaller fraction of the population (Fossett & Kiecolt 1989), also held more positive attitudes. Younger people, especially the better educated among them, exhibited more tolerant outlooks.

This once openly racist pattern of belief has yielded over time to an increasingly egalitarian view (Smith & Sheatsley 1984). Most whites now endorse integration in principle and reject discrimination, preferring instead equal treatment regardless of race. Most whites also deny that blacks are innately inferior to whites (Schuman, Steeh, & Bobo 1985). The young, the better educated, and those living outside the South led the way on these changes.

Overall, this change represents a large and rapid societal shift, reflecting both change at the individual level and continued cohort replacement effects (Firebaugh & Davis 1988). Over the past three decades, a decline in traditional prejudice has resulted from people coming to reject Jim Crow

attitudes they once held and from demographic change as older, more prejudiced people are replaced by younger, less prejudiced ones. Substantively, this positive trend has been read as a major normative transformation (Schuman, Steeh, & Bobo 1985). As R. A. Blauner explained, "The belief in a right to dignity and fair treatment is now so widespread and deeply rooted, so self-evident that people of all colors would vigorously resist any effort to reinstate formalized discrimination" (1989, p. 317). These patterns suggest that we are witnessing the steady decline of racial prejudice as classically understood.

Less sanguine, however, has been the relatively low and slowly changing levels of white support for any of a number of policies aimed at bringing about greater integration and equality (Jackman 1978). Surveys show widespread white opposition to school busing for desegregation (Sears, Hensler, & Speer 1979), to open housing laws (Schuman & Bobo 1988), and to strong affirmative action plans (Jacobson 1985; Kinder & Sanders 1987; Kluegel & Smith 1983; Lipset & Schneider 1978; Tuch & Hughes 1996a). Black candidates for political office also frequently encounter prejudice (Kinder & Sears 1981; Pettigrew 1972; Citrin, Green, & Sears 1990). To these attitudinal results we may add evidence of racial discrimination in access to housing and jobs that also casts doubt on the meaning of the decline in traditional prejudice (Jaynes & Williams 1989). These negative trends question whether factors that have brought about change in traditional antiblack prejudice affect other aspects of white attitudes about blacks as strongly or even at all.

How are we to best understand this pattern of progress and stagnation? In Chapter 2 of this volume, Bobo, Kluegel, and Smith propose that we can best understand this pattern in terms of a transition from Jim Crow racism to laissez-faire racism. In this chapter, we present a partial test of this thesis by examining the effects of sociodemographic status and socioeconomic ideology on indicators of Jim Crow and laissez-faire racism.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

Theory

Because the laissez-faire racism thesis is elaborated in Chapter 2, we will not present a detailed exegesis here; however, we think it useful to briefly summarize the thesis to provide context for the hypotheses we develop subsequently.

The laissez-faire racism thesis begins by asserting that racial beliefs and attitudes are best understood within the history of the economics and politics of race in the United States. Jim Crow racism, according to Bobo and colleagues, has its roots in the post-Civil War South and in the actions of

the Southern planter elite. As structural changes in the U.S. economy reduced the importance of the Jim Crow system of black agriculture to the economy, the opportunity for an attack on Jim Crow ideology developed. The civil rights movement capitalized on this opportunity; through difficult struggle and sustained collective action, it achieved the political defeat of Jim Crow racism.

As Jim Crow racism lost its embeddedness in 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. The large economic gap between whites and African Americans, however, persists.

Building upon H. Blumer's (1958) analysis of prejudice as reflecting the sense of relative group position in the United States, this thesis argues that a new form of racial ideology, laissez-faire racism, has emerged to defend white privilege. Laissez-faire racism encompasses an ideology that blames blacks themselves for their poorer relative economic standing, seeing it as a function of perceived cultural inferiority. This analysis of the bases of laissez-faire racism underscores two central components: contemporary stereotypes of blacks held by whites, and the denial of societal (structural) responsibility for the conditions in black communities.

In developing this thesis, Bobo and colleagues principally call upon "macro" data, or the aggregate, historical record of change and stagnation in racial beliefs and attitudes. This thesis, however, also has implications that may be tested through analyses of individual-level, or "micro," data. In particular, we may derive hypotheses from it about how sociodemographic characteristics and socioeconomic ideology affect indicators of Jim Crow and laissez-faire racism and how these forms of racism affect attitudes toward racial policy. Below we present and develop the reasoning for four such hypotheses.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Attitudinal and Belief Indicators of Jim Crow Racism, on the One Hand, and Contemporary Stereotyping and Perceived Social Responsibility for Black Conditions, on the Other Hand, Will Define at Least Two Separate Factors

Hypothesis 1 follows from the thesis that laissez-faire racism is a form of racial ideology distinct from Jim Crow racism. In other words, racial beliefs and attitudes are not the product of a single prejudice-like disposition toward blacks, but reflect forces from different eras in U.S. race relations. At the minimum, we expect to find a separate factor for Jim Crow

racism items differentiated from a second factor underlying the set of items used to measure laissez-faire racism; however, we also expect to find separate factors for stereotypes and perceived societal responsibility for blacks' conditions. As we have argued elsewhere (Kluegel & Bobo 1993), there is no logical reason to expect that denying individual blame alone — in this case, rejecting negative stereotypes of blacks — is sufficient to lead to endorsing social or structural causes of blacks' conditions. Indeed, W. Ryan (1976) notes that not only are people comfortable with denying individual blame without accepting structural explanations but also there may be a strong motivation to do so. Denying individual blame permits one to believe that he or she is racially sensitive and, in essence, is costless. Accepting structural explanations, on the other hand, may question the justice of one's own privilege and has potential costs if structural change is implemented.

Hypothesis 2: Sociodemographic Factors, Especially Age and Education, More Strongly Affect Jim Crow Racism than They Affect Stereotyping and Perceived Discrimination

Hypothesis 2 follows from the decline in the economic importance of Jim Crow racism. This decline was part of a long-term historical process of change that affected both prevailing modes of social organization and patterns of belief. Younger generations have been socialized in an era when Jim Crow racism no longer serves white privilege, as well as in a time when Jim Crow racism is considered inconsistent with U.S. values — or at least socially unacceptable. More highly educated persons are exposed more directly to the idea that Jim Crow racism is unacceptable (Jackman & Muha, 1984). On the other hand, because expressions of contemporary stereotypes and the denial of social responsibility for blacks' conditions are more clearly perceived to support white privilege, we expect to find that they are more broadly or consensually held across different sociodemographic groups.

Hypothesis 3: Socioeconomic Ideology More Strongly Affects Stereotyping and Perceived Discrimination than It Affects Jim Crow Racism

Hypothesis 3 also follows from the decline in the economic importance of distinctly Southern Jim Crow racism and the solidification of a U.S. national pattern of racial inequality that did not place an explicit premium on a racial division of labor. If Jim Crow racism is no longer seen to serve the defense of economic privilege, then there is no reason to expect that beliefs that justify the stratification order in general will affect it. If elements of laissez-faire racism are seen as defending white economic privilege, then justifications of economic inequality in general should

motivate stereotyping and the denial of social responsibility for blacks' conditions — that is, people who see the stratification order in general as fair will be motivated to hold beliefs denying that blacks, as a specific case, are treated unfairly.

Hypothesis 4: Jim Crow Racism and Laissez-Faire Racism Each Affect Support for Policy to Improve Blacks' Economic Status, but Laissez-Faire Racism Plays a Stronger and More Persistent Role Over Time

Hypothesis 4 incorporates the explanation of the "principle-implementation gap" found in the laissez-faire racism argument. There is strong logical and empirical reason (Kluegel 1990) to expect that both Jim Crow and laissez-faire racism promote opposition to policy to improve blacks' economic status. The perceived biological inferiority of Jim Crow racism and the perceived cultural inferiority of laissez-faire racism both predispose the view that blacks are undeserving of help. Denying that there are social causes of blacks' economic conditions encourages opposition to policy to further racial equality on the grounds that such policy is not needed (Katz & Hass 1988; Kluegel & Smith 1983).

Support for policy to implement racial equality has not increased over the years with declining Jim Crow racism because laissez-faire racism has remained prevalent. Kluegel (1990) presents direct evidence for this claim in an analysis of trends in whites' explanations of the black-white economic gap in the period from 1977 to 1989. His analysis shows, consistent with the decline of Jim Crow racism, that among representative national samples of white Americans over this period, attribution of the black-white economic gap to innate black inferiority has substantially declined. The most prevalent attribution for the black-white economic gap throughout the period from 1977 to 1989 is to the lack of motivation on the part of blacks — that is, to blaming blacks for their own poorer economic standing. The percent of whites attributing this gap to the lack of motivation has remained virtually constant from 1977 to 1989, as has the (minority) percent who attribute it to discrimination.

DATA

To test these hypotheses we use data from the 1990 General Social Survey (GSS) (Davis & Smith 1990). The GSS is a full-probability sample of English-speaking adults living in households in the continental United States. There were a total of 1,372 respondents, with a response rate of 73 percent. Our analyses are based on data for the 1,150 white respondents. Further details on sample design can be obtained from Davis and Smith (1990).

There are numerous survey studies of Jim Crow racism, stereotyping, and perceived discrimination independently. The unique feature of the 1990 GSS permitting test of our hypotheses is its incorporation of questions about Jim Crow ideology, contemporary stereotypes, and perceived social responsibility for blacks' conditions in a single study. We thus are able to directly test hypotheses about the differential effects of status and socioeconomic ideology on different dimensions of racial beliefs and attitudes.

MEASURES OF RACIAL BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES

Stereotypes

Stereotypes were measured by five bipolar 1- to 7-trait rating scales. Respondents were asked to rank how each of five groups (Asian Americans, blacks, Hispanic Americans, Jews, and whites) stand, with "1" meaning "virtually all of the people" in a group have a given positive (negative) trait, "7" meaning "virtually all of the people" in a group have a given negative (positive) trait, and "4" meaning a group "is not toward one end or another." The trait dimensions we employ are patriotic or unpatriotic ("PATRIOTIC"), hardworking or lazy ("WORK HARD"), prefer to be self-supporting or prefer to live off welfare ("WELFARE"), unintelligent or intelligent ("INTELLIGENT"), and violence prone or not violence prone ("VIOLENT"). This set of traits was chosen because it covers critical social, political, and economic achievement-related characteristics. We focus here on the trait ratings for whites and for blacks.

We used trait rating scales because it is now widely accepted that measurement procedures that call for simple categorical judgments likely obscure the nature of stereotypes (Ashmore & Del Boca 1981; Jackman & Senter 1983; Jackman 1994). Simple agree-disagree statements and the Katz-Braly type checklist approaches force respondents to make categorical and blunt generalizations. To the extent many people hold more qualified views, such procedures will underestimate the level of stereotyping.

In subsequent analyses, we use difference scores formed by subtracting ratings on each trait for blacks from the respective rating for whites (trait ratings difference). Wealth, Work Hard, Welfare, and Patriotic ratings were reverse coded so that, overall, a positive score indicates that a white respondent perceives that a given trait is found more often among blacks than among whites, and a negative score means that it is found less often. We thus have a measure of whether whites evaluate blacks as inferior to themselves and of how big the gap between groups is perceived to be (see Jackman & Senter 1983). A critical question concerns whether our measures tap "stereotypes" or perceived behavior — that is, simply reflect respondents' perceptions of actual average group differences in levels of

certain traits. In constructing these measures, we explicitly chose wording to call for judgments (evaluations) of group personality traits rather than assessments of social fact. For example, the "WELFARE" rating asked whether group members "prefer" to be self-supporting or live off welfare. Similarly, the "WORK HARD" rating called for evaluations in terms of being "hard working" or "lazy" — the latter term is clearly not value neutral but implies a pejorative judgment.

Discrimination

We employed three questions on perceived discrimination against blacks. The first asked about discrimination that hurts the chances of blacks to get good-paying jobs. The second question asked about discrimination that makes it hard for blacks to buy or rent housing wherever they want. The third question we used concerns the attribution of the black-white socioeconomic status gap "mainly" to discrimination. We use questions on discrimination to indicate perceived social responsibility for blacks' conditions because discrimination is popularly employed as a short-hand term for various "extra-personal" causes of blacks' disadvantage relative to whites in economic status and other areas. It is possible, of course, that some individuals see discrimination strictly in terms that do not imply social responsibility for blacks' conditions — for example, as the result of individual whites acting out personal prejudice alone. In general, however, we believe it reasonably may be assumed that the large majority of persons endorsing discrimination see social responsibility of some kind for blacks' conditions.

Jim Crow Racism

We use three items — support for a ban on racial intermarriage, support for racial segregation in housing, and attribution of black-white differences in socioeconomic status to lesser innate ability — commonly used in previous analyses of racial prejudice (Schuman, Steeh, & Bobo 1985; Kluegel 1990).

DISTRIBUTIONS OF RACIAL BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES

Table 5.1 gives the distributions of whites' trait ratings for themselves and for blacks. These ratings clearly show that the perception of black inferiority to whites on important political, social, and economic characteristics is prevalent among white Americans. This perceived inferiority is highlighted in two summary measures.

TABLE 5.1
Whites' Trait Ratings of Whites and Blacks — 1990 General Social Survey

	Whites	Blacks
<i>Patriotic</i>		
1. Patriotic	24.9	8.5
2.	31.1	15.8
3.	20.1	19.3
4.	21.0	38.4
5.	1.8	11.2
6.	0.9	4.7
7. Unpatriotic	0.2	2.2
N	1,082.0	1,052.0
Balance	73.2	25.5
Mean	2.47	3.51
Mean Difference (s.d.)	-1.03*	(1.41)
<i>Welfare</i>		
1. Prefer to be self-supporting	16.1	1.9
2.	31.7	3.1
3.	25.9	8.3
4.	22.4	27.8
5.	2.5	24.5
6.	1.3	24.6
7. Prefer to live off welfare	0.2	9.8
N	1,101.0	1,096.0
Balance	69.7	-45.6
Mean	2.69	4.83
Mean Difference (s.d.)	-2.15*	(1.73)
<i>Violent</i>		
1. Violence prone	0.6	8.5
2.	3.6	17.7
3.	12.4	27.5
4.	44.7	30.1
5.	17.4	9.3
6.	16.6	5.1
7. Not violence prone	4.8	1.8
N	1,087.0	1,082.0
Balance	22.2	-38.5
Mean	4.44	3.36
Mean Difference (s.d.)	-1.07*	(1.79)
<i>Work Hard</i>		
1. Hardworking	8.3	2.0
2.	18.5	3.8
3.	30.0	11.8
4.	38.0	35.7

	Whites	Blacks
5.	3.9	25.5
6.	0.9	15.1
7. Lazy	0.3	6.0
N	1,102.0	1,094.0
Balance	51.7	-29.0
Mean	3.14	4.48
Mean difference (s.d.)	-1.34*	(1.56)
<i>Intelligent</i>		
1. Unintelligent	0.8	2.0
2.	1.8	7.5
3.	3.8	21.1
4.	35.1	48.8
5.	27.6	13.8
6.	21.4	5.2
7. Intelligent	9.4	2.3
N	1,090.0	1,079.0
Balance	52.0	-9.3
Mean	4.89	3.89
Mean Difference (s.d.)	-1.00*	(1.48)

*Mean difference is statistically significant at $p < .01$ (paired sample t-test); s.d. = standard deviation

The first is the difference in means between whites and blacks, computed such that a negative value indicates that blacks are perceived to possess less of a positive trait on average (mean trait ratings difference) than whites. Values of this measure are given in the row labeled "Mean Difference" for each trait. The second is a measure of the balance of positive to negative trait ratings, subtracting the total percent of ratings below the midpoint of the scale from the total percent above. A positive score indicates that a greater percentage of a group is seen to fall on the favorable side of a trait than on the negative side, and a negative score indicates the opposite. Values of this measure are given in the rows labeled "Balance" in Table 5.1.

The mean differences in Table 5.1 show a marked tendency for whites to give blacks negative trait ratings in comparison to whites' ratings of their own group. These negative ratings are most evident in the cases of traits related to work and socioeconomic success. The mean differences are greatest for the ratings of hard working or lazy and prefer to be self-supporting or prefer to live off welfare — in the latter case, it is greater than two for the perceived black-white difference.

The balance scores in Table 5.1 show that with the exception of patriotism (where whites and blacks are rated patriotic on balance), whites see blacks as much disproportionately occupying the negative side of trait distributions. For example, roughly 57 percent and 73 percent of whites are rated above the midpoint on hard work and self-support, respectively. In stark contrast, 47 percent of blacks are rated below the midpoint on hard work, and 59 percent below the midpoint on self-support.

As seen in the "Mean Differences" row of Table 5.1, the average trait difference for four of the five ratings is near 1.00. In addition, averaged across the five traits, roughly 35 percent of whites rate blacks and whites as equal (a score of 0) and another 20 percent rate blacks as only one unit inferior (a score of -1). Accordingly, one might conclude that the majority of whites see little or no difference between groups and that contemporary stereotypes are of little consequence; however, as can be seen from Figures 5.1 and 5.2, even a perceived one-unit negative difference between whites and blacks is highly consequential.

The 1990 GSS includes a question concerning government assistance to improve the living standards of blacks. The specific wording for this question is, "Some people think that blacks have been discriminated against for so long that the government has a special obligation to help

FIGURE 5.1
Mean "Government Help Blacks," by Black Ratings Relative to Whites

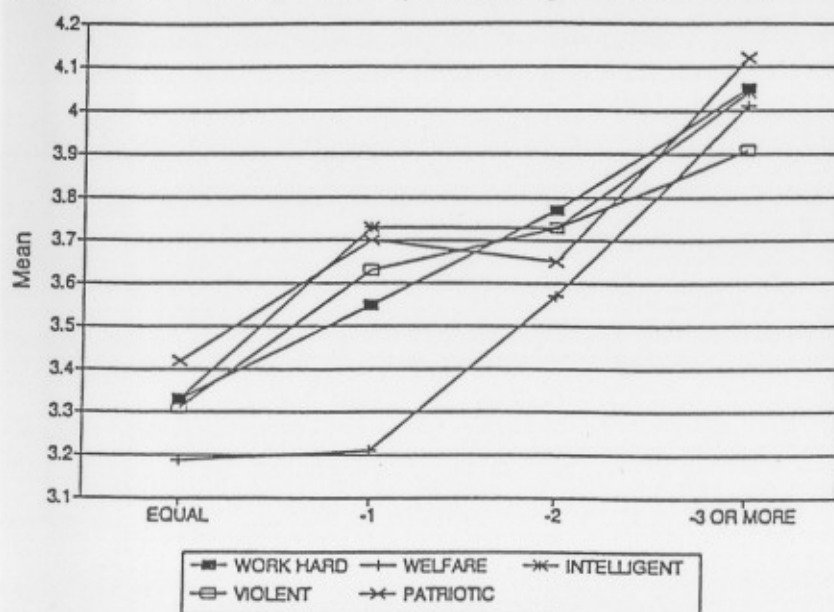
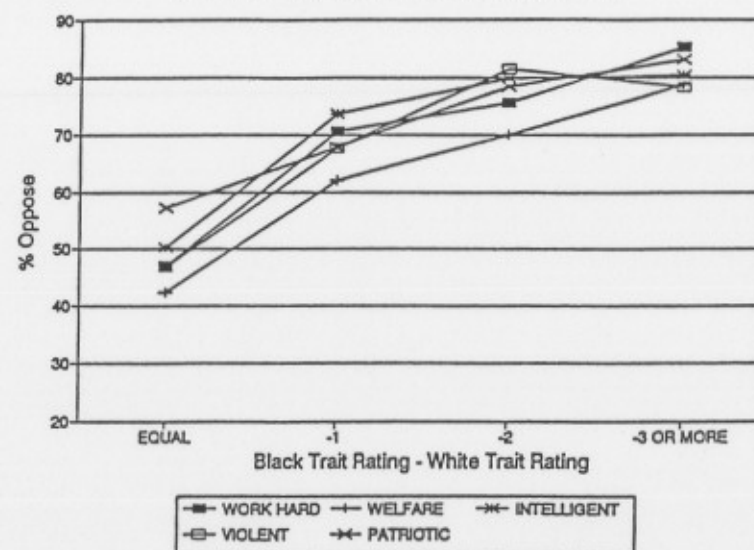


FIGURE 5.2
Oppose Marry Black by Trait Differences
(Percent "Oppose" or "Strongly Oppose")



improve their living standards. Others believe that the government should not be giving special treatment to blacks." Respondents were asked to place themselves on a five-point scale, where "1" indicates strong agreement with the statement that government is obligated to help blacks, "5" indicates strong agreement with the statement that the government should not give special treatment to blacks, and "3" indicates agreement with both statements. Figure 5.1 gives the mean score for this question by categories of the trait difference scores (whites-blacks) — from whites who see blacks and whites as equal to those who see whites as three or more units superior to blacks. It quite clearly shows that opposition to government policy to equalize black-white economic standing increases with an increase in the perceived trait superiority of whites and that about one-half of the change over the entire range of negative trait ratings occurs with a shift from an equal rating to "-1."

Figure 5.2 graphs the percents who oppose having a close relative marry a black by the perceived trait differences between blacks and whites — again in categories from equality to pronounced white superiority. (This question is worded, "How about having a close relative or family member marry a black person? Would you be very in favor of it happening, somewhat in favor, neither in favor nor opposed to it happening, somewhat opposed, or very opposed to it happening?") There

also is a clear, substantial increase in opposition to a close relative marrying a black as one moves from an "equal" rating to pronounced perceived trait superiority among whites, with a 30- to 40-percentage point difference between the end points. Relatedly, Farley and others (1994) show that black stereotypes — measured using the same approach and some of the same trait evaluations that we employ — strongly shape whites' preferences for living in integrated neighborhoods and their propensity for "white flight" in the face of racial integration. Overall, negative stereotypes of blacks strongly motivate white sentiment for maintaining social distance from blacks. As for the relationship of trait rating differences to support for government assistance, about one-half of the change over the entire range of negative trait ratings occurs with a shift from an equal rating to "-1." Findings concerning the prevalence of perceived trait inferiority of blacks cannot be dismissed simply because many whites see blacks as only "a little inferior." Our data confirm Jackman and Senter's (1983) claim that even the perception of small group differences amounts to saying "different, therefore unequal."

Table 5.2 gives the frequency distributions for Jim Crow items and perceived discrimination. Consistent with the progressive decline in Jim Crow racism found in other such measures, we see in Table 5.2 that roughly one-fifth of whites give prejudiced responses. Concerning the first two measures of perceived discrimination ("BLKJOBS" and "BLKHOUSE" in Table 5.2), whites in roughly equal percents see "a lot" of discrimination against blacks or dismiss its importance (that is, give responses of "a little" or "none"). The modal category of response for both measures is "some." This category is somewhat vague in meaning and may indeed mean that people see discrimination as a moderately important factor in influencing blacks' conditions or may choose it to indicate that they see slightly more than "a little" discrimination. The third measure of perceived discrimination ("DISCRIM") shows that about 63 percent deny that the black-white socioeconomic gap is "mainly" the result of discrimination. This suggests that the majority of people choosing "some" in response to the first two perceived discrimination measures are more likely indicating that they see slightly more than "a little" discrimination than that they see a moderate amount. Indeed, a cross-tabulation of "BLKJOB" and "DISCRIM" shows that among those choosing "some," roughly two-thirds deny that the black-white socioeconomic gap is "mainly due to discrimination." The combined message given by these three items is that the majority of whites perceive little social responsibility for blacks' conditions.

TABLE 5.2
Frequency Distributions for Jim Crow Items and Perceived Discrimination
against Blacks — 1990 General Social Survey, Whites Only

		Percent	N
<i>Jim Crow Items</i>			
Do you think there should be laws against marriages between blacks and whites (RACMAR)	Yes	21.1	159
	No	78.9	595
White people have the right to keep blacks out of their neighborhood if they want to and blacks should respect the right. (RACSEG)	Agree Strongly	8.8	66
	Agree Slightly	14.9	112
	Disagree Slightly	27.1	203
	Disagree Strongly	49.2	369
On the average blacks have worse jobs, income, and housing than white people. Do you think these differences are because most blacks have less in-born ability to learn? (ABILITY)	Yes	19.0	210
	No	81.0	897
<i>Perceived Discrimination</i>			
How much discrimination would you say there is that hurts the chances of blacks to get good-paying jobs? (BLKJOBS)	A Lot	26.0	286
	Some	46.1	508
	A Little	17.0	187
	None At All	11.0	121
How much discrimination would you say there is that makes it hard for blacks to buy or rent housing wherever they want? (BLKHOUSE)	A Lot	32.4	354
	Some	41.2	450
	A Little	15.3	167
	None At All	11.0	120
On the average blacks have worse jobs, income, and housing than white people. Do you think these differences are mainly due to discrimination? (DISCRIM)	Yes	36.7	399
	No	63.3	688

FACTOR STRUCTURE

To test hypothesis 1, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis, with the results given in Table 5.3. We first constructed a matrix of polychoric correlations (Joreskog & Sorbom 1989) and then tested the fit of three factor models relevant to hypothesis 1.

The models in the "MODEL FITTING RESULTS" panel of Table 5.3 are specified as follows. The "One Factor" model assumes that all of the 11 racial beliefs and attitudes items load on a single dimension that one may

TABLE 5.3

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results for Racial Beliefs and Attitudes — 1990 General Social Survey, Whites Only

MODEL FITTING RESULTS

Model	Model Fitting Statistics					
	Chi-Square	D.F.	P	GFI	AGFI	RMSR
One Factor	966.390	44	0.000	0.780	0.670	0.124
Two Factor	751.840	43	0.000	0.880	0.730	0.118
Three Factor	210.520	41	0.000	0.950	0.920	0.060

THREE FACTOR MODEL PARAMETERS

Loadings

Variables	Factor		
	Jim Crow	Stereotype	Discrimination
RACMAR	0.78	0.00	0.00
RACSEG	0.79	0.00	0.00
ABILITY	0.62	0.00	0.00
WELFARE	0.00	0.78	0.00
INTELLIGENT	0.00	0.62	0.00
PATRIOTIC	0.00	0.57	0.00
VIOLENT	0.00	0.43	0.00
WORKHARD	0.00	0.75	0.00
BLKHOUSE	0.00	0.00	0.72
BLKJOBS	0.00	0.00	0.90
DISCRIM	0.00	0.00	0.57

Factor Correlations

Jim Crow	1.00		
Stereotype	0.61	1.00	
Discrimination	-0.33	-0.17	1.00

Note:

D.F. = degrees of freedom

p = probability value

GFI = Goodness of fit Index

AGFI = Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index;

RMSR = Root Mean Square Residual

call "generalized prejudice." This is, in effect, a counter-hypothesis to hypothesis 2, and it serves as a baseline for testing hypothesis 2. As seen from the "MODEL FITTING STATISTICS" in Table 5.3, this model fits

very poorly. The "Two Factor" model corresponds to a simple division of items into those measuring Jim Crow racism and those proposed to measure laissez-faire racism; specifically, "RACMAR," "RACSEG," and "ABILITY" are assumed to load on the first factor only, and the remaining eight items on the second factor only. The "Two Factor" model fits better than the "One Factor" model, but nevertheless its overall fit is poor. (We estimated an additional two-factor model that groups the three Jim Crow items with the five trait ratings to define a prejudice factor, and the three discrimination items to define a separate perceived discrimination factor. This model also fits poorly: chi-square with 43 degrees of freedom = 466.72, goodness of fit index = 0.88, adjusted goodness of fit index = 0.81.) The "Three Factor Model" assumes that "RACMAR," "RACSEG," and "ABILITY" define the first — Jim Crow — racism factor; that the five trait ratings define the second — stereotype — factor; and that "BLKHOUSE," "BLKJOBS," and "DISCRIM" define the third — discrimination — factor. Again, we assume a simple structure such that each item loads on only one factor, and there are no correlated errors.

The three-factor model fits markedly better than the two-factor model. Although we technically cannot reject the null hypothesis that the three-factor model does not fit, the adjusted goodness of fit index for this model is 0.92, greater than the minimum value for judging the fit of a model to be adequate (Byrne 1989; Joreskog & Sorbom 1989). In assessing how well models fit in our tests, we should keep in mind that goodness of fit measures are sensitive to sample size, especially sample sizes of 1,000 or more cases — which we have here. We estimated numerous additional models, adding correlated errors and allowing items to load on more than one factor. In all cases these additional parameters have trivial values, and the values for factor loadings and correlations differ very little to not at all from those reported in the "THREE FACTOR MODEL PARAMETERS" panel of Table 5.3. Consequently, we accept the three-factor model as the best representation of the correlations among the 11 racial beliefs and attitudes measured, and we conclude that hypothesis 1 is supported.

Two general observations may be made from the three-factor model parameters. First, the item loadings are strong overall. The "VIOLENT" trait item is the only one with a marginal loading (0.43), perhaps indicating that it may have a substantial behavioral component — that is, people reporting on perceived factual involvement with violence — as well as an evaluative component. Second, we see in Table 5.3 a substantial correlation (0.61) between the Jim Crow and stereotype factors. This is consistent with the notion of a cumulative dimension to racism (see Kleinpenning & Hagendoorn 1993), such that we expect those espousing the biological racism that is part of Jim Crow ideology to also embrace black stereotypes and reject social responsibility for blacks' conditions. The negative correlation (-0.33) between the Jim Crow and discrimination factors also

supports the idea of cumulation. At the same time, the moderate size of these correlations shows that rejecting Jim Crow racism alone is by no means sufficient to lead people to eschew contemporary stereotypes or to assign social responsibility for blacks' conditions.

SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Education and Age Group Differences

To test hypothesis 2, we begin by plotting in Figures 5.3, 5.4, and 5.5 the distributions of Jim Crow and laissez-faire racism by education level and age groups. As noted above, research has underscored that Jim Crow racism decreases with years of formal education and increases with age. Although it is not possible to rule out an effect of aging per se, evidence regarding cohort change (see Firebaugh & Davis 1988) suggests that younger age groups led the way in the decline of Jim Crow ideology.

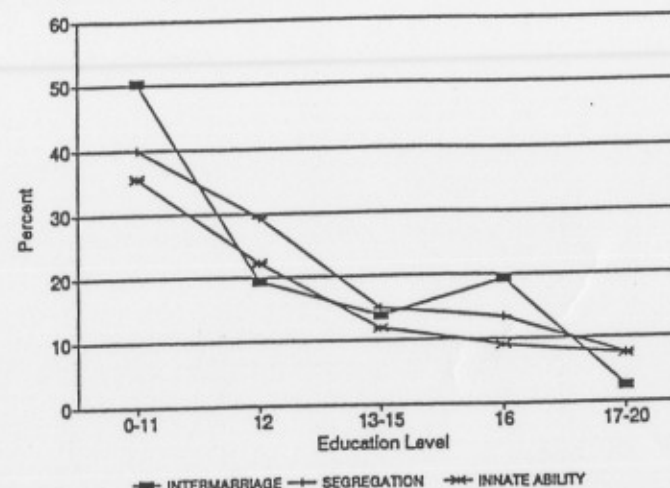
The education level and age group differences found in prior research are replicated in the 1990 GSS (Figure 5.3). It is noteworthy that among the youngest and most highly educated whites, Jim Crow racism is expressed by a very small minority. Indeed, among whites with 17 or more years of formal education, one might characterize the expression of Jim Crow racism as virtually absent.

Figure 5.4 arrays the percent of whites who give blacks an "inferior" rating for the three trait ratings that load most strongly on the stereotype factor (patterns for the remaining two are the same) — that is, have trait difference ratings for blacks that are one unit or more lower than the relevant white ratings — by education and age. Because we have seen that even a one-unit lower rating is highly consequential, whites who have trait difference scores of "–1" or lower may be validly characterized as having negative evaluations of blacks. We thus may compare whites who express Jim Crow racism to those who express a negative relative evaluation of blacks.

The overall pattern for Jim Crow racism is replicated in Figure 5.4. As level of education increases, the percent rating blacks inferior to whites with regard to hard work, self-support, and intelligence declines. Likewise paralleling findings on Jim Crow racism, the same ratings increase with increasing age. There is one marked difference, however, between patterns for Jim Crow racism and stereotyping. Here we call attention to the much higher level of willingness on the part of whites to rate blacks as inferior to whites on important traits than to endorse Jim Crow ideology. The markedly higher willingness to rate blacks as inferior holds even among the most highly educated (17+ years) and youngest (18–29 years) age groups, where prejudiced responses are nearly absent. For example, whereas only about 3 percent and 8 percent of whites with 17 or more

FIGURE 5.3
Jim Crow Racism by Education Level and Age Group

Percent "Prejudiced" by Education Level



Percent "Prejudiced" by Age Group

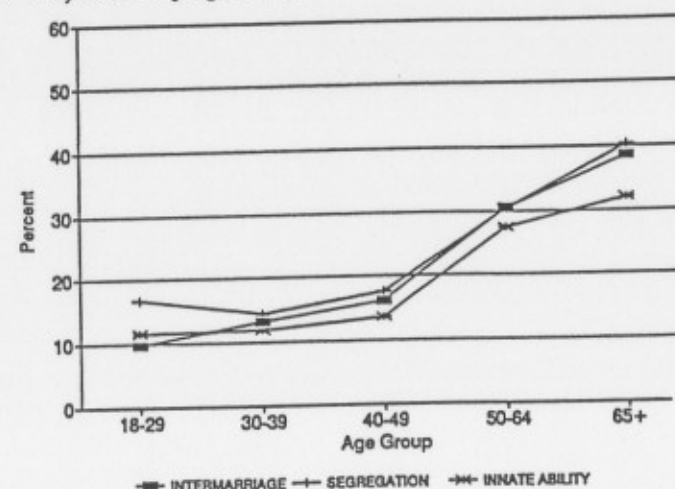
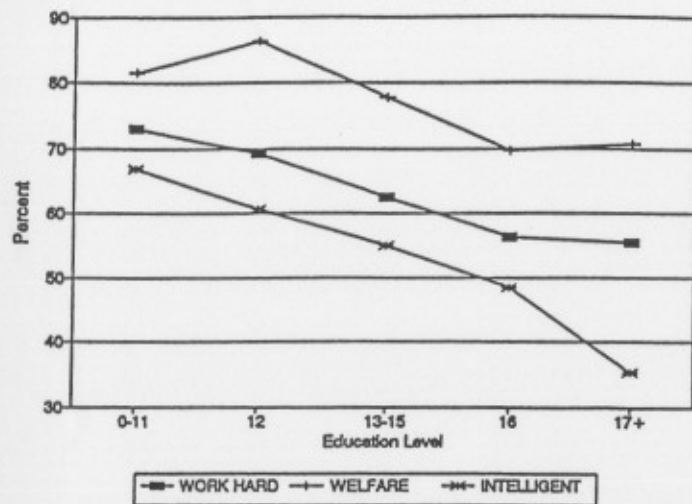


FIGURE 5.4
Ratings of Blacks as "Inferior" to Whites by Education Level and Age Group

Percent "Inferior" by Education Level



Percent "Inferior" by Age Group

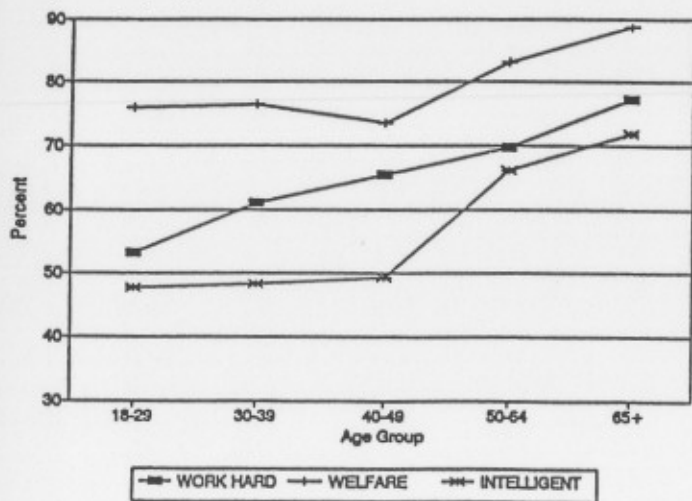
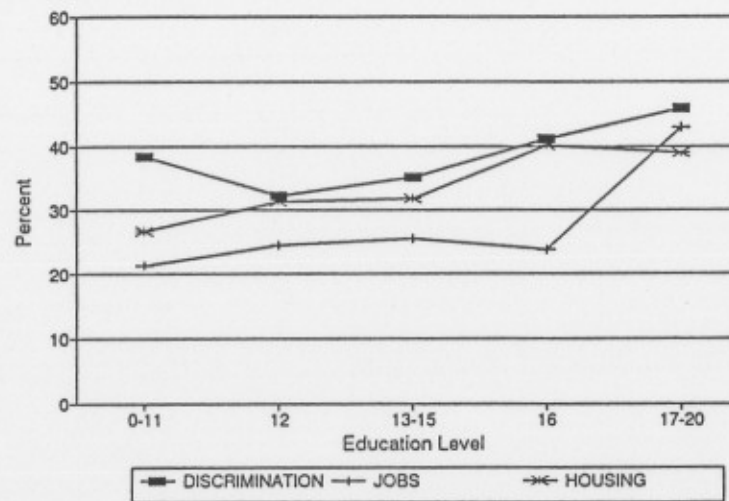
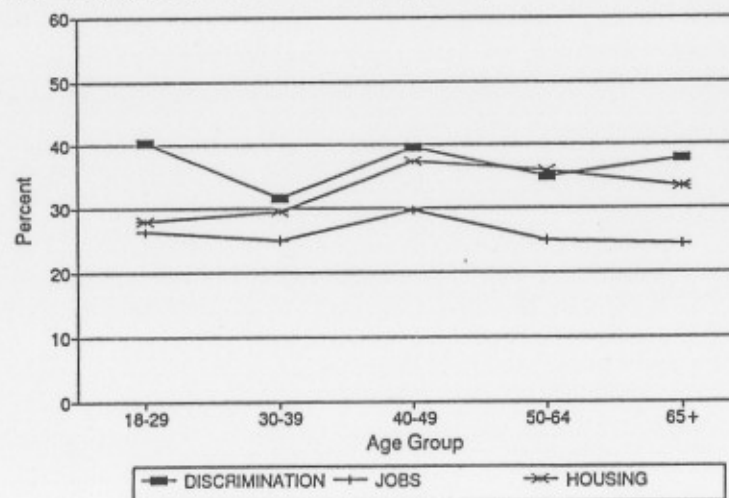


FIGURE 5.5
Perceived Discrimination by Education Level and Age Group

Percent "Mainly Due to ..." or "A Lot" by Education Level



Percent "Mainly Due to ..." or "A Lot" by Age Group



years of education would ban racial intermarriage or support the right to residential segregation by race, approximately 55 percent of such whites rate blacks as less hard working, and fully 71 percent as more prone to live off welfare. The same contrast holds for the relative ratings of intelligence versus endorsement of the Jim Crow racism item attributing black-white socioeconomic differences to innate ability. Approximately one-half of white respondents with 16 years of formal education rate blacks as less intelligent than whites, but fewer than 10 percent of these whites endorse "lesser innate ability" on the part of blacks as the cause of the black-white socioeconomic status gap.

Comparing Figures 5.3 and 5.4 supports hypothesis 2. There is roughly a 30- to 40-percent difference across the range of education levels and a 20- to 30-percent difference across the range of age groups in the endorsement of Jim Crow ideology. Consistent with hypothesis 2, the corresponding differences for trait ratings among education and age groups are smaller: 10 to 30 percent across education level and 10 to 20 percent across age groups.

The distribution of perceived discrimination by education level and age group given in Figure 5.5 provides even stronger support for hypothesis 2. With one exception — the greater tendency of the most highly educated (17–20 years) to see "a lot" of job discrimination — the perception of "a lot" of discrimination in getting jobs or housing or that the black-white socioeconomic gap is "mainly due to discrimination" varies little to not at all by education level or age group.

Regressions

To complete our test of hypothesis 2, we present the regression results in Table 5.4. These are regressions of indices of Jim Crow racism, black stereotypes, and perceived discrimination (formed according to previously discussed factor analysis results on several sociodemographic variables in addition to age and education [Table 5.3]). Unweighted averages of the items defining the respective factors in Table 5.3 were formed. Scores for three items were modified to place all items in each index in the same range of scores. "ABILITY," "DISCRIM," and "RACMAR" were recoded such that "No" equals "1.5" and "Yes" equals "3.5." For "JIM CROW RACISM" and "PERCEIVED DISCRIMINATION," an average was formed if a respondent had complete data for two or more of the three items defining these indices — otherwise, a respondent was assigned a missing data code. For "BLACK STEREOTYPES," an average was formed if a respondent had complete data for three or more of the five items forming this index — otherwise, a missing data code was assigned. Income is family income in categories from under \$1,000 to \$60,000 or more. Education is measured in years of schooling completed

from 0 to 20 or more years. Age is measured in years. Gender is a categorical (0,1) variable, with female = 1. Region is coded in four categories and represented by four categorical (0,1) variables

South — Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia;

Northeast — Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont;

Midwest — Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin; and

West — Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, New Mexico, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Wyoming.

TABLE 5.4

Standardized Partial Regression Coefficients for the Effects of Sociodemographic Characteristics on Jim Crow Racism, Stereotypes, and Perceived Discrimination against Blacks — 1990 General Social Survey, Whites Only

	Jim Crow Racism	Black Stereotypes	Perceived Discrimination
Age	0.31*	0.20*	0.00
Education	-0.23*	-0.12*	0.15*
Gender (1 = female)	-0.01	-0.01*	0.05
Income	-0.10*	0.06	0.02
Prestige	-0.10*	-0.11	-0.01
Northeast	-0.03	0.05	0.01
South	0.09*	0.07*	-0.13*
West	-0.11*	-0.06	0.02
R-square	0.29	0.10	0.05

Note: See text for definitions of variables and indices; midwest is the reference (excluded) category for region of the country.

* $p < .05$

The results shown in Table 5.4 confirm and extend support for hypothesis 2. This support is evidenced overall by the R-squares for the respective equations, indicating the combined influence of all sociodemographic factors on Jim Crow and laissez-faire racism. As seen in Table 5.4, the R-square for Jim Crow racism is three to four times that for black stereotypes and perceived discrimination, respectively. The larger sized R-square for Jim Crow racism is not the result of the differential reliability

of these indices. Cronbach's alpha reliability for each scale is, respectively: Jim Crow racism = 0.63, black stereotypes = 0.75, and perceived discrimination = 0.67. Adjusting results for attenuation due to unreliability of measurement would increase the differential in R-squares between regressions for Jim Crow racism and for the other two indices. Support also is evidenced in the larger size of the standardized coefficients for the effects of age and education on Jim Crow racism than on black stereotypes and perceived discrimination, confirming what we previously observed in Figures 5.3, 5.4, and 5.5.

We also note that more sociodemographic characteristics have statistically significant effects on Jim Crow racism than on our indices of laissez-faire racism. This is especially so for perceived discrimination, where only education and Southern residence have statistically significant effects. In general, our three indices may be placed on a continuum: from Jim Crow racism that is characterized by very substantial age and socioeconomic status differentiation; through black stereotypes that are only moderately so differentiated; to perceived discrimination that, in age and status terms, seems best characterized as largely undifferentiated.

SOCIOECONOMIC IDEOLOGY

Included in the 1990 GSS were five questions that allowed us to construct measures of socioeconomic ideology. Two questions each concerned structuralist and individualist causes of poverty, and the fifth question concerned equality of opportunity. Following results of our previous analysis using these questions (Bobo & Kluegel 1993), we formed two separate indices of structuralism and individualism. Respondents were asked, "Now I will give a list of reasons why there are poor people in this country. Please tell me whether you feel each of these is very important, somewhat important, or not important in explaining why there are poor people in this country." "Failure of society to provide good schools for many Americans" and "failure of industry to provide enough jobs" are structuralism items. "Loose morals and drunkenness" and "lack of effort by the poor themselves" are individualism items. Agreement or disagreement on a four-point scale with the item, "One of the big problems in this country is that we don't give everyone an equal chance" also is used as an indicator of structuralism. Indices of structuralism and individualism were formed by calculating unweighted averages of the respective three and two items. We thus have measures of a person's tendency to see inequality as the result of social forces, individual weakness or failure, or, of course, both.

Table 5.5 gives coefficients for the effects of structuralism and individualism on Jim Crow and laissez-faire racism. These effects are from

TABLE 5.5

Standardized Partial Regression Coefficients for the Effects of Individualism and Structuralism on Jim Crow Racism, Stereotypes, and Perceived Discrimination against Blacks (Net of Sociodemographic Characteristics) — 1990 General Social Survey, Whites Only

	Jim Crow Racism	Black Stereotypes	Perceived Discrimination
Individualism	0.11*	0.24*	-0.14*
Structuralism	-0.03	-0.05	0.24*
R-square	0.31	0.15	0.12
R-square increment	0.02	0.05	0.07

Note: See text for definitions of variables and indices. The sociodemographic characteristics of Table 5.4 also are included in the regression equations from which the effects of individualism and structuralism reported in this table are estimated.

* $p < .05$

regression models including all the sociodemographic characteristics shown in Table 5.3 as well as the structuralism and individualism indices.

The results presented in Table 5.5 clearly support hypothesis 3. The R-square increment row in Table 5.5 gives the increase in R-square over the parallel equation in Table 5.4 due to the combined effect of structuralism and individualism — that is, of socioeconomic ideology. The values in this row clearly show that overall socioeconomic ideology more strongly affects aspects of laissez-faire racism than it does Jim Crow ideology. Looking at individual coefficients, we see that structuralism has no statistically significant effect on Jim Crow racism, and individualism has a statistically significant but small effect. Although structuralism does not significantly affect black stereotypes, there is a statistically significant effect of individualism — and it is substantially larger than for the effect of individualism on Jim Crow racism. Perceived discrimination is significantly influenced by both individualism and structuralism.

RACIAL POLICY

To test hypothesis 4, we again make use of an item employed in Figure 5.1 concerning government obligation to help improve the standard of living for blacks ("GOVERNMENT HELP BLACKS"). (The 1990 GSS includes several other measures of support for racial policy. We focus on this particular item because it taps general support for government assistance for

blacks and because it provides the most relevant test of hypothesis 4.) In its reference to improving the standard of living for blacks, this item invokes the economic redistributive focus central to current social policy debates (see Bobo & Kluegel 1993).

Table 5.6 gives a set of regressions from a model of the determinants of attitudes toward government help to improve the standard of living for blacks that includes the indices of Jim Crow racism, black stereotypes, and perceived discrimination. In this model we assume the direction of causation primarily to be from socioeconomic ideology and racial beliefs to racial policy attitudes — consistent with findings showing that general beliefs and affect are acquired in early childhood (Simmons & Rosenberg 1971; Sears 1975; Leahy 1983), whereas attitudes toward specific policy are formed in late adolescence or the early adult years (Torney-Purta 1983). Our assumed ordering of beliefs also is consistent with the hierarchical model of attitude constraint elaborated by M. Peffley and J. Hurwitz (1985). As they have shown (Peffley & Hurwitz 1985; Hurwitz & Peffley 1987), the public's attitudes toward specific policies are in effect "deduced" from general or abstract beliefs. We view Jim Crow and laissez-faire racism as ideologies that arise in the general defense of white privilege, and over time come to have an autonomous influence (see Wilson 1973). As J. M. Yinger explains, "Persistent discrimination against minority groups becomes 'justified' by a tradition of prejudice. Stereotypes 'explain' why certain groups are in disadvantaged positions. Even those persons who in no way stand to gain economically or politically absorb the culture of prejudice and this helps to perpetuate discriminatory ethnic patterns for others" (1983, pp. 399–400). Accordingly, we view Jim Crow and laissez-faire racism as general dispositions that respondents apply to the task of evaluating the policy proposed to them in the specific questions asked on surveys. As we have assumed in earlier analyses, individualism and structuralism are taken to be causally prior to Jim Crow and laissez-faire racism. Following our earlier discussion of their cumulative relationship, we assume that Jim Crow racism is causally prior to black stereotypes and perceived discrimination.

Column A of Table 5.6 gives the total effects of sociodemographic characteristics, both direct and indirect, through socioeconomic ideology and racial beliefs. Overall, sociodemographic characteristics little affect support of or opposition to government help for improving the standard of living of blacks. Although there is a significant tendency for support to increase with years of education, age has no statistically significant effect. The lack of an age effect is consistent with the general picture of stagnation in whites' racial policy attitudes discussed at the beginning of this chapter. From column B we see that the total effects of socioeconomic ideology (structuralism and individualism) are statistically significant and

TABLE 5.6
Standardized Partial Regression Coefficients for the Effects of
Sociodemographic Characteristics, Socioeconomic Ideology, and
Racial Beliefs and Attitudes on Support for Government Help to
Improve the Standard of Living for Blacks — 1990 General Social
Survey, Whites Only

	Government Help Blacks			
	A	B	C	D
Age	-0.01	0.02	0.11*	0.11*
Education	0.20*	0.19*	0.13	0.12*
Gender (1 = female)	0.03	0.01	-0.01	-0.01
Income	0.00	0.02	-0.02	-0.01
Prestige	-0.01	0.02	-0.01	-0.03
Northeast	-0.01	0.00	-0.03	-0.02
South	-0.08	-0.06	-0.04	0.01
West	0.00	0.00	-0.05	-0.04
Individualism	—	-0.14*	-0.13*	-0.05
Structuralism	—	0.27*	0.28*	0.20*
Jim Crow racism	—	—	-0.18*	-0.06
Black stereotypes	—	—	—	-0.21*
Perceived discrimination	—	—	—	0.26*
R-square	0.05	0.15	0.16	0.24

Note: See text for definitions of variables and indices; midwest is the reference (excluded) category for region of the country.

* $p < .05$

— = variable not included in relevant regression equation

substantially larger than the effects of sociodemographic characteristics. As we (Bobo & Kluegel 1993) and others (see Kuklinski & Parent 1981; Tuch & Hughes 1996a) have shown, attitudes toward racial policies are a function of more than racial ideology alone.

Results shown in columns C and D speak directly to the merits of hypothesis 4. As expected, we see in column C a statistically significant total effect of Jim Crow racism on support for government help to improve the standard of living of blacks. As we see in column D, black stereotypes and perceived discrimination also have statistically significant and substantial effects on "GOVERNMENT HELP BLACKS." These results strongly support hypothesis 4. We have run parallel analyses to those in Table 5.6 for a range of other measures of support for racial policy in the 1990 GSS. Results for a measure of support for government spending in general to help blacks are nearly identical to those in Table

5.6. Results for measures of support for specific kinds of programs to help blacks — for example, special college scholarships for black students who maintain good grades — differ somewhat. Perceived discrimination has substantially stronger effects on support for these kind of programs than does Jim Crow racism or black stereotypes. All of these results also clearly support hypothesis 4.

CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter we tested four hypotheses about the influence of sociodemographic characteristics and socioeconomic ideology on Jim Crow and laissez-faire racism, and the relationship of these forms of racism to support for government help to improve the standard of living for blacks. We found clear and strong evidence in support of each of the four hypotheses. Items drawn from the respective domains of Jim Crow and laissez-faire racism define separate factors in confirmatory factor analyses. Jim Crow racism is more strongly affected by sociodemographic characteristics — and especially by age and education — than is laissez-faire racism. Socioeconomic ideology has substantially stronger effects on contemporary black stereotypes and perceived discrimination against blacks than on Jim Crow racism. Jim Crow racism, black stereotypes, and perceived discrimination against blacks all significantly shape support for government help to improve blacks' standard of living.

The results of these analyses provide "micro" evidence that buttresses Bobo's explanation of progress and stagnation in racial beliefs and attitudes for which he primarily employs "macro" evidence. We have seen in our analyses that progress in racial beliefs and attitudes is largely limited to the decline of Jim Crow racism. Among young and highly educated white Americans, endorsement of Jim Crow ideology might well be characterized as simply absent. The picture for contemporary stereotypes and acknowledgment of social responsibility for blacks' conditions is quite different.

We focused in our analysis on contemporary or more subtle stereotypes, defined in relative terms rather than as categorical judgments. Negative stereotypes of blacks prevail among whites. Blacks are rated as less intelligent, more violence prone, lazier, less patriotic, and more likely to prefer living off welfare than whites. Not only are whites rated more favorably than blacks, but on four of the five traits examined (except patriotism), many whites rated the majority of blacks as possessing negative qualities and the majority of whites as possessing positive qualities.

We have no over-time national level data that permits us to analyze the trend in contemporary black stereotypes as we have measured them here; however, we may take certain implications for change from our cross-sectional analysis of stereotypes. This analysis suggests that we may expect

some relative decline in stereotyping over the coming years, as younger cohorts replace older ones and if the trend of increasing enrollment in higher education continues. Projections from age group differences are always speculative, but such projections concerning Jim Crow racism have been borne out by analysis of historical trend data (Firebaugh & Davis 1988). Less optimistically, our findings suggest that the absolute level of black stereotyping will remain high. In contrast to Jim Crow racism, stereotypes are far from absent among the youngest and most highly educated whites. Indeed, as we have seen, the majorities of college-educated whites and whites aged 18 to 29 rate blacks as "inferior" to whites on important traits. Furthermore, our analyses have shown that negative stereotypes matter. Even the perception of only small group differences increased whites' expressed desire for social distance from blacks and reduced support for government intervention to help blacks get ahead in life.

The outlook for an increase in recognition of social responsibility for blacks' conditions is even less optimistic. Analyses of perceived discrimination presented in this chapter show that whites' endorsement of social responsibility is at best characterized as weak or halting, with the majority seeing little to no influence of discrimination against blacks. We have found that there are no significant age group differences in perceived discrimination and only a limited effect of education. These findings — combined with others showing that, from 1977 to 1989, a constant minority percent of white Americans have attributed the black-white socioeconomic gap to discrimination (Kluegel 1990) — argue for a stable denial of social responsibility in the future.

Our findings concerning the effects of Jim Crow and laissez-faire racism on support for government help to improve the standard of living for blacks lend further support to the laissez-faire racism explanation of the "paradox" of contemporary racial attitudes. Viewed in the light of the macro-level findings discussed in Chapter 2 and the micro-level findings of this chapter, the gap between increasingly egalitarian racial principles (the decline of Jim Crow racism) and resistance to policies such as affirmative action presents no paradox at all. Both are products of changes in U.S. social structure and politics that successfully deposed Jim Crow institutions but left large numbers of African Americans in economically disadvantaged and segregated communities. The high level of negative stereotyping and prevalent denial of social responsibility we find suggest that for many white Americans, blacks are viewed as undeserving of special treatment from government. To the extent that pressure from civil rights groups and white liberals have put such policies into effect, they would, perforce, breed resentment and resistance. Absent a change in the underlying social conditions that breathe life into stereotypes or a

substantial increase in the perception by whites that discrimination prevents minorities from getting ahead economically, the political stalemate over policy interventions to help minorities is likely to continue.

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