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EVIDENCE FROM FOUR CITIES

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PERCEIVED GROUP DISCRIMINATION AND POLICY ATTITUDES: THE SOURCES AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE RACE AND GENDER GAPS

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S OCIAL science research gives a complex picture of factors shaping racial, ethnic, and gender inequalities. Yet, when the subject of inequality enters public discourse, and especially that involving social policy, the discussion often becomes simplified to assessments of whether or not a group is treated unfairly in the economic order. Is a group a victim of discrimination, and, if so, how much discrimination does it suffer?

The substantial gap between whites and African Americans in perceptions of how much discrimination is experienced by African Americans has been underscored by several scholars (Bobo and Kluegel 1997; Feagin and Vera 1995; Hochschild 1995; Jaynes and Williams 1989; Kluegel 1985; Kluegel and Smith 1986; Sigelman and Welch 1991; Sniderman and Hagen 1985). Whites, as has been well established, are far more sanguine about opportunity for blacks to get ahead than blacks are. Blacks see racial discrimination in the workplace as much more prevalent than do whites.

Some work—for example, a recent *Washington Post*–sponsored study (Morin 1995)—has begun to document differences among whites and other minorities as well. Research on this gap, however, has been largely descriptive, documenting the contours and size of the perception gap and examining some differences among basic demographic groups (by age, education, and gender) in their perceptions. More analytical research on minority group perceptions of discrimination is limited by its noncomparative quality. It focuses on single groups, with each study

using unique sample designs and measures (Kuo 1995; Portes and Bach 1985; de la Garza et al. 1992).

Probing more deeply into what shapes perceptions of discrimination against different groups, and thus what produces the white-minority gaps in perception, is important for two reasons. First, gaps in perception in and of themselves are a source of tension and potential political conflict between groups. Minority groups react with frustration and anger at having the problem of discrimination they see as major taken as minor, or simply dismissed, by the white majority or other groups (Feagin and Vera 1995; Hochschild 1995). On the other side, the perception among many whites that minorities face a minor or nonexistent problem engenders anger toward minorities—that is, minorities are seen as making illegitimate demands for corrective action (Kinder and Sanders 1996).

The Multi-City Study of Urban Inequality permits us to provide both a more extensive and intensive analysis of perceptions of discrimination against different groups than achieved in prior research. The study is unique in posing *identical* questions about perceived discrimination and other factors to large samples of whites, blacks, Hispanics, and Asians in the same study. In this chapter we present a broadly comparative analysis of differences in perceived discrimination between blacks and whites, between the white majority and Hispanic and Asian minorities, and between men and women. As we shall see in the analysis that follows, there is a consistent gap across the four cities between whites, on the one hand, and blacks and Hispanics, on the other. Although whites and Asian Americans do not currently differ, we found evidence suggesting that differences in perceived discrimination paralleling the white-black and white-Hispanic gaps may develop in the future. We also found a racial gap in the determinants of perceived discrimination. Whites' perceptions are abstractly based, while nonwhites' perceptions are rooted in experience. The gender gap is much smaller, but it too is racialized.

Second, perceived discrimination affects support for policy to address economic inequality—in general and, of course, that targeted toward specific groups (Bobo and Kluegel 1993, 1997; Jacobsen 1985; Kluegel 1990; Tuch and Hughes 1996). Among the factors shaping the fate of policy in the political process, we certainly must attend to how the public responds to it (compare, Burstein 1985). Although supportive public opinion does not of itself lead to policy, as shown in the difficult history of affirmative action, opposing public opinion does make policy implementation difficult politically and in daily life.

The Multi-City Study data also allow us to construct a unique, broadly comparative perspective on white-minority differences as well

as differences between men and women in support of such policy. Research has shown that perceptions of discrimination do play an important role in support for policy targeted toward African Americans. We lack such knowledge, however, concerning other minorities and women. In this chapter, we examine the effect of perceived discrimination on whites' attitudes toward policy targeted to blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and women. As our analyses will show, discrimination perceptions have real consequences, shaping attitudes toward opportunity-related policy targeted to each minority group and women, independent of their other major determinants.

Group Differences in Perceived Discrimination

The Multi-City Study respondents were asked the following question concerning job discrimination:

> In general, how much discrimination is there that hurts the chances of [specific group] to get good paying jobs? Do you think there is *a lot, some, only a little,* or *none at all*? [In this order, respondents were asked about discrimination affecting Hispanics, blacks, Asians, women, and whites.][1]

Accordingly, we may examine perceptions of job discrimination affecting the major minority groups, women, and indeed whites. The latter has come in popular treatment to be given the label of "reverse discrimination." Although the authors agree with many who see this term as a symbolically loaded misnomer, claims about reverse discrimination are now prevalent in political discourse. Understanding who holds and what shapes this sentiment is necessary to a complete appreciation of the public's comprehension of group-based inequality.

Perceived Discrimination Against Racial and Ethnic Groups

Table 3.1 arrays the percentage distributions of perceived job discrimination against minorities and whites by city and race. Results of Multi-City Study analyses for blacks and whites likely may be generalized to the broader urban United States. Because the Hispanic respondents are drawn primarily from only two cities, and virtually all the Asian respondents are from Los Angeles, we can offer only more limited generalizations about these groups.

Consistent with other research, we see in the table that the gap between blacks and whites in these four cities is large. It is not the case that most whites largely deny the existence of discrimination against

TABLE 3.1   Perceived Discrimination Against Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and Whites, by City and Race-Ethnic Group

Perceived Discrimination Against Blacks

	None	A Little	Some	A Lot
Atlanta***				
Among whites	13.5	22.7	44.3	19.4
Among blacks	0.6	4.9	34.1	60.4
Boston***				
Among whites	5.7	16.3	44.6	30.1
Among blacks	2.1	6.4	34.5	57.0
Among Hispanics	3.4	12.4	33.3	48.9
Detroit***				
Among whites	8.8	14.6	43.6	33.1
Among blacks	1.5	6.5	30.4	61.5
Los Angeles***				
Among whites	8.5	16.6	46.2	23.1
Among blacks	1.3	4.7	24.7	69.3
Among Hispanics	7.2	15.3	37.2	40.3
Among Asians	9.5	34.4	42.0	14.1

Perceived Discrimination Against Hispanics

	None	A Little	Some	A Lot
Atlanta*				
Among whites	10.3	19.5	47.0	23.2
Among blacks	8.5	15.3	42.0	31.3
Boston***				
Among whites	9.7	16.3	45.7	28.3
Among Hispanics	4.0	13.7	33.2	49.0
Among blacks	5.1	15.7	43.2	36.0
Detroit***				
Among whites	8.1	16.4	56.0	19.9
Among blacks	4.5	15.8	46.4	33.2
Los Angeles***				
Among whites	9.3	19.5	48.9	22.3
Among Hispanics	3.6	9.6	27.4	59.3
Among blacks	10.0	17.1	36.1	36.8
Among Asians	10.7	38.9	39.6	10.8

Perceived Discrimination Against Asians

	None	A Little	Some	A Lot
Atlanta				
Among whites	14.7	31.7	40.6	13.0
Among blacks	14.0	24.0	44.7	17.3
Boston***				
Among whites	12.5	25.2	43.4	18.9
Among blacks	5.2	24.3	45.0	25.5
Among Hispanics	12.3	26.2	40.0	20.6
Detroit***				
Among whites	12.2	20.8	50.7	10.3
Among blacks	9.3	28.8	43.9	18.0
Los Angeles***				
Among whites	17.7	34.2	42.0	6.1
Among Asians	10.8	41.2	42.4	5.5
Among blacks	24.0	36.1	30.7	9.2
Among Hispanics	24.5	35.6	37.4	7.5

Perceived Discrimination Against Whites

	None	A Little	Some	A Lot
Atlanta***				
Among whites	26.8	38.5	29.4	5.2
Among blacks	60.1	25.2	12.2	2.5
Boston***				
Among whites	32.0	35.6	29.4	8.8
Among blacks	43.1	33.5	18.3	5.0
Among Hispanics	62.6	19.7	12.4	5.2
Detroit				
Among whites	—	—	—	—
Among blacks	—	—	—	—
Los Angeles***				
Among whites	30.2	37.4	28.0	4.4
Among blacks	65.5	24.5	8.2	1.8
Among Hispanics	73.8	15.8	8.1	2.2
Among Asians	74.1	19.8	9.3	0.9

Source: Multi-City Study of Urban Inequality.
* = p < .05. ** = p < .01. *** = p < .001.

blacks—although a substantial minority does, responding "a little" or "none." The modal perception among whites is that "some" job discrimination against blacks does exist. The contrast is found in the choice of "some" among 44 to 46 percent of whites and the choice of "a lot" by 60 to 70 percent of blacks. There exists among whites a perception of a middling or moderate level of job discrimination against blacks. The gap is best characterized as one between a somewhat halting recognition on the part of whites and a nearly consensual view among blacks that their group is the victim of prevalent job discrimination.

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to review research speaking to the amount of racial, ethnic, or gender discrimination that exists in fact. Nevertheless, we need make it clear at the outset that we believe that such research shows that job discrimination remains a serious problem. It is clear that respondents who claim that there is "only a little" discrimination or "none at all" do not see it as a problem, while those who choose "a lot" do. It is less clear what "some" implies for the perceived seriousness of discrimination. Our recent research (Bobo and Kluegel 1997) using national sample data, however, argues that most respondents who choose "some" stand closer to those choosing "only a little" than to those choosing "a lot" in their evaluated seriousness of discrimination. We found that two-thirds of white respondents choosing "some" when asked about the *amount* of discrimination deny that the black-white socioeconomic gap is "mainly due to discrimination" when asked to *explain it*.[2] Most whites, then, do not see the problem of discrimination against blacks as very serious, and clearly do not see it to be as serious as blacks do.

The black-white gap in the perceived seriousness of discrimination is strong in all four cities. It is somewhat smaller in Boston and Detroit than in Atlanta or Los Angeles. Nevertheless, the distributions of perceived discrimination against blacks among whites and blacks, respectively, quite closely match those found in a 1990 national survey (Bobo and Kluegel 1991, 1997). Do parallel white-minority gaps exist for Hispanics and Asians?

The white-Hispanic gap in perceived discrimination is somewhat smaller than the white-black gap, but nevertheless substantial. In Boston and Los Angeles the modal response among whites regarding job discrimination against Hispanics is "some." As in the case of blacks, the modal response among Hispanics is that members of their own group face "a lot" of job discrimination.

There is no gap in perceptions between whites and Asian Americans. Whites in Los Angeles are a bit more likely than Asian Americans to say "none" in response to a question about the prevalence of discrimination against Asians. Otherwise, the distribution of perceived discrim-

ination against Asians is essentially the same for whites and Asian Americans. In light of the "success image" and "model minority" labels attached to Asian Americans (Chen and Hune 1995; Kuo 1995; Lee 1989) and the often subtle and hidden nature of discrimination against them (Duleep and Sanders 1992; Tang 1993), the tendency of whites to downplay discrimination against Asians is perhaps unsurprising. That Asian Americans share whites' views, however, perhaps is surprising.

Whites in three of the cities (perceived discrimination against whites was not measured in Detroit) share the same distribution of perceived "reverse discrimination." Whites do not see discrimination against their own group as pronounced. Only about 5 percent say "a lot"; five times this number say "none." The modal white response is somewhere between "a little" and "some." Yet there is a strong white-minority gap here. All three minority groups strongly deny that whites are the victims of discrimination. "None" is the majority response among each group in each of the three cities, with the sole exception of blacks in Boston.

The distributions of minorities' perceptions of discrimination against other minority groups show a shared sense of victimization between blacks and Hispanics, but there is an apparent fissure involving Asian Americans. Blacks and Hispanics each see more discrimination against their own respective group than they perceive against the other. But both also see more discrimination against blacks or Hispanics, respectively, than whites perceive against either one. Asian Americans in Los Angeles, however, are less likely than whites to perceive that blacks or Hispanics suffer from job discrimination. Blacks and Hispanics in Los Angeles are more likely to deny that Asians experience discrimination at all than are whites. In other cities, however, blacks and Hispanics perceive somewhat more extensive discrimination against Asians than do whites. This suggests that the interethnic tension in Los Angeles between blacks and Hispanics, on the one hand, and Asian Americans, on the other, documented in several studies (Bobo et al. 1995; Chang and Leong 1994; Jackson, Gerber, and Cain 1994; Johnson and Oliver 1994; Thornton and Taylor 1988), shapes mutual perceptions of discrimination against other minorities.

Perceived Discrimination Against Women

There is little research on perceived discrimination against women based on national-scope data (Kluegel and Smith 1986; Kane 1992, 1995; Kane and Sanchez 1994).[3] Multi-City Study data permit us to look not only at contemporary gender differences in perceived discrimination

against women, but these perceptions within racial groups and to compare features of perceived discrimination against women to perceived discrimination against racial groups.[4] Table 3.2 gives the distribution of perceived discrimination against women separately by race and gender, within each of the four cities.

Three patterns in this table merit note. First, there is a significant gap in perception between white men and white women, such that white women see more discrimination against women than do white men. Only among Hispanics do we see a parallel gender gap for minority group respondents.

Second, the gap between white men and white women is markedly smaller than parallel white-black and white-Hispanic gaps. In general, white men are much more likely to deny discrimination against women than against blacks or Hispanics. Across the four cities, roughly 45 percent of white men characterize the extent of discrimination against women by the responses "a little" or "none." Contrasting percents for perceived discrimination against blacks and Hispanics are in the 25 percent range. The gender gap is smaller than the race gap because white women are substantially more likely than blacks or Hispanics (males or females) to downplay the extent of discrimination against their own group. Roughly a third of the white women deny any significant discrimination against women, and only about 9 percent on average perceive "a lot" of discrimination against women. This compares to parallel figures for blacks in the range of about 7 and 60 percent, respectively.[5]

Third, across the four cities blacks see more discrimination against women than is perceived by white women themselves.[6] Hispanics and whites have a similar profile in Boston, but Hispanic men and women in Los Angeles see somewhat more extensive discrimination against women than do their white counterparts. Asian American men and women share the same distribution of the perceived extent of discrimination against women, and they each perceive substantially less discrimination against women than do whites and other minorities.

In Sum

These comparisons show that perceived discrimination is much more "racialized" than "gendered." The gaps in perceived discrimination between whites, on the one hand, and blacks and Hispanics, on the other, are truly large. In contrast, although women are more likely than men to see discrimination against women as a serious problem, the gender gap in perceived discrimination is much smaller than the parallel race gap.

In each of the four cities, black women perceive somewhat more

discrimination against women than do black men, but both black men and black women see substantially more discrimination against women than do white men. It appears that the consciousness of race discrimination prevalent among blacks increases sensitivity to gender discrimination among black women *and* men. Such sensitivity is less strong among Hispanics. Hispanic women do see discrimination against women as more serious than do Hispanic men. Whereas consciousness of discrimination against Hispanics seems to increase sensitivity to gender discrimination among Hispanic women, it does not seem to have this effect on Hispanic men. The distribution of perceived discrimination against women among Hispanic men is similar to that of white men.

The views of Asian Americans in Los Angeles in one respect are an exception to this racialized pattern. There is no gap in perceived race-ethnic discrimination between Asian Americans and whites. However, they are racialized in a within-minority group gap found in Los Angeles. Here the views of blacks and Hispanics about discrimination against Asian Americans are pitted against Asian Americans' views of discrimination against Hispanics and blacks—such that each downplays the extent of discrimination against the other. In another aspect of the racialization of discrimination perceptions, Asian Americans do stand with other minorities: all minority groups are united in the perception that whites are not the victims of "reverse discrimination."

Explaining Perceived Discrimination Against Racial Groups

How are we to explain this racialized pattern of discrimination perceptions? There is a small body of empirical research literature on factors shaping perceptions of opportunity for different groups (Bobo and Kluegel 1991, 1997; Sigelman and Welch 1991). It is especially small in contrast to the literature on "traditional prejudice"—overt bigotry and support for Jim Crow–style segregation. Research on perceptions of group opportunity, however, has quite clearly established that the factors shaping traditional prejudice relate much more weakly, if at all, to perceived discrimination against blacks (Bobo and Kluegel 1997). The college-educated, for example, are only slightly more likely to attribute the black-white gap to discrimination than are others, and there are no age group differences in opportunity perceptions. There are marked differences by age and education, however, in traditional prejudice (Bobo and Kluegel 1997).

Prior research on discrimination perceptions has gone little beyond examining the influence of sociodemographic variables. Thus it provides

TABLE 3.2 Perceived Discrimination Against Women by City, Race-Ethnic Group, and Sex

Atlanta

	None	A Little	Some	A Lot
Whites***				
Among men	19.5	32.3	40.2	7.9
Among women	12.9	23.2	51.5	12.4
Blacks**				
Among men	6.8	16.0	50.0	27.2
Among women	2.0	12.1	56.7	29.3

Boston

	None	A Little	Some	A Lot
Whites***				
Among men	16.5	30.8	41.0	11.7
Among women	10.2	22.0	45.7	20.0
Blacks				
Among men	8.7	19.5	43.6	28.2
Among women	4.8	15.6	47.4	32.2
Hispanics*				
Among men	20.7	24.4	38.9	16.1
Among women	17.4	25.8	32.1	24.7

Detroit

	None	A Little	Some	A Lot
Whites***				
Among men	17.1	29.4	44.3	9.2
Among women	11.3	18.1	50.6	19.9
Blacks				
Among men	4.6	20.5	49.0	25.9
Among women	3.9	16.3	46.3	33.6

Los Angeles

	None	A Little	Some	A Lot
Whites**				
Among men	13.2	30.4	47.9	8.5
Among women	11.8	22.2	50.7	15.4
Blacks***				
Among men	8.5	20.5	50.3	20.7
Among women	4.3	15.2	50.8	29.7
Hispanics***				
Among men	19.9	23.8	37.7	18.6
Among women	14.3	18.1	40.5	27.2
Asians				
Among men	28.6	38.3	29.7	3.4
Among women	26.4	41.0	29.9	2.7

Source: Multi-City Study of Urban Inequality.
* = p < .05. ** = p < .01. *** = p < .001.

little answer to our question about the racialized quality of perceived discrimination. It simply implies that group differences in perceived discrimination *cannot* be explained by differences among groups in their distributions of certain sociodemographic characteristics. The inability to explain perceived discrimination may stem from the failure to consider factors other than those known to shape prejudice.

Perceived discrimination may be the product of what might be labeled "social learning" variables. Many persons may downplay the importance or deny the influence of discrimination altogether because they live their lives in homogeneous circumstances that preclude firsthand experience with discriminatory acts taken against minorities or women. Some scholars have suggested that it is the segregation between blacks and whites, residentially and in the workplace, that supports a worldview downplaying or denying discrimination (Sniderman and Hagen 1985). One potentially important social learning factor is intergroup contact. Although the historical record of research seeking to find "contact effects" has been largely negative (compare, Jackman and Crane 1986), several recent studies have come to more positive conclusions (Bobo and Zubrinsky 1996; Ellison and Powers 1994; Powers and Ellison 1995; Sigelman and Welch 1993; Sigelman et al. 1996). However, the effects of contact demonstrated in this work have been limited to interpersonal relations, showing that contact reduces stereotyping and racial hostility. The question of whether contact affects perceived discrimination—against one's own or other groups—remains open.

A second "social learning" factor that may account for the gap is the personal experience of discrimination. Minority group members may perceive greater discrimination against their own group because they have greater experience with discrimination directed toward them as individuals.

A line of research developed by the authors of this chapter stresses what may be termed the "social theory"–driven nature of perceived discrimination (Bobo and Kluegel 1997; Bobo, Kluegel, and Smith 1997). In this perspective, among whites perceived discrimination derives more from social and political beliefs and ideology than from individual interests or experiences. One facet of popular "social theory" is general socioeconomic ideology. Denial of discrimination is substantially rooted in the ideological defense of the economic status quo in general. Societal and individual-blame explanations of poverty shape whites' perceived discrimination against blacks and other groups (Bobo and Kluegel 1991, 1997).

Another potentially important source of discrimination perceptions is group-based economic interest or threat. Individual-level self-interest, as defined by a person's place in the economic order and likely *individ-*

ual loss or benefit from social policy, has been shown to play little role in shaping intergroup beliefs and attitudes (Kinder and Sanders 1996). Following upon insights offered forty years ago by Herbert Blumer (1958), several recent studies have underscored that *perceived* group-based interests or threats to same, however, do have powerful effects on racial attitudes (Bobo and Hutchings 1996; Bobo and Kluegel 1993; Kinder and Sanders 1996; Quillian 1995, 1996). White denial that a minority group suffers from discrimination may serve to defend a sense of relative group privilege. That is, accepting that another group has suffered from discrimination gives legitimacy to efforts to promote increased opportunity for that group—opportunity that will be bought at the cost of reduced privilege for one's own group.

Finally, we also need to acknowledge simple naïveté. Recent research (Morin 1995) has shown, perhaps a bit astonishingly, that a substantial minority of white Americans sees no difference between whites and blacks or Hispanics in their relative economic standing. Whites see substantially more progress in blacks' economic conditions than do blacks (Hochschild 1995). In part, this perception may itself be theory-driven (Kluegel 1985). Such a belief serves to defend the economic status quo. However, naïveté may be the result of misinformation and lack of information about the history and current status of minority groups provided in American primary and secondary schooling (Loewen 1995) or through the media (Campbell 1995). To the extent that perceived equality of economic condition in and of itself leads people to deny discrimination, the white-minority gap in perceived discrimination may rest in social ignorance.

The Multi-City Study data contain direct or indirect measures of each of the factors discussed here. In subsequent sections of this chapter, we consider how they combine to influence perceived discrimination against racial groups. We contrast how whites' views of discrimination against each of the three minority groups (and their own group) are shaped by these forces with how each minority's view of discrimination *against its own group* is influenced by them. In so doing, we can evaluate how important each factor is in producing the white-minority gaps in perceived discrimination we have observed.

Sociodemographic Factors

We begin with an examination of how perceived discrimination differs along major sociodemographic lines. Table 3.3 gives a series of regressions for perceived discrimination on age group, education, family income, gender, and city.[7] In analyses estimated within the Hispanic and Asian American groups, we examine the influence of two other factors.

TABLE 3.3   *Regression Coefficients for the Effects of Sociodemographic Characteristics and City of Residence on Perceived Discrimination*

	Whites' Perceived Discrimination Against			
	Asians	Blacks	Hispanics	Whites
Age twenty-one to twenty-nine	.027	−.038	−.045	−.139*
Age thirty to thirty-nine	.015	−.049	−.087	−.017
Age forty to forty-nine	.050	−.072	−.106*	.009
Age sixty-five +	−.062	−.111*	−.137***	−.196***
Education	.061***	.139***	.121***	−.085***
Income	−.002	−.002	−.001	−.011**
Male	−.062*	−.014	−.101**	−.075*
Atlanta	−.083*	−.359***	−.067	.067
Boston	.092*	−.055	.054	−.011
Los Angeles	−.248***	−.111*	−.070	
R^2	.03	.05	.03	.03

	Perceived Discrimination Against		
	Asians Among Asians	Blacks Among Blacks	Hispanics Among Hispanics
Age twenty-one to twenty-nine	.075	.038	.063
Age thirty to thirty-nine	−.022	−.025	.036
Age forty to forty-nine	.099	.074	.080
Age sixty-five +	−.127	−.223**	−.231**
Education	.108***	.020	.018
Income	−.015	−.011	−.011
Male	−.032	−.046	−.054
Atlanta	—	.005	—
Boston	—	−.078*	—
Los Angeles	—	.082**	—
Japanese	.032	—	—
Korean	−.136*	—	—
Central American	—	—	.142
Dominican	—	—	−.054
Mexican	—	—	.255***
Puerto Rican	—	—	.069

TABLE 3.3   *Continued*

	Perceived Discrimination Against		
	Asians Among Asians	Blacks Among Blacks	Hispanics Among Hispanics
Foreign-born English	−.044		−.035
Foreign-born non-English	−.233**		.262***
R^2	.08	.02	.06

Source: Multi-City Study of Urban Inequality.
Notes: Entries are metric OLS regression coefficients. The reference (excluded) group for age categories is ages fifty to sixty-four. The reference (excluded) group for nativity-language use is native-born English speakers. The reference (excluded) group for city of residence is Detroit. The reference (excluded) groups for ethnicity are Chinese and Mexican American, respectively.
* = $p < .05$. ** = $p < .01$. *** = $p < .001$.

First, we consider the impact of specific Hispanic and Asian American group origin. As Douglas Massey (1993) underscores, there are important differences among Hispanic groups in their respective social and economic circumstances, conditions of immigration, and incorporation into American society. Similar differences are present among Asian American groups as well (Espiritu 1997). Second, we employ a three-category variable to capture potential effects of nativity and English-language facility. We distinguish among respondents born in the United States, respondents not born in the United States but interviewed in English, and respondents not born in the United States and interviewed in a non-English language. Analyzing the effect of this variable on perceived discrimination permits us to address issues concerning acculturation among Hispanic (de la Garza, Falcon, and Garcia 1996; Portes and Bach 1985) and Asian American groups (Hein 1994).

The results in the table match findings from other research using national sample data looking at the influence of sociodemographic variables on whites' and blacks' perceptions of job discrimination against blacks (Bobo and Kluegel 1997; Kluegel and Smith 1986; Sigelman and Welch 1991), showing a rather weak pattern of effects. Here we see that this pattern extends to perceived job discrimination against Asians, Hispanics, and whites. Because our results for sociodemographic differences in whites' perceptions of discrimination against minorities and for blacks' perceived discrimination against blacks replicate prior findings, we will not comment on them in any detail.

Instead, we focus on the sociodemographic patterning of perceived discrimination among Hispanics and Asian Americans. This patterning

sheds light on a key question posed in the study of Hispanics and Asian Americans concerning the consequences of increasing acculturation within each group. How does increasing exposure to American culture by virtue of increasing experience with the American educational system, through increasing facility with English, or simply through the succession of generations shape how Hispanics and Asian Americans view economic opportunity?

Some scholars have suggested that younger generations of minority groups may be socialized such that they perceive greater discrimination against their own group than do older ones. Alejandro Portes and Min Zhou (1993) discuss a potential increasing awareness of discrimination among second- and third-generation youth of Mexican descent. Jeremy Hein's (1994) analysis of Hmong refugees suggests that younger generations of Asian Americans and Hispanics may more frequently adopt a "minority" as opposed to an "migrant" identification, resulting in increased consciousness of racial discrimination.

We see little evidence that younger Asian Americans or Hispanics see more extensive discrimination than their elders. There is but one statistically significant age group difference. Hispanic respondents sixty-five or older see less discrimination than all other groups. However, it is among the groups aged eighteen to twenty-nine and thirty to thirty-nine that we are most likely to find second- and third-generation Hispanics or Asian Americans, and they do not differ from persons ages forty to sixty-four.[8]

Alejandro Portes and Robert Bach (1985) have advanced two competing hypotheses about the effects of acculturation among recent immigrant minorities. The "conflict hypothesis" proposes that as groups become more integrated in U.S. society, they become more aware of racial and ethnic prejudice and discrimination. The "assimilationist hypothesis" proposes that increased integration brings with it *decreased* perceived discrimination against one's own group. In their analyses of Cuban and Mexican immigrants, Portes and Bach (1985) found most support for the latter hypothesis.

Our results for Hispanics, however, do not support the conflict hypothesis. Among Hispanics, certain aspects of greater acculturation seem to produce less perceived discrimination. Hispanics who are foreign-born and were not interviewed in English see *more* discrimination than the other two Hispanic native-language groups. Mexican origin Hispanics see more discrimination than those who identify themselves as "Mexican Americans." Perceived discrimination among Hispanics does not increase with an increasing level of education, as the conflict hypothesis implies.

It is among Asian Americans that we find patterns fitting the con-

flict hypothesis. Among Asian Americans, the perceived prevalence of discrimination against Asians increases with years of education. Korean-origin respondents, on average the most recent arrivals among the immigrant groups in our study, see less extensive discrimination than do Chinese- or Japanese-origin groups. Asian Americans who are foreign-born and were not interviewed in English see *less* discrimination than the other two Asian American native-language groups.[9]

Fully explaining these findings requires a more dynamic analysis than is possible with our cross-sectional snapshot. However, viewing the seemingly contradictory patterns together suggests a possible unifying explanation: the patterns for each group correspond to findings concerning the objective "risk factors" of discrimination. Research on the "glass ceiling" points to higher discrimination against Asian Americans at higher levels of occupational status (Duleep and Sanders 1992; Tang 1993; U.S. Commission on Civil Rights 1992). Asian Americans with higher levels of education and greater English-language facility are more likely to hold jobs at higher status levels, and thereby to be at greater risk of job discrimination. Research also underscores the importance of English-language facility to the socioeconomic attainments of Hispanics (Massey 1993; Morales and Ong 1993; Stolzenberg 1990). Among Hispanics, the Mexican-origin group has the lowest average income, highest rates of poverty, and poorest rates of high school and college graduation (Reimers 1992). Lack of English facility and poor economic circumstances increase one's vulnerability to exploitation and discrimination.

Social Learning

Tables 3.4 and 3.5 array the results for two classes of social learning variables (information regarding the measurement of these variables is given in the appendix to this chapter). Table 3.4 gives coefficients for the effects of personal and workplace contact. Table 3.5 looks at the influence of authority position and perceived *personal* discrimination. In each case, the coefficients presented are from regressions including the sociodemographic variables in table 3.3.[10]

Results in table 3.4 show little consistent effect of personal or workplace contact. There are only two statistically significant effects of personal contact: whites who have a black person in their network are somewhat more likely to perceive discrimination against blacks, and Hispanics who have a white person in their networks perceive a little less discrimination against Hispanics.

Race of coworker has no significant effects at all. Whites who have a white supervisor, counter to our expectation, report *more* perceived discrimination against blacks and Hispanics. Social learning does seem

TABLE 3.4 *Regression Coefficients for the Effects of Personal and Workplace Contact on Perceived Discrimination*

	Whites' Perceived Discrimination Against			
	Asians	Blacks	Hispanics	Whites
Have Asian in network	−.109	—	—	—
Have black in network	—	.220*	—	—
Have Hispanic in network	—	—	−.096	—
Have nonwhite in network	—	—	—	.082
White versus nonwhite coworkers	.085	.023	.065	−.046
White versus nonwhite supervisor	.062	.148*	.135*	.033
R^2	.03	.06	.04	.03

	Perceived Discrimination Against		
	Asians Among Asians	Blacks Among Blacks	Hispanics Among Hispanics
Have white in network	−.034	−.035	−.170*
Have other minorities in network	−.022	.030	.137
White coworkers	−.078	.039	.141*
Other minority coworkers	−.016	−.020	.039
White supervisor	.080	−.009	.024
Other minority supervisor	.065	.098	−.020
R^2	.08	.02	.08

Source: Multi-City Study of Urban Inequality.
Notes: Entries are metric OLS regression coefficients from equations that also include the sociodemographic variables in table 3.2. See text for discussion of reference (excluded) groups for contact categories.
* $= p < .05.$ ** $= p < .01.$ *** $= p < .001.$

to take place, but not of the type expected. That is, some whites appear to take the simple presence of a nonwhite supervisor as evidence that discrimination against blacks or Hispanics is not widespread.

We measure job authority by two categorical variables. The first distinguishes between the self-employed and those who work for others. The second distinguishes those who do not have supervisory authority (workers) from those who do. From a social learning perspective, perhaps whites who are in authority positions are typically more knowledgeable about broader patterns in hiring and promotion, and accordingly in a better position to perceive discrimination. "Personal Race Discrimination" is a two-category variable distinguishing those who

TABLE 3.5   *Regression Coefficients for the Effects of Work-Related Characteristics on Perceived Discrimination*

	Whites' Perceived Discrimination Against			
	Asians	Blacks	Hispanics	Whites
Worker	−.024	−.015	−.065	−.047
Self-employed	−.003	.150*	.079	−.165*
Personal race discrimination	−.142*	−.274***	−.179***	.483***
R^2	.03	.06	.04	.06

	Perceived Discrimination Against		
	Asians Among Asians	Blacks Among Blacks	Hispanics Among Hispanics
Worker	.058	−.050	−.043
Self-employed	.085	−.141*	−.140
Personal race discrimination	.272***	.190***	.278***
R^2	.10	.05	.09

Source: Multi-City Study of Urban Inequality.
Notes: Entries are metric OLS regression coefficients from equations that also include the sociodemographic variables in table 3.2. The reference (excluded) category for job authority is the category "supervisor" (persons who work for others and have supervisory authority).
* = $p < .05$. ** = $p < .01$. *** = $p < .001$.

perceive they have ever been discriminated against personally because of their race in either hiring or promotions (1) from those who report no personal experience of race discrimination at all (0).

Table 3.5 shows a small effect of organizational context. Whites who work for others (that is, are not self-employed) see less discrimination against blacks and more against whites. Blacks and Hispanics working for others show a slightly greater perception of discrimination against their own groups than do the self-employed. Holding a supervisory position, however, is of no consequence for discrimination perceptions.

The direction of causal relationship between perceived personal discrimination and perceived discrimination against one's own group is a matter of some dispute. In one view, perceived personal discrimination is the product, not the cause, of perceived group discrimination. In this view, perceived group discrimination is not rooted in real or experienced personal discrimination so much as in the incorrect or "overgener-

alized" application of beliefs about group discrimination to personal circumstances.

We, however, assume that primary direction of cause is from the personal experience of discrimination to perceived discrimination against one's group. While no doubt some influence flows in the direction from perceived group discrimination to the perception of personal discrimination, we assume that the preponderant influence is from personal to group perceptions. We so assume because of strong evidence for the phenomenon of "denial of victimization" in general, and "denial of discrimination" in particular (Clayton and Crosby 1992; Major 1994). Among both minorities and women, a substantially larger fraction see their respective group as suffering discrimination than report that they as individuals have experienced personal discrimination. This may be the result of cognitive bias and emotional costs. It is difficult to infer discrimination in individual cases because most people do not have ready access to the kind of comparative data needed to support such a claim. In addition, the circumstances of each potential individual instance of discrimination are often unique and the causal forces involved are complex or ambiguous (Clayton and Crosby 1992; Major 1994).

These circumstances of "attributional ambiguity" (Major 1994) also may dispose persons who perceive a high level of discrimination against their own group to infer personal discrimination when evidence is unclear. However, the high psychological and social costs of acknowledging personal discrimination much favor denial and exempting oneself as an individual from group outcomes. We live in a culture of individualism, where the prevalent assumption is that individuals are responsible for their own success or failure (Kluegel and Smith 1986). To see oneself as a victim of external factors violates "just world" beliefs and the desire to be personally in control of one's circumstances. To see oneself as a victim also implies that one must take action against the source of personal discrimination. Often this involves action against those in authority positions, who may impose psychological or economic costs. For minorities, who also face a large numerical disadvantage, such costs can be especially high. Regarding personal gender discrimination, Susan Clayton and Faye Crosby (1992, 84) note: "To give up the belief that one has escaped the pitfalls of sexism, that one can play by her own rules but win at their game, that one is in charge of her own destiny and exempt from the society forces that limit other people is to forfeit a great deal."

For many persons, the recognition of personal discrimination comes only after a steady accumulation of discriminatory events that are initially denied. Or, it may come as the result of a particularly dramatic event (Clayton and Crosby 1992). Such personal experience often leads

people to broader identification with their own group and to be more accepting of claims of group-based discrimination.

Findings from our survey are consistent with other evidence showing a bias against seeing oneself as a victim of discrimination (Bobo and Suh 1995). One might well imagine that the impersonal and transitory nature of the survey interview would facilitate reporting personal discrimination. Yet in all groups, the majority of respondents deny that they have ever experienced personal discrimination in being hired for a job or in promotion: 85 percent of whites, 82 percent of Asian Americans, 72 percent of Hispanics, and 55 percent of blacks.

A marked and clear pattern of effects is shown for the personal experience of race discrimination. We see in table 3.5 that whites who perceive that they have personally been the victim of reverse discrimination are more likely to *deny* that each minority group experiences discrimination, and especially more likely to see that whites as a group experience job discrimination. Asians, blacks, and Hispanics respectively, who report a personal experience with workplace discrimination are significantly more likely to perceive greater job discrimination against their own minority group.

Ideology, Interests, and Ignorance

To examine the impact of popular social theory, group self-interest, and social ignorance, we employ four variables. The first is self-assessed liberalism-conservatism on a 7-point scale. This measure is substantially correlated with general socioeconomic ideology (Kluegel and Smith 1986; Sidanius, Pratto, and Bobo 1996). Self-placed liberals are more likely than conservatives to attribute inequality in general to social causes and less likely to invoke individual blame (Feldman 1988; Fine 1992a; Griffin and Oheneba-Sakyi 1993; Zucker and Weiner 1993). We do not have measures of general socioeconomic ideology available in the Multi-City Study data, so we employ self-assessed political ideology as a reasonable proxy.

Two items concern group threat. (See appendix 3A to this chapter for measurement details.) The first measures a more general sense of threat due to immigration, and the second concerns perceived direct economic threats to one's own racial group.

The final measure concerns the perceived difference between whites and each minority group in their economic position. A high score on this measure indicates whites are seen to be more affluent than members of a given minority group. It permits us to assess the effect of simple social ignorance. Do people who perceive that whites and blacks have equal incomes downplay or deny the prevalence of job discrimination? The results in table 3.6 are from regressions that also contain the

TABLE 3.6 *Regression Coefficients for the Effects of Liberalism, Perceived Group Threat and Perceived Group Trait Differences on Perceived Discrimination*

	Whites' Perceived Discrimination Against			
	Asians	Blacks	Hispanics	Whites
Liberalism	.074***	.104***	.105***	−.024
Competition with immigrants	−.100***	−.096**	−.104***	.034
Job competition with GROUP	−.042	−.085**	−.023	.039
White versus GROUP wealth	.120***	.109***	.082***	−.074***
R²	.09	.14	.11	.08

	Perceived Discrimination Against		
	Asians Among Asians	Blacks Among Blacks	Hispanics Among Hispanics
Liberalism	.008	.041**	.046
Competition with immigrants	−.002	.049**	.013
White versus GROUP wealth	.053**	.061***	.048***
R²	.10	.07	.10

Source: Multi-City Study of Urban Inequality.
Notes: Entries are metric OLS regression coefficients from equations that also include the sociodemographic variables in table 3.2 and perceived personal discrimination. "GROUP" refers to the target group for perceived discrimination (Asians, then blacks, then Hispanics). For perceived discrimination against whites, however, GROUP refers to blacks.
* = $p < .05$. ** = $p < .01$. *** = $p < .001$.

sociodemographic variables arrayed in table 3.3 and perceived personal discrimination.

Table 3.6 shows that, among whites, perceived discrimination against minorities is very much the product of ideology, interest, and ignorance. Net of sociodemographic and other variables, white liberals perceive more discrimination against each minority group than do conservatives. Controlling for the influence of other variables, the perceived threat to whites as a group posed by immigration reduces the amount of perceived discrimination against each minority group. The amount of perceived discrimination against blacks is affected by perceived direct job competition with blacks, but only the threat associated with immigration has an effect among Asians and Hispanics. We also see that social ignorance plays a role. We see from the table that, independent of the influence of other factors, the smaller the perceived income gap be-

tween whites and minorities, the less the perceived discrimination against each minority group.

In contrast, perceptions of discrimination against one's own group—including the perception of discrimination against whites among whites—are little based in self-assessed liberalism-conservatism. It has a statistically significant effect only among Hispanics, and it is roughly half as strong as the effect among whites. Only among blacks do we see an effect of perceived group competition with immigrants. It also is weaker than the parallel effect among whites, and it is *opposite* in sign. A perception that continued immigration will hurt blacks' economic standing as a group somewhat encourages more extensive perceived discrimination against blacks among blacks. The perceived income gap between one's own group and whites does consistently affect perceived discrimination against one's group. Its effect is statistically significant in each of the three minority groups, and as for whites, the larger the perceived income gap, the greater the assessed prevalence of discrimination.

A Note on "City Effects"

Prior research on discrimination perceptions has for the most part been done with national-scope survey data. But cities are the arenas in which current multigroup relations are played out. The design of the Multi-City Study of Urban Inequality allows us to see if the city context makes a difference in beliefs about discrimination against minority groups. In particular, we can assess such effects among white and black respondents. For Asian American respondents we have but one city, and the confounding of Hispanic groups with city that we noted earlier does not permit us to separate the two.

Potential city effects may be of two kinds. They may be one of several factors that add up in determining beliefs (that is, as one of the "main effects"). The influence of a city may reflect the history of intergroup relations in a given city or region of the country. It also may capture a group salience effect due to the relative size of different racial or ethnic groups in a city or region. Other groups may view a given minority group as more of a competitive threat or simply be more aware of its social and economic circumstances when it constitutes a substantial fraction of the population. Simple differences in the distribution of beliefs, though, such as we observed in table 3.1, may be due to city differences in the levels of other variables that shape discrimination perceptions—that is, to what are commonly called "composition effects."

Table 3.3 gives the main effects for city net of sociodemographic composition. In addition, the regression analyses reported in table 3.6 include terms for the effects of city net of sociodemographic, personal discrimination, liberalism, group threat, and perceived income-gap com-

position. We do not report these coefficients here, but they point to two city main effects of note. Net of all the potential determinants of discrimination perceptions we have considered, white respondents in Atlanta perceive less extensive discrimination against blacks, and white respondents in Los Angeles perceive less extensive discrimination against Asians. The "Atlanta effect" matches other well-known findings showing that white beliefs and attitudes in the South are more negative than in other regions. The "Los Angeles effect" among whites requires a different explanation. The Asian American population, of course, is much larger in Los Angeles than in the other three cities, suggesting a group salience interpretation. The tendency among whites to downplay the perceived extent of discrimination against blacks in Atlanta and Asians in Los Angeles may have a common origin in the threat presented by relative group size (Quillian 1996).[11]

City effects may also take the form of differences among cities in the way factors shape perceived discrimination (that is, interactions of determinants with city). It may reasonably be assumed that certain variables, such as political liberalism-conservatism, affect perceived discrimination in the same manner in each city. One may well question, however, whether the effect of group threat variables is the same in different cities. Immigration arguably is more salient to the average Los Angeles resident than to Atlantan, and hence perceived competition with immigrants may have a stronger effect in Los Angeles. Similarly, one might argue that Asian Americans and Hispanics present more salient direct group economic threat to whites in Los Angeles than in the other three surveyed cities.

To test the general possibility that the effect of any of our determinants differs among cities, we estimated the regression models that underlie the results in table 3.6 among white and black respondents separately in each of the four cities. Strikingly, they are nearly identical in each city. In Atlanta, for example, among whites, the perceived threat from competition with immigrants just as strongly reduces the perceived prevalence of discrimination against each minority group as it does in Los Angeles.

We also estimated the regressions presented subsequently in this chapter separately by city. Again, we found no evidence of city differences in how factors shape perceived discrimination or policy attitudes. Our results argue that discrimination perceptions and policy attitudes are largely shaped by a general or national regime.

In Sum

These results show that, among whites, beliefs about discrimination against minority groups are determined largely abstractly, following a

national regime. They are not influenced by intergroup contact or by work circumstances that may make discrimination against blacks more visible to whites. Rather, they are shaped by liberal-conservative ideology and by perceived zero-sum competition between whites and other groups. The exception to the abstract determination of perceived group discrimination is the effect of personal race discrimination among whites on perceived group discrimination against whites. The effect of seeing oneself as a victim of "reverse discrimination" on perceived group discrimination against whites is even stronger than parallel effects for minorities who see themselves as personal victims of race discrimination. Whites also react to this experience with increased denial of discrimination against minorities.

In contrast, minorities' perceptions of discrimination against their respective groups are more concretely or experientially shaped. Political ideology has little to no effect. Perceived group discrimination among Asian Americans and Hispanics follows patterns by sociodemographic groups that reflect differences in the real-world risks of discrimination. Among all minority respondents, perceived personal race discrimination consistently results in increased perceived discrimination against one's own group.[12]

The white-black and white-Hispanic gaps in perceived discrimination are due in part to the propensity among whites to base beliefs about minorities on deduction from abstract principle. Hispanics and blacks are not so inclined. Black and Hispanic self-rated conservatives are little or no less likely than self-rated liberals to see prevalent discrimination against their own group.

These gaps also stem from a white-minority gulf in respective views of group differences in income. The tendency to see more discrimination against a minority group when one sees a larger perceived income gap between whites and a given minority group is shared by whites and minorities alike. Whites, however, have a substantially more optimistic assessment of the size of the income gap than do either blacks or Hispanics. The Multi-City Study data show that in each case, whites on average do see fellow whites as economically better off (mean = 1.42 for blacks and 1.54 for Hispanics). But blacks and Hispanics see the income gap between whites and minorities as much larger (mean = 2.07 for blacks and 2.53 for Hispanics).

Explaining Perceived Discrimination Against Women

Tables 3.7 and 3.8 present regressions for perceived discrimination against women paralleling those in tables 3.3 through 3.5 for perceived discrimination against racial groups. To the sociodemographic variables examined in table 3.3, we add marital status as a potential predictor of perceived discrimination against women—a two-category variable differentiating persons currently married (1) from persons not currently married (0). We include this variable to examine the potential effect of dependence on men (for women) on women's attitudes toward gender inequality (Kane and Sanchez 1994).

Sociodemographic Factors

Table 3.7 shows little differentiation in perceived discrimination against women along sociodemographic lines among white, black, or Hispanic men or women. The only consistent effect is a slight tendency among the more highly educated to see more discrimination against women. Origin group has no effect among Hispanic respondents, but Koreans perceive less discrimination against women than do respondents from other Asian-origin groups. The strongest effect of a sociodemographic variable is found among Asian Americans, where combined nativity and English-language facility have a substantial influence. Men and women Asian Americans who were born in the United States perceive markedly more discrimination against women than the foreign-born and especially more than the foreign-born who do not speak English. This well may reflect patriarchal norms often held by Asian immigrants (Espiritu 1997). Interestingly, if this is so, our results suggest that acculturation reduces the influence of patriarchy equally among Asian American men and women.

As for perceived racial discrimination, results for perceived sex discrimination seem to support the conflict hypothesis for Asian Americans. Furthermore, the conflict hypothesis applies equally to Asian American men and women. Among Hispanics, however, we find little support for either the conflict or assimilationist hypotheses as applied to perceived gender discrimination. These findings, viewed together with those concerning acculturation and perceived racial discrimination, point to the role of isolation from the dominant culture in shaping the low level of perceived discrimination against women found among Asian Americans. Patriarchal norms, or simply a lack of comparative standards among Asian Americans who remain isolated by virtue of language or other factors, inhibit perceived group discrimination. The partial regression coefficient in table 3.7 does not convey just how large the apparent effect of isolation is. Seventy-eight percent of Asian American men and 80 percent of Asian-American women who are foreign-born and do not speak English chose "a little" or "none" to characterize the extent of discrimination against women. In contrast, 64 percent of Asian

TABLE 3.7   Regression Coefficients for the Effects of Sociodemographic Characteristics and City of Residence on Perceived Discrimination Against Women

| | Perceived Discrimination Against Women Among | | | |
| | White | | Black | |
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Age twenty-one to twenty-nine	−.095	−.027	−.084	.014
Age thirty to thirty-nine	−.024	.065	.023	.066
Age forty to forty-nine	.089	.024	−.015	.165***
Age sixty-five +	−.262**	−.236**	.035	−.090
Married	−.002	−.108*	.074	−.013
Education	.065***	.078***	.051***	.050*
Income	−.007	−.005	.026***	.001
Atlanta	−.134*	−.235***	.001	.031
Boston	.019	−.045	−.109	−.046
Los Angeles	.015	−.140*	−.138	−.068
R^2	.03	.04	.04	.02

| | Perceived Discrimination Against Women Among | | | |
| | Hispanic | | Asian | |
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Age twenty-one to twenty-nine	−.039	−.173	.006	.020
Age thirty to thirty-nine	−.165	−.300**	.058	−.065
Age forty to forty-nine	−.101	−.062	.032	−.012
Age sixty-five +	−.422*	−.248	−.034	−.127
Married	.075	−.024	.022	−.115
Education	−.012	.068*	.080**	.091*
Income	.008	.004	−.004	−.013
Japanese			−.174	−.088
Korean			−.347***	−.235**
Central American	.005	−.062		
Dominican	−.107	−.275		
Mexican	−.103	−.054		
Puerto Rican	−.019	−.083		
Foreign-born English	−.162	−.051	−.474***	−.296*

TABLE 3.7   Continued

| | Perceived Discrimination Against Women Among | | | |
| | Hispanic | | Asian | |
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Foreign-born non-English	−.117	−.101	−.811***	−.791***
R^2	.02	.03	.17	.20

Source: Multi-City Study of Urban Inequality.
Notes: Entries are metric OLS regression coefficients. The reference (excluded) group for age categories is ages fifty to sixty-four. The reference (excluded) group for nativity-language use is native-born English speakers. The reference (excluded) group for city of residence is Detroit. The reference (excluded) groups for ethnicity are Chinese and Mexican American, respectively.
* = $p < .05$. ** = $p < .01$. *** = $p < .001$.

American men and 68 percent of Asian American women who were born in the U.S. chose "some" or "a lot" to characterize discrimination against women.

Social Learning and Ideology

A more limited set of variables is available in the Multi-City Study data to examine how social learning and popular social ideology influence perceptions of discrimination against women. We do not have parallels for women to the measures of perceived group competition or group differences in income used to analyze racial and ethnic differences in perceived discrimination. Table 3.8 presents regressions involving the parallel measures of potential determinants of perceived discrimination present in the Multi-City Study data.

Neither having a male supervisor nor one's authority position was shown to influence perceived discrimination against women. The only statistically significant effects of either variable are found among self-employed white women, who see less prevalent discrimination than do other white women, and workers among Asian American men, who see more discrimination against women than Asian American men in authority positions.

There is a statistically significant and substantial effect among women, except Asian American women, of the experience of personal gender discrimination in the workplace.[13] Paralleling findings for minority groups, women who have experienced discrimination based on gender are more likely to perceive that their own group in general experiences job discrimination. In contrast to the case of whites' perceived

TABLE 3.8   *Regression Coefficients for the Effects of Work-Related Characteristics and Liberalism on Perceived Discrimination Against Women*

| | Perceived Discrimination Against Women Among | | | |
| | White | | Black | |
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Supervisor is male	.023	−.049	−.135	.077
Worker	.036	−.032	−.024	.001
Self-employed	−.074	−.244*	—	−.019
Personal gender discrimination	−.005	.402***	.061	.215**
Liberal	.092***	.119***	.012	.016
R^2	.05	.13	.04	.03

| | Perceived Discrimination Against Women Among | | | |
| | Hispanic | | Asian | |
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Supervisor is male	−.116	−.104	−.039	.006
Worker	−.030	−.057	.130	−.012
Self-employed	—	—	—	—
Personal gender discrimination	.251	.340***	−.317	.259
Liberal	.084**	.044	.002	−.006
R^2	.04	.05	.18	.21

Source: Multi-City Study of Urban Inequality.
Notes: Entries are metric OLS regression coefficients from equations that also include the sociodemographic variables in table 3.7. The reference (excluded) category for job authority is the category "supervisor" (persons who work for others and have supervisory authority). Too few black men, Asian men and women, and Hispanic men and women are self-employed to estimate its effects reliably.
* = $p < .05$. ** = $p < .01$. *** = $p < .001$.

discrimination against minorities, men who report that they have experienced gender discrimination do not significantly differ from other men in their perceived level of discrimination against women.

Among whites, both men and women, perceived discrimination is linked to self-assessed political ideology. This essentially is not the case among minorities, where we see an effect of political ideology on perceived discrimination against women among Hispanic men only.

In Sum

Our results show that the perceived personal experience with gender discrimination in the workplace plays largely the same role in producing the gender gap in perceived discrimination against women as a group as perceived race-ethnic discrimination does in producing the white-minority gap in perceived discrimination against racial groups. As for personal racial discrimination, the majority of persons do not report that they have ever been the victim of gender discrimination. The percent who report that they have ever personally experienced gender discrimination varies from a low of 9 percent among Asian American women to a high of 26 percent among white women. The parallel figures for men are 3 percent among Asian Americans to 15 percent among blacks.

We see, however, that a difference exists in the effect of personal discrimination on perceived discrimination against minorities and on perceived discrimination against women. Why do whites who see themselves as personal victims of race discrimination more often deny that minorities in general are the victims of race discrimination, while white men who see themselves as the victim of gender discrimination *do not* more often deny discrimination against women? We cannot answer this question directly with the data at hand. However, we suggest that it well may stem from who is held responsible by whites for their perceived personal experience of race discrimination versus who men see as responsible for personally experienced gender discrimination. Many white males may hold minorities as a group responsible for promoting affirmative action or other such programs. Men do not, however, seem to hold women as a group responsible for their perceived personal experience of gender-based discrimination. The anger whites feel from perceived race discrimination may be more readily targeted toward minority groups, increasing the likelihood that such whites will deny that minorities in general experience job discrimination. Anger among men based on perceived discrimination due to gender, however, is not readily displaced against women as a group. The merit of this explanation, of course, awaits further research.[14]

Policy Attitudes

We now examine how perceived discrimination combines with other major forces in the climate of intergroup relations to shape public support for policy to promote intergroup economic inequality. In so doing, we return to one of the issues with which this chapter began: How does the public's comprehension of intergroup inequality shape the political prospects for the successful implementation of policy?

We employ two items in the analyses that follow. Prior research has shown that attitudes toward racial policy are strongly influenced by "framing" (Bobo and Kluegel 1993; Fine 1992b; Kinder and Sanders 1996; Nelson and Kinder 1996; Sniderman and Piazza 1993). Support for racial policy differs according to how a question is worded. The type of policy—whether it refers to quotas or programs to help minorities acquire skills and training—the agency for carrying out policy—the federal government or private-sector organizations—and the rationale for implementing policy invoked in a question all shape the public's response. It is important to know the wording of questions employed to measure policy attitudes. Ours are as follows:

Training Help: Now I have some questions about what you think about the fairness of certain policies. Some people feel that because of past disadvantages there are some groups in society that should receive special *job training and educational assistance.* Others say that it is unfair to give these groups special job training and educational assistance. What about you? Do you strongly favor, favor, neither favor nor oppose, oppose, or strongly oppose special job training and educational assistance for [*group*]?

Job Preference: Some people feel that because of past disadvantages there are some groups in society that should be *given preferences in hiring and promotion.* Others say that it is unfair to give these groups special preferences. What about you? Do you strongly favor, favor, neither favor nor oppose, oppose, or strongly oppose giving special preferences in hiring and promotion to [*group*]?

Both questions employ a "past disadvantages" referent that is in one sense rather neutral, in that it does not invoke imagery of slavery or other emotionally laden characterizations of the history of racism and discrimination. It importantly does not reference "discrimination" itself, so we avoid a possible definitional link between perceived discrimination and answers to this question. The questions differ in referent to simple training and education assistance versus preferences. The wording of the latter question importantly avoids use of the term *quotas,* which has become highly symbolically loaded and will confound responses to the preferences per se with the range of emotional reactions it invokes. Finally, these questions do not invoke a role for the federal government, and thus do not make antigovernment sentiment highly salient.

There is a substantial literature on attitudes toward affirmative action, specifically, and equal opportunity policy in general. It has focused primarily on policy directed toward African Americans, but there is a growing literature on attitudes toward policy addressing gender inequal-

ity (Clayton and Crosby 1992; Kane 1992, 1995; Kane and Sanchez 1994; Major 1994; Matheson et al. 1994; Steeh and Krysan 1996; Tougas and Veilleux 1988). We are unaware of published research, however, that examines attitudes toward policy for Hispanics or Asian Americans.[15] Because prior studies often differ in the wording of questions or the time and design of samples employed, and most often involve attitudes toward a program targeted at a single group, we lack truly comparative analyses of policy attitudes across groups. The Multi-City Study data allow such comparative analyses, and we present them here.

Group Gaps in Policy Support

Table 3.9 gives mean levels for each of the questions mentioned about policy support by city and race, and separately by gender as well for policy directed toward women. We see initially that, as has been demonstrated repeatedly in prior research, in all four cities there is less public support for job preferences than for training or educational assistance programs. This holds whether the target of policy is a race or ethnic group or women. It holds as well among all racial groups, and among men and women.

In general, the gaps in policy support seen in the table follow the same contours of the group gaps in perceived discrimination. The gaps are largest between whites and blacks and between whites and Hispanics over support for policy targeted to blacks and Hispanics, respectively. To illustrate what the differences in means imply, it is useful to note a few percentage differences. In Atlanta, for example, 38 percent of whites "favor" and an additional 17 percent "strongly favor" training or educational assistance for blacks. In contrast, the same figures for blacks are, respectively, 35 and 52 percent. The gap is even starker for job preference. Among white Atlantans, 10 percent "favor" and an additional 6 percent "strongly favor" job preferences for blacks. In contrast, the same figures for black Atlantans are, respectively, 32 and 34 percent.

We see, then, a 30-percentage-point gap between white and African American Atlantans in support for what may be termed relatively minimalist or "weak" policy and a 50-percentage-point gap in support for stronger policy. The gaps are somewhat smaller in the other three cities, but even in the most liberal of the four cities, Boston, the gap in support for job preference policy is nearly 40 percentage points. Differences of this magnitude between groups are rare in any survey data, and represent a real chasm in opinion. As in perceptions of discrimination, the gaps between Asian Americans and whites and between women and men are substantially smaller than those between whites and blacks and between whites and Hispanics.

TABLE 3.9   Mean Level of Support for Training Programs to Help Minorities or Women and Support for Job Preference for Minorities or Women, by City and Race-Ethnic Group

| | Support Training Help For | | | | | Support Job Preference For | | | | |
| | | | | Women | | | | | Women | |
	Asians	Blacks	Hispanics	Men	Women	Asians	Blacks	Hispanics	Men	Women
Atlanta										
Whites	3.19	3.32	3.26	3.13	3.16	2.34	2.40	2.34	2.28	2.60
Blacks	3.62	4.34	3.78	4.09	4.26	3.16	3.81	3.27	3.47	3.80
Boston										
Whites	3.68	3.79	3.73	3.59	4.02	2.61	2.67	2.64	2.62	2.96
Blacks	4.05	4.34	4.24	4.20	4.31	3.42	3.65	3.56	3.56	3.62
Hispanics	4.03	4.08	4.16	4.15	4.22	3.52	3.52	3.62	3.46	3.73
Detroit										
Whites	—	3.62	—	3.30	3.83	—	2.49	—	2.44	2.73
Blacks	—	4.43	—	4.24	4.30	—	3.78	—	3.66	3.67
Los Angeles										
Whites	3.34	3.58	3.51	3.41	3.71	2.56	2.66	2.61	2.65	2.81
Asians	3.57	3.88	3.51	3.60	3.75	3.07	3.15	2.96	3.04	3.12
Blacks	3.64	4.34	4.06	4.21	4.43	3.27	3.65	3.61	3.81	4.05
Hispanics	3.71	4.08	4.08	4.00	4.12	3.20	3.52	3.50	3.37	3.62

Source: Multi-City Study of Urban Inequality.

Perceived Discrimination and Policy Support

Gaps in policy support mirror gaps in perceived discrimination, suggesting that perceived discrimination has a substantial effect on policy support. But does this correlation imply that beliefs about discrimination *determine* policy attitudes? This question has been debated in a symposium centering on research by Steven Tuch and Michael Hughes (1996) arguing that perceived discrimination against blacks (among other factors) does importantly shape racial policy support among whites.

One point of debate involves causal direction. Mary Jackman (1996) argues that racial policy attitudes should be seen as the cause rather than the consequence of discrimination beliefs. Tuch and Hughes—in our view, compellingly—argue on logical grounds against the extreme position that causation runs solely from policy attitudes to discrimination. We may accept the premise that some or many whites justify opposition to racial policy based solely on self-interest by denying that blacks are the victims of job discrimination. But, ask Tuch and Hughes (1996, 785), what racial interests lead whites to support racial policy? Furthermore, they ask: "Do whites who acknowledge the existence of pervasive discrimination against blacks do so *because* they support affirmative action?" (emphasis added).

In addition, we have seen in our analysis of the determinants of perceived discrimination that net of sociodemographic position, liberal-conservative ideology, and group interests, whites who see a larger income gap between themselves and minorities are more likely to see prevalent job discrimination against minorities. This implies, counter to Jackman's critique of Tuch and Hughes, that educating whites about the pervasiveness of discrimination can lead to greater policy support. We concur with Tuch and Hughes that it is wholly reasonable to assume a causal relationship from perceived discrimination to racial policy attitudes.

A second point of debate involves the multicausal basis of policy attitudes (Davis 1996; Sears and Jessor 1996). The breadth of the Multi-City Study coverage allows us to control for the influence of several competing explanatory factors, which we do in the regressions presented in table 3.10. They substantiate that, net of other factors, perceived discrimination does have an independent and important influence on white support of policy targeted toward all minority groups and toward women.

Because whites' views carry the most political force at present, and because policy support among blacks and Hispanics for policy to help their own groups is so high, we restrict analyses of support for policy

TABLE 3.10   Regression Coefficients for the Determinants of Policy Support Attitudes, White Respondents Only

| | Support Training Help For | | | | | Support Job Preference For | | | | |
| | | | | Women | | | | | Women | |
	Asians	Blacks	Hispanics	Men	Women	Asians	Blacks	Hispanics	Men	Women
Age twenty-one to twenty-nine	-.061	-.084	-.005	-.050	-.191*	-.097	-.127	-.017	-.174	-.134
Age thirty to thirty-nine	.011	-.061	.031	.057	-.007	-.006	-.057	.041	-.105	-.097
Age forty to forty-nine	-.019	-.074	-.022	.012	.068	.037	-.036	.052	-.092	-.026
Age sixty-five +	-.058	.020	-.061	.188	-.082	.021	.067	.034	.199	.005
Married	—	—	—	-.050	-.135*	-.025	-.041*	-.044*	-.077	-.059
Education	.022	.018	.036	-.072*	-.055*	-.032***	-.032***	-.032**	-.028	-.066*
Income	-.032***	-.028***	-.035***	-.025***	-.022***	-.110**	-.129**	-.096**	-.030***	-.038***
Male	-.241***	-.231***	-.199***	—	—	-.182**	-.006	-.221**	—	—
Atlanta	-.324***	-.206**	-.360***	-.116	-.144	—	.103	—	-.018	-.075
Boston	—	.092	—	.225*	.097	.043	.148**	.049	.087	.146
Los Angeles	-.171**	-.070	-.111*	.078	-.113				.138	.084
Competition with immigrants	-.155***	-.145***	-.156***	-.143***	-.110***	-.228***	-.214***	-.229***	-.189***	-.182***
Liberalism	.116***	.114***	.112***	.088***	.126***	.103***	.110***	.101***	.118***	.078***
Discrimination against group	.176***	.231***	.199***	.194***	.239***	.137***	.159***	.178***	.197***	.162***
White versus group welfare dependence	.020	-.036**	-.047***	—	—	-.004	-.039**	-.034**	—	—
R^2	.13	.15	.15	.11	.16	.13	.14	.15	.13	.11

targeted to minorities to our white sample. For policy targeted to women, however, we do separate analyses among men and women.

The results in table 3.10 replicate for policy targeted to Asians and Hispanics several findings of research using national-level data on support of policy targeted to blacks. Here we see no statistically significant age group differences in support for either type of policy or for policy targeted to any of the three minority groups. Net of other factors, education does not effect support of training or educational assistance, but does have a negative effect on support for job preferences. Higher-income whites and white males consistently are more opposed to policy of both types across all groups. Married women oppose training help for women more than the nonmarried, but these two groups do not differ in support for job preferences. Our white Atlantan respondents oppose training help policy for all minorities more than do white respondents from the other three cities. Net of other variables, white Angelenos oppose policy to provide training assistance for Asians more so than do respondents from Boston (questions about policy targeted to Asians and Hispanics were not asked in Detroit). Although the greater policy opposition of Atlantans carries forward to job preference for Asians and Hispanics, they do not differ from whites in Boston or Detroit regarding support for job preferences for blacks. Angelenos show stronger support for job preferences for blacks than do white respondents from the other three cities.

There are no significant city differences in support for training assistance to women, other than a tendency for men in Boston to be more supportive. Otherwise the socioeconomic patterning of support for policy targeted to women is the same for white men and white women, and is essentially the same as that found for whites' attitudes toward policy targeted to minorities.

We include three measures to control for the influence of factors proposed in the debate over the determinants of policy attitudes to influence racial policy, and whose influence is potentially confounded with that of perceived discrimination. We include the previously used measure of perceived competition with immigrants to tap the influence of group self-interest. We also include our measure of self-assessed liberalism-conservatism to control for the argued political determination of policy attitudes (Davis 1996). Finally, we include a measure of perceived welfare dependency among minorities (see appendix 3A for wording and construction of this measure). It indicates the extent to which whites are perceived to be less "prone" to live off welfare (that is, to give more value to self-sufficiency) than are members of a particular racial group. We include this measure to tap the potential influence of a key component of symbolic racism (Sears 1988): blaming blacks for social ills, espe-

cially welfare. According to the symbolic racism perspective, many whites have come to recognize that overt expression of bigotry or Jim Crow racism is unacceptable. Thus, "safe" avenues for expressing hostility toward blacks are sought—such as labeling blacks welfare-dependent.

Factors other than perceived group discrimination do affect policy attitudes. Liberals support each type of policy for each group more than conservatives do, controlling for perceived discrimination and other factors. Self-assessed placement on the liberal-conservative dimension, of course, reflects more than socioeconomic ideology alone, and these dimensions (for example, anti–big government sentiment) also shape support for policy. Some whites who see blacks or Hispanics as more welfare-dependent than whites oppose policy to help them, even if they perceive that black or Hispanic groups suffer from discrimination.

The direct effect of perceived competition with immigrants on policy support underscores the basis of policy support in self-interest. There is an individual component of self-interest in the direct effect of income on support for training assistance, and of both income and education on support for job preferences. Support for policy of any kind is paid for by taxes that, in turn, are higher for the more well-to-do. Job preferences bring a challenge to the advantage that higher education provides in competition for jobs and promotions. The direct effect of perceived competition shows an effect of group self-interest as well.

We have demonstrated the effect of group self-interest on support of policy targeted toward blacks in other research (Bobo and Kluegel 1993). This research highlights how strong the influence of group self-interest is and shows its effect on policy targeted to other minorities and to women. Independent of their education, income, political leanings, and beliefs about minorities and women, white males as a group consistently more strongly oppose policies targeted to any minority or to women than do white women. This no doubt reflects simple defense of white male privilege and the "anti–white male" label often attached to affirmative action and other equal opportunity programs. Whites who see the world as a competition between or among groups over a zero-sum good oppose any efforts that will advantage some other group. (Interestingly, women who hold to this worldview also are more likely than other women to oppose policy helping *women.*) Note as well that perceived competition with immigrants has a stronger effect on support for job preference than on support for training help. This seems best interpreted as a result of the greater group-threat quality of job preferences than of training assistance. The latter, of course, involves a more individualistic approach and is a more diffuse threat than direct job preference.

Perceived discrimination has a substantial and statistically significant net effect on policy support across the board. Its effect is essentially equal for men or women. Furthermore, perceived discrimination completely mediates the effect of two factors we considered in analyzing its own determinants on support for policy targeted to minorities. Regressions (not shown) demonstrate that neither the perceived personal experience of race discrimination nor the perceived white-minority gap in income have statistically significant direct effects on whites' support for either training help or job preference for minority groups. Thus it appears that perceived group discrimination channels the influence of "data"—in the form of individual experience or societal knowledge—potentially relevant to supporting racial inequality policy.

Conclusion

We set out in this chapter to use the unique strengths of the Multi-City Study of Urban Inequality data to provide a broader picture of racial and gender gaps in perceived discrimination. We also sought to probe more deeply into the sources of these gaps and their consequences for opportunity-related policy.

We found a picture of a limited gender gap, but an extensive and multifaceted race gap in perceived discrimination. We have seen that the large white-black and white-Hispanic gaps in perceived discrimination against these respective minority groups is found in each of the four surveyed cities. These gaps in perceived discrimination are paralleled by large white-black and white-Hispanic gaps in support for policy to reduce racial inequality. At present there is no such white–Asian American gap in perceived discrimination against Asians in Los Angeles, but this may be temporary. We found evidence that increased acculturation among Asian Americans brings with it increased perceived discrimination—against Asians as a group and against women.

Our comparative analysis by race and gender shows that the racialization of discrimination perceptions involves two facets beyond whites' and minorities' beliefs about discrimination against minorities. It includes a substantial minority-white gap in perceived reverse discrimination. The majority of whites perceive "a little" or "some" race-based job discrimination against whites, but the large majority of each minority categorically says "none" exists. This itself may be a source of frustration and anger, as is the white-minority gap in perceptions about discrimination against minorities. In addition, the racialized quality of discrimination perceptions extends to beliefs about discrimination against women. As we have seen, the gap between blacks' greater and whites'

lesser perceived gender discrimination is larger than the same gap between women and men.

We found that there is a large white-minority gap in the determinants of perceived group discrimination as well. Whites' beliefs do not reflect potential social learning from personal or workplace contact, but rest more in deduction from social ideology, perceived group interest, and social ignorance. In contrast, perceived discrimination among minority groups is a function of the actual risk and perceived personal experience with job discrimination. This suggests that one direct and straightforward way to reduce the white-minority gap in perceived discrimination is to eliminate actual discrimination.

The subject of eliminating discrimination leads us back to a consideration of inequality-related policy. We found that, net of other important determinants, perceived discrimination against minorities and women does shape policy attitudes. What, accordingly, are the implications of our findings about perceived discrimination for future public support of policy to reduce race-ethnic or gender inequality?

Our findings give some reason to be optimistic about increased public support for racial policy in response to research on "objective" group-based economic inequalities presented in this book and elsewhere. White acknowledgment of discrimination may be halting, but it is there. Only a minority of whites deny it altogether. Even for perceptions of discrimination against Asians, at least half of whites in each city say there is "some" or "a lot" of discrimination. That whites do acknowledge job discrimination against minorities results in at least moderate levels of support for minimalist interventions to promote equal economic opportunity.

White anger over "reverse discrimination" is one source of opposition to racial policy. Contrary to the impressions given by one line of questioning, whites in our cities do not see prevalent reverse discrimination against their own group. Questions such as those posed in the National Election Survey that ask whites to rate the likelihood that a white family member will be the victim show a high percentage rating such a chance as likely (compare, Kinder and Sanders 1996). Yet when the referent is fellow whites collectively, a very small percent of whites perceive a lot of reverse discrimination and the substantial majority see little or none. Perhaps there is a grain of realism shaping perceptions here, and recognition that numbers and segregation determine that the potential for whites as a group to suffer extensive discrimination due to being white is quite limited.

Viewed in one light, we have reason to be optimistic at the percentage of whites who see no income difference on average between whites and minorities: 59 percent see Asians as having income equal to or

greater than whites, 23 percent and 20 percent share the same belief in equality, respectively, between whites and blacks or Hispanics. It holds out the promise that continued efforts to describe and interpret the stagnant or worsening economic gap between whites and minority groups may pay off in terms of an increased perception among whites that there are structural limitations to opportunity for minorities. The challenge is to understand who in particular holds this view and how best to educate them.

Other findings are not so sanguine. The white-minority gap involving blacks and Hispanics is just as strong among the young and the old. Age group differences may derive from social or biological aging per se, as well as reflect larger societal trends. Yet we know that age group differences in traditional prejudice shown with cross-sectional data do clearly parallel trend data. The young led the way in the decline of traditional prejudice, but we can make no such statement at present about perceived discrimination against minority groups.

We have found little to no evidence that personal or workplace contact leads to a greater recognition of discrimination against minorities. Although recent research demonstrates that such contact may have effects on interpersonal relations, our findings argue against such effects on beliefs about discrimination. Contact then may reduce hostility or, more positively, increase good feelings between whites and minorities *as individuals*. It does not appear to teach any lessons about the circumstances and treatment of minorities *as a group*.

Our results show this to be a consequence of the strongly abstract determination among whites of perceived discrimination against minority groups. Although, as we noted earlier, the social naïveté basis of perceived discrimination against minorities perhaps is malleable, other components are much more resistant to change. Liberal-conservative political ideology and the white sense of group entitlement are deeply rooted in American history and culture. Simple intergroup contact faces an uphill battle in overcoming them.

Our research also shows that perceiving prevalent job discrimination among minority groups or women in and of itself is not sufficient to produce support for policy. The visible political attention to opportunity-related social policy is frequently reduced to a debate over the fairness of "quotas." As we have seen, the simple mention of the word *preference* in the context of racial or gender policy was sufficient to produce widespread opposition among whites in each of the four cities. In addition, we have seen that attitudes toward inequality-related policy addressed to minorities or women are the product of several entrenched forces, including social-political ideology, negative racial effect in the

guise of such characterizations as welfare dependency, and group interests.

Support for policy addressing gender inequality in the four cities rests on a rather uncertain base in opinion about job discrimination against women. As in the case of whites' perceptions of discrimination against minorities, at least half the male respondents in each city acknowledge "some" (the modal response) or "a lot" of job discrimination against women. In contrast to the case of blacks and Hispanics, however, women are much more divided in their opinion about the pervasiveness of discrimination against their own group. This implies, as we have seen empirically, that women are less strong advocates for programs targeted toward reducing gender inequality than blacks and Hispanics are for programs targeted toward their respective groups. Indeed, as we have seen, the greater denial of discrimination against women found among white women than among black men leads black men to support gender-related policy more strongly than do white women.

Recently, we have seen an increasing call for dialogue on matters of race by the president and other political figures. (Indeed, one might consider such a dialogue on matters of gender as well.) Often, the kind of dialogue that is envisioned includes only issues of racial prejudice and stereotyping. Yet we have shown in this research that the basis for intergroup anger and conflict over beliefs about discrimination is wide-ranging and even stronger than has been underscored in other research on whites and blacks (Feagin and Sikes 1994; Hochschild 1995). The results of this and other research show that there is potentially much to be gained by including racial and ethnic discrimination as a topic in this dialogue. The basis of minority group views in actual risk and personal experience of discrimination, however, argues that dialogue alone will not be sufficient to bridge the white-minority gap in perceived discrimination. It must be accompanied by action to end discrimination in the workplace.

Appendix: Measures
Sociodemographic Variables

Education is measured in five categories: (1) zero to eleven years, (2) twelve years, (3) thirteen to fifteen years, (4) sixteen years, and (5) seventeen or more years. *Income* is total family income for 1992 in twenty categories, ranging from (1) 0 to $4,999 to (2) $150,000 or more. It is measured in $5,000 intervals up to $69,999, $10,000 intervals up to $99,999, and $25,000 intervals up to $149,999.

Personal and Workplace Contact

To measure personal contact, we used the following question:

From time to time, most people discuss important matters with other people. Looking back over the last six months, who are the people, *other than people living in your own household*, with whom you have discussed matters important to you?

Personal contact has been measured in different ways in prior research, but the restriction to contact involving important matters focuses attention on nontrivial engagement across race or ethnic lines. Thus, any potential effect of personal contact on perceived discrimination is allowed full opportunity to show itself in this research.

We employ two measures of workplace contact. Respondents were asked to indicate the race/ethnicity of their immediate supervisor at work. They also reported on the race/ethnicity of coworkers, indicating whether "most of the employees doing the kind of work you do/did at this location are non-Hispanic white, non-Hispanic black, Hispanic, Asian, or other."

These measures in principle permit one to look at the effects of personal contact viewed in many different configurations. In practice, however, because of the prevalence of white-minority segregation, we are limited to examining more simple operationalizations when analyzing the effects of contact on whites' perceptions. We analyze the effects of having one or more persons of a specific minority group in one's personal network on perceived discrimination against that minority group. In looking at how contact shapes perceived "reverse discrimination," we broaden the scope a bit, examining the effect of having any nonwhite member among one's personal network. We restrict our attention to whether or not whites work where their coworkers are predominantly white versus nonwhite (330 whites work with predominantly nonwhite coworkers), and to whether they have a white or nonwhite immediate supervisor (182 whites have a nonwhite supervisor).

Among minorities, we include two dimensions of personal contact: a variable distinguishing persons who number one or more whites in their personal network, and persons who number one or more other minorities in their network. Each workplace contact measure now has three categories among minority group members. Coworker race-ethnicity is composed of those who work with coworkers primarily of their own race-ethnicity, those who work with primarily white coworkers, and those who work primarily with coworkers from other minority groups. Supervisor race-ethnicity is composed of those who are super-

vised by a member of their own race-ethnicity, those who have a white supervisor, and those who are supervised by someone from another minority group than their own. The first category of each of these two variables is excluded in the regressions of table 3.4.

Personal Experience of Discrimination

The perceived personal experience of job discrimination due to race or gender, respectively, is measured by the combined response to the following questions:

Have you felt that at any time in the past you were refused a job because of your race or ethnicity (your gender)?
Have you ever felt at any time in the past that others at your place of employment got promotions or pay raises faster than you because of your race or ethnicity (your gender)?

A respondent is given a score of 1 if she or he answers yes to either one of these two questions, and a score of 0 if she or he answers no to both of them. Measures of personal race and gender discrimination were constructed for respondents who had ever worked for pay and who had complete data for each of the two questions.

Liberalism-Conservatism

Answers to this question were coded such that a high score indicates greater self-assessed political liberalism. Respondents were asked:

We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. Here is a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged, from extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Where would you place yourself on this scale?
[Responses are "extremely liberal," "liberal," "slightly liberal," "moderate," "slightly conservative," "conservative," and "extremely conservative."]

Group Threat

Competition with Immigrants: If immigration to this country continues, do you believe people like you will probably have: much more opportunity than now, some but not a lot more, no more or less than now, less than now, or a lot less than now?
Job Competition with GROUP: More good jobs for blacks-Hispanics or Asians mean fewer good jobs for R'S RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUP.
[The response scale ranges from 5 ("strongly agree") to 1 ("strongly disagree.")]

White Versus GROUP Traits

To measure *White vs. GROUP Wealth* and *White vs. GROUP Welfare Dependence*, we asked respondents to rate "whites," "Asians," "blacks," and "Hispanics or Latinos" on 7-point scales. We used difference scores in our analyses, obtained by subtracting the rating for a particular minority group from that for whites. The items were recoded so that a higher value of a difference score indicates, respectively, that whites are perceived to be more affluent than a minority group or that whites are considered to be less "welfare-dependent." The specific questions used are as follows:

Wealth: In the first statement a score of 1 means that you think almost all of the people in that group are "rich." A score of 7 means that you think almost everyone in the group is "poor." A score of 4 means that you think that a group is not toward one end or the other, and of course you may choose any number in between that comes closest to where you think people in the group stand.

Welfare Dependence: Next, for each group I want to know whether you think they tend to be self-supporting or tend to prefer to live off welfare. A score of 1 means that you think almost all of the people in that group "prefer to be self-supporting." A score of 7 means that you think that almost everyone in the group "prefers to live off welfare." A score of 4 means that you think that a group is not toward one end or the other, and of course you may choose any number in between that comes closest to where you think people in the group stand.

Notes

1. Because questions about discrimination against different groups were placed together in the questionnaire, the possibility of "even-handedness" or a response consistency effect must be recognized (Schuman and Presser 1981). Correspondingly, we give more attention to the relative difference in perceptions of discrimination against different groups than to their absolute values.

2. In contrast, nearly two-thirds of those choosing "a lot" *affirm* that the black-white socioeconomic gap is "mainly due to discrimination."

3. Emily Kane (1992) examines attitudes toward gender stratification, including perceptions of discrimination and support for inequality-related policy—by gender and race. However, her analysis is based on small samples of black men (62) and black women (80), and does not include comparisons with Hispanics or Asian Americans.

4. For convenience of exposition only, we use the term *racial* in referring to Hispanics as well as blacks and Asians.

5. Results from a 1980 national survey (Kluegel and Smith 1986) showed slightly more perceived discrimination against women than blacks, and a smaller gap between men and women in the extent of perceived discrimination against women than we find in the Multi-City Study data.

6. Emily Kane (1992) found the same pattern for attitudes toward gender stratification in general.

7. We do not include variables to represent city of residence in analyses of Asian American and Hispanic perceptions of discrimination against their own respective groups. In the Asian American case, virtually all respondents, of course, are from Los Angeles. There is essentially no overlap in the distribution of Hispanic origin groups between Boston and Los Angeles. Hispanics from Boston are either Dominican or Puerto Rican in origin. Hispanics from Los Angeles originate from Central America or Mexico or are Mexican Americans. City and origin group thus are completely confounded, and we cannot include variables for both of them simultaneously in regression equations.

8. To more closely "capture" second- and third-generation persons, we analyzed age group differences among Hispanic and Asian American respondents born in the United States. These results differ from the results in table 3.2 in only one respect. Hispanic respondents sixty-five or older do not differ on average from other age groups in perceived discrimination against Hispanics. That is, there are no statistically significant differences in perceived discrimination at all among either Asian Americans or Hispanics born in the United States.

9. We also tested for possible differences among the respective Hispanic and Asian American origin subgroups in how sociodemographic variables affect perceived group discrimination. The smaller numbers of respondents in each subgroup limit how strong a test we can realize from these data. Nevertheless, the results show that the findings in table 3.3 for the respective Hispanic and Asian American origin groups combined are the same in each of the separate origin groups.

10. Questions about contact and work experiences were asked of partial subsets of respondents. To accommodate this problem of varying n's, we employed pairwise deletion of missing data. This effectively made use of all available information when we tested for the statistical significance of relationships between variables.

11. Consistent with this interpretation, Lawrence Bobo and Vincent Hutchings (1996) found that whites in Los Angeles perceive greater job and economic competition with Asians and Latinos than with blacks. In the Multi-City Study data, we find that white Atlantans

perceive more direct job competition on average with blacks than do whites in the other three cities, and white Angelenos perceive more direct job competition with Asians than with either blacks or Hispanics (the latter two groups have roughly equal means for perceived job competition).

12. In addition to its contemporaneous effect, the personal experience of race discrimination contributes to a historical and collective determination of perceived group discrimination through "racial alienation" (Bobo and Hutchings 1996). Racial alienation is shaped over time by a group's cumulative and collectively shared experience with racial disenfranchisement and unequal treatment (Bobo and Hutchings 1996; Feagin 1991). Forty-five percent of blacks and 28 percent of Hispanics report having ever personally been the victim of job discrimination, and it is substantially more likely that they will know a fellow member of their group who perceives having been so victimized than it is for whites or Asian Americans. The collectively derived knowledge of job discrimination against members of one's own group meets with the collective experience of discrimination in other areas to reinforce the sense that job discrimination is a serious problem faced by one's group (Feagin 1991).

13. The lack of a statistically significant effect for personal gender discrimination among Asian women reflects the small number reporting such experience. Of the 284 Asian women who were asked to report on experience with personal discrimination, 26 responded that they had ever experienced any gender discrimination in hiring or promotion. It is best to conclude that our data do not permit a reliable estimate of the effect of personal gender discrimination among Asian American women.

14. Social distance also may play a role. There, of course, is much greater social distance between whites and minorities than between white men and white women. It is correspondingly psychologically easier for white men to express anger toward minorities than toward women.

15. A review of poll and other survey data on affirmative action (Steeh and Krysan 1996) identifies only one unpublished study that examined attitudes toward programs targeting Asians and Latinos.

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