

The Impact of Anti-Black Racism on Approval of Barack Obama's Job Performance  
and on Voting in the 2012 Presidential Election

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Executive Summary

- Anti-Black attitudes became slightly more common between 2008 and 2012.
- Sizable proportions of both Democrats and Republicans manifested anti-Black attitudes, though anti-Black attitudes were more common among Republicans than among Democrats.
- People who identified themselves as Republicans in 2012 expressed anti-Black attitudes more often than did Republican identifiers in 2008.
- People with more negative attitudes toward Blacks were less likely to approve of President Obama's job performance.
- The influence of racial attitudes on approval of Mr. Obama's job performance decreased between 2010 and 2012.
- If anti-Black attitudes had been converted to be neutral, about 2 to 3 percentage points more people would have approved of President Obama's job performance in 2010 and 2012.
- If both anti-Black and pro-Black attitudes had been converted to be neutral, the proportion of Americans disapproving of President Obama's job performance would have been 1 to 3 percentage points lower in both 2010 and 2012.

- In 2012, holding negative attitudes toward Blacks increased the likelihoods of voting for Mr. Romney and not voting at all and decreased the likelihood of voting for Mr. Obama.
- Neutralizing anti-Black attitudes led to a projected increase in Mr. Obama's 2012 vote share of 4 percentage points and a projected decrease in Mr. Romney's 2012 vote share of 5 percentage points.
- Converting both anti-Black and pro-Black attitudes to neutral led to a projected increase in Mr. Obama's 2012 vote share of 2 percentage points and a projected decrease in Mr. Romney's 2012 vote share of 3 percentage points.

## The Impact of Anti-Black Racism on Approval of Barack Obama's Job Performance and on Voting in the 2012 Presidential Election

Many scholarly investigations suggest that anti-Black racism had a moderate influence on the outcome of the 2008 U.S. presidential election. Some individuals with anti-Black sentiments seem to have voted for John McCain when they would otherwise have voted for President Obama or abstained (see, e.g., Pasek et al., 2009). A variety of estimates using differing data sources and relying on various plausible assumptions projected that President Obama would have received between two and 12 additional percentage points of the vote had anti-Black attitudes in America been neutral instead (Highton, 2011; Hutchings, 2010; Jackman & Vavreck, 2011; Lewis-Beck & Tien, 2008; Piston, 2010; Schaffner, 2011).

Since 2008, the American people have learned a great deal about President Obama. For a variety of reasons, this additional exposure could lead to changes in the amount and influence of anti-Black attitudes in 2012. A large body of research in social psychology illustrates that non-contentious intergroup contact often results in diminished prejudice (Pettigrew, 1998). And by gaining a great deal of information about Mr. Obama and his actions during the last 4 years, Americans are poised to evaluate him on the basis of such information rather than making inferences based on his group membership, a process known as individuation (Neuberg & Fiske, 1987). Or Americans could engage in "subtyping", whereby they come to view their attitudes toward Blacks in general as only minimally relevant to

Mr. Obama, if people view him as an atypical Black, to whom conventional stereotypes do not apply.

Alternatively, if some Americans view President Obama's policies and actions as motivated toward advancing the interests of Blacks at the expense of Whites, those people today may be inclined to use their attitudes toward Blacks to evaluate Mr. Obama (cf. Tesler & Sears, 2010a; 2010b; Valentino & Brader, 2011; Wilson & Davis, 2012).

If people did engage in subtyping, then it is unlikely that learning about Mr. Obama would have changed more general anti-Black sentiments in the nation. But if people learned about Mr. Obama and generalized their feelings toward him and beliefs about him to other Blacks, then the nation's evaluations of Blacks might have become more positive or more negative, depending on people's reactions to him.

In this paper, we explore the extent of implicit and explicit anti-Black attitudes in 2012 and the degree to which such attitudes shape the American public's evaluations of Mr. Obama's performance in office and their intentions regarding voting in the 2012 election. In doing so, we compare the current extent and impact of prejudice now with their extent and impact in previous years.

## Method

### *Data*

Data come from three surveys conducted by the Associated Press, GfK Custom Research (formerly Knowledge Networks for the 2008 and 2010 surveys), Stanford University, and – in the case of the most recent data – the University of Michigan. All data were collected by GfK using samples from KnowledgePanel®, a

representative, probability-based web panel of U.S. adults who were recruited via mail and telephone to complete questionnaires regularly via the Internet. Non-internet households were equipped with laptops or netbooks and free internet service. Data for the first survey were collected from 2,228 individuals between August 25 and September 8, 2008. Data for the second survey were collected between December 23, 2009, and January 10, 2010, from 1,037 respondents. The third survey involved data collected from 1,071 individuals between August 30 and September 11, 2012. We refer to these surveys as the 2008, 2010, and 2012 surveys, respectively.

All three surveys' data were weighted to match Current Population Survey statistics on all American adults at the time of each data collection.

#### *Explicit Racial Attitudes (Symbolic Racism)*

Explicit racial attitudes were gauged using questions designed to measure "Symbolic Racism" (Henry & Sears, 2002). The questions, averaged into a single index, were:

"Irish, Italians, Jewish<sup>1</sup>, and other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without special favors." (Coding: Strongly disagree = 0, Somewhat disagree = .25, Neither agree nor disagree = .50, Somewhat agree = .75, Strongly agree = 1).

"Generations of slavery have created conditions that make it difficult for Blacks to work their way out of the lower class." (Coding: Strongly agree = 0,

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<sup>1</sup> This word was changed to "Jews" in the 2012 survey.

Somewhat agree = .25, Neither agree nor disagree = .50, Somewhat disagree = .75, Strongly disagree = 1).

“It’s really a matter of some people just not trying hard enough; if Blacks would only try harder, they could be just as well off as whites.” (Coding: Strongly disagree = 0, Somewhat disagree = .25, Neither agree nor disagree = .50, Somewhat agree = .75, Strongly agree = 1).

“Over the past few years, Blacks have gotten less than they deserve.” (Coding: Strongly agree = 0, Somewhat agree = .25, Neither agree nor disagree = .50, Somewhat disagree = .75, Strongly disagree = 1).

“Over the past few years, Blacks have gotten more economically than they deserve.” (Coding: Strongly disagree = 0, Somewhat disagree = .25, Neither agree nor disagree = .50, Somewhat agree = .75, Strongly agree = 1).

“Some people say that Black leaders have been trying to push too fast. Others feel that they haven’t pushed fast enough. What do you think?” (Coding: Haven’t pushed fast enough = 0, Pushing at about the right speed = .50, Trying to push too fast = 1).

“How much of the racial tension that exists in the United States today do you think Blacks are responsible for creating?” (Coding: Not much at all = 0, Some = .33, Most = .67, All of it = 1).

“How much discrimination against Blacks do you feel there is in the United States today, limiting their chances to get ahead?” (Coding: A lot = 0, Some = .33, A little = .67, None at all = 1).

### *Implicit Racial Attitudes (AMP)*

Implicit racial attitudes were measured using the Affect Misattribution Procedure (AMP). Respondents saw a series of Chinese ideographs, one at a time, and assigned each one to one of two categories, more pleasant and less pleasant, placing approximately half of the ideographs in each. After respondents completed a sequence of practice trials during which only ideographs were shown, more ideographs were shown, but each one was preceded by a quick flash of a photograph of the face of either an African-American male or a White male (24 of each were used). When a face precedes an ideograph, people's affective reactions to the face influence their later assessments of the ideograph (Payne, Cheng, Govorun, & Stewart, 2005). People who have favorable feelings toward the face are more likely to label the ideograph as pleasant, and people who have unfavorable feelings toward the face are more likely to label the ideograph as unpleasant.

Two scores were calculated for each respondent: the proportion of trials rated as pleasant when an African-American face was shown, and the proportion rated as pleasant when a White face was shown. We subtracted the score for trials with African-American faces from the score for trials with White faces and then recoded the result to range from 0 (meaning all ideographs preceded by African-American faces were labeled as more pleasant and all ideographs preceded by White faces were labeled as less pleasant) to 1 (meaning all ideographs preceded by African-American faces were labeled as more pleasant and all ideographs preceded by White faces were labeled as less pleasant). Descriptive statistics for racial attitude measures are shown in Table 1.



### *Approval of President Obama's Job Performance*

Respondents in 2010 and 2012 were asked:

“Overall, do you approve, disapprove, or neither approve nor disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?” “Strongly approve”, “Somewhat approve”, “Have mixed feelings”, “Somewhat disapprove”, and “Strongly disapprove.”

### *Turnout*

Respondents were determined to be “likely voters” or not during 2008 and 2012 using responses to five questions.

*Turnout likelihood.* Respondents in 2008 and 2012 were asked, “On [November 6, 2012/November 4, 2008], the election for President will be held. Using a 1-to-10 scale, where 10 means you are completely certain you will vote and 1 means you are completely certain you will NOT vote, how likely are you to vote in the upcoming presidential election? You can use any number between 1 and 10 to indicate how strongly you feel about your likelihood to vote.” Respondents who selected 8, 9, or 10 were classified as having a moderate or greater turnout likelihood. Respondents who selected 10 were classified as having a high turnout likelihood. People who selected any other answer were classified as having a low turnout likelihood.

*Registration status.* Respondents in 2008 and 2012 were asked, “Are you registered to vote?” Response options were “Yes, at my current address”, “Yes, but at a different address”, “No”, and “Not Sure”. Respondents who selected “Yes, at my

current address” were coded as registered, and all other respondents were coded as not registered.

*Voted in a prior election.* Respondents in 2008 were asked, “In talking to people about elections, we often find that a lot of people were not able to vote because they weren’t registered, they were sick, or they just didn’t have time. Which one of the following statements best describes you?” Response options were “I did not vote in the 2004 presidential election”, “I’m sure I voted in the 2004 presidential election”, “I thought about voting in the 2004 presidential election, but didn’t”, and “I usually vote, but didn't in the 2004 presidential election”. Respondents who answered “I’m sure I voted in the 2004 presidential election” were classified as prior voters, all other individuals were considered non-prior voters.

Respondents in 2012 were asked, “Did you happen to have voted in the 2008 election?” Individuals who responded “Yes” were classified as prior voters, and all others were considered non-prior voters.

*Know where to vote.* Respondents in 2008 and 2012 were asked, “Do you happen to know where people in your neighborhood go to vote, or not?” Respondents who answered “Yes” were classified as knowing where to vote, and those who answered “No” were classified as not knowing.

*Identifying likely voters.* Individuals were classified as likely voters if they were registered, knew where to vote, and either reported high turnout likelihood, reported moderate turnout likelihood and voted in the prior election and reported

voting frequently, or reported moderate turnout likelihood and were too young to have voted in past presidential elections.

### *Candidate Choice*

In 2012, respondents were asked, “If the 2012 general election for President were being held today and these were the candidates, would you vote for...”

Response options were, “Barack Obama, the Democrat”, “Mitt Romney, the Republican”, “Gary Johnson, the Libertarian”, “Jill Stein, the Green Party candidate”, “Someone else”, and “Don’t know”. The order of the first two candidates was randomized.

Respondents who answered “Don’t Know” were asked, “If you had to choose, is there one of these candidates that you lean more towards?” Response options were “Barack Obama, the Democrat”, “Mitt Romney, the Republican”, “Gary Johnson, the Libertarian”, “Jill Stein, the Green Party candidate”, “No, don’t lean toward any of these candidates”, and “Don’t know”.

Responses to both of these questions and the turnout question were used to assign each respondent to one of four categories: (1) a likely voter who would vote for President Obama, (2) a likely voter who would vote for Mitt Romney, (3) a likely voter who would vote for a Non-Major Party Candidate (Bob Barr, Ralph Nader, Gary Johnson, or Jill Stein, Someone else, or No, don’t lean toward any of these candidates), or someone not categorized as a likely voter.

### *Additional Measures*

Additional measures used in the analyses are shown in Appendix A.

### *Multiple Imputation*

We created five datasets, one for each year, and one for each adjacent year pair: 2008-2010 and 2010-2012. To replace missing values in each dataset, we implemented multiple imputation with deletion via chained equations (MICE). Because multiple imputation relies on Monte Carlo simulations, imputed values for a variable varied slightly across datasets, leading to slight differences in the coefficient for the variable in multiple-year equations than in single-year equations.

## Results

### *Distribution of Racial Attitudes*

The proportion of Americans expressing explicit anti-Black attitudes held steady between 47.6% in 2008 and 47.3% in 2010, and increased slightly and significantly to 50.9% in 2012. The proportion of Americans explicitly expressing pro-Black attitudes declined slightly from 46.7% in 2008 to 45.6% in 2010 and 41.9% in 2012 (see column 1 of Figure 1;  $\chi^2=10.0(4)$   $p=.04$  for both comparisons). Thus, anti-Black attitudes increased by 3.3 percentage points between 2008 and 2012, and pro-Black attitudes decreased by 4.8 percentage points during that time.<sup>2</sup>

Similarly, the proportion of Americans manifesting anti-Black attitude scores on the implicit measure increased from 49.3% in 2008 to 51.1% in 2010 and 55.7% in 2012. And the proportion of American receiving pro-Black attitudes scores declined from 36.5% in 2008 to 35.5% in 2010 and 32.4% in 2012 (see column 2 of Figure 1;  $\chi^2=10.0(4)$   $p=.04$  for both comparisons). Thus, anti-Black attitudes

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<sup>2</sup> The mean of explicit attitudes was relatively constant from .507 in 2008 to .508 in 2010 and increased significantly ( $p<.001$ ) to .529 in 2012.

increased by 6.4 percentage points from 2008 to 2012, and pro-Black attitudes decreased by 4.1 percentage points during that time (for the distributions of attitudes, see Figure 1).<sup>3</sup>

### *Racial Attitudes of Democrats, Republicans, and Independents*

Consistent with past research (Sniderman & Carmines, 1997; Tesler & Sears, 2010b), explicit racism was more common among Republicans than among Democrats in all years. In 2008, the proportion of people expressing anti-Black attitudes was 31% among Democrats, 49% among independents, and 71% among Republicans, highly significant differences ( $p < .001$ ). In 2012, the proportion of people expressing anti-Black attitudes was 32% among Democrats, 48% among independents, and 79% among Republicans, again highly significant differences ( $p < .001$ ).

The gap between Democrats and Republicans was significantly greater in 2012 than it was in 2008 ( $p = .004$ ), though much of the change may be attributable to differences between people who called themselves Republicans in 2008 and people who called themselves Republicans in 2012. The extent of explicit anti-Black attitudes was notably larger in the latter of these groups than in the former (71% vs. 79%). In contrast, the extent of explicit anti-Black attitudes was equivalent among people who called themselves Democrats in 2008 and people who called themselves Democrats in 2012 (31% vs. 32%).

Implicit anti-Black attitudes manifested almost the identical pattern but with smaller differences between the parties, higher apparent levels of racism among

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<sup>3</sup> The mean of implicit attitudes shifted from .526 in 2008 to .534 in 2010 ( $p < .04$ ) and increased to .548 in 2012 ( $p < .04$ ).

Democrats, and lower apparent levels of racism among Republicans. In 2008, the proportion of people expressing anti-Black attitudes was 46% among Democrats, 48% among independents, and 53% among Republicans, statistically significant differences ( $p=.03$ ). In 2012, the proportion of people expressing anti-Black attitudes was 55% among Democrats, 49% among independents, and 64% among Republicans, again highly significant differences ( $p<.001$ ).

#### *Approval of President Obama's Performance*

In an ordinal logistic regression predicting job approval in 2012 using a variety of demographic variables as well as party identification, liberal-conservative ideology, and both measures of racial attitudes, more explicit anti-Black attitudes were strongly associated with lower likelihood of approval ( $b=-2.87$ ,  $p<.001$ ; Table 2).<sup>4</sup> Controlling for explicit attitudes, implicit racial attitudes explained no additional variance in approval ( $b=.64$ ,  $p=.16$ ).<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> According to earlier studies of racial attitudes (cf. Pasek et al., 2009), this model provides a middle-of-the-road estimate of the influence of racial attitudes on job approval. We estimated the parameters of two additional equations to understand the potential range of the influence that racial attitudes might have had: (1) a parsimonious equation predicting approval of President Obama's performance using only racial attitudes and demographic variables, and (2) an enhanced equation including all of the predictors in the primary equation and also including perceptions of the economy and of a variety of President Obama's traits.

Using parameter estimates generated for each of these equations, we predicted the proportions of individuals who would be expected to give approving, disapproving, and neutral answers (1) at actual levels of racial attitudes, (2) if all anti-Black sentiment were transformed to be neutral, and (3) if everyone held neutral racial attitudes. In the most parsimonious model, with anti-Black attitudes neutralized, President Obama's approval would have been 40.2% and his disapproval would have been 28.9%, with 30.8% expressing mixed feelings. With all racial attitudes neutralized, job approval would have been 34.3%, disapproval would have been 32.8%, and mixed feelings would also have comprised 32.8% of the population. In the most exhaustive model, with anti-Black attitudes neutralized, President Obama's job approval would have been 34.4%, with 37.1% disapproving

With existing racial attitudes in 2012, the model predicts that 34.5% of people would approve of President Obama's performance, 37.7% would disapprove, and 27.7% would neither approve nor disapprove (results not far from the raw survey's actual results that 35.0% of Americans approved of the President's performance, 37.8% disapproved, and 27.2% neither approved nor disapproved). If anti-Black sentiments were transformed to be neutral, the model predicts that 36.6% would approve, 34.2% would disapprove, and 29.1% would neither approve nor disapprove. That is, the proportion approving would be expected to increase by two percentage points. If we were to neutralize both pro-and anti-Black attitudes, the model predicts that 33.8% would approve, 35.6% would disapprove, and 30.6% would neither approve nor disapprove, a net decrease in disapproval of 1.5 percentage points.<sup>6</sup>

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and 28.5% neutral. With all racial attitudes neutralized, 34.0% would have approved of the president's performance with 37.2% disapproving and 28.7% neutral.

<sup>5</sup> Implicit attitudes were not significantly related even when explicit attitudes were removed from the model.

<sup>6</sup> For statistical reasons, comparisons of model-predicted values under different circumstances cannot be directly compared with actual values. Predicted values of approval were created within each imputation for each respondent based on the ordinal logit regression models. Based on actual levels of racism, distributions of demographic characteristics, partisanship, and ideology, each respondent was assigned a probability for each of the five levels of approval. A weighted average of these probabilities produced an estimate of the distribution of approval across all outcomes for each of the imputations. These within-imputation averages were then averaged to produce an estimate for all five levels of approval. The strongly approve and somewhat approve categories were combined to produce an estimate of approval; the strongly disapprove and somewhat disapprove categories were combined to produce an estimate of disapproval.

To produce estimates with no anti-Black attitudes, values of both symbolic racism and the AMP that were above .5 were replaced with values of .5 for all respondents in each of the imputations when producing predicted values. To

The relation of racial attitudes to approval of Mr. Obama's performance was slightly stronger in 2012 than in 2010 ( $p < .001$ , see rows 1 and 2 in column 2 of Table 3). With existing racial attitudes in 2010, the model predicts that 39.8% of people would approve of President Obama's performance, 33.1% would disapprove, and 27.1% would neither approve nor disapprove (the actual proportions were 40.4% approve, 33.5% disapprove, and 26.2% neither approve nor disapprove). If anti-Black sentiments were neutralized, the model predicts that 43.2% would have approved, 28.0% would have disapproved, and 28.8% would have neither approved nor disapproved. That is, the proportion approving would have increased by three percentage points, slightly larger than the two percentage points observed for 2012. Neutralizing both anti-Black and pro-Black sentiments, the model predicts that 39.6% would have approved, 30.1% would have disapproved, and 30.3% would have neither approved nor disapproved. This is three percentage points less disapproval than with observed racial attitudes, also a slightly larger change than the 1.5 percentage points observed for 2012.

### *Voting*

Using a multinomial logistic regression with the same set of predictors to predict vote choice in the 2012 election (in which voting for Mr. Obama was the omitted category of the dependent variable), higher explicit racism was associated with a higher likelihood of voting for Mr. Romney ( $b = 4.04$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and was associated with a higher likelihood of not voting at all ( $b = 1.65$ ,  $p = .007$ ; see Table 4).

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produce estimates with no pro-Black or anti-Black attitudes, all values of the AMP and Symbolic racism were set to .5.



Controlling for the impact of explicit racism, implicit racial attitudes explained no additional variance in electoral choices.

Given current actual levels of racism, the model predicts that the President would receive 47.1% of the vote and that Mr. Romney would receive 41.8% of the vote. Transforming all anti-Black attitudes into neutral attitudes, President Obama is predicted to receive 51.1% of the vote, 4.0 percentage points more than currently. Mr. Romney is predicted to receive 37.2% of the vote, 4.6 percentage points fewer than currently. Neutralizing pro-Black attitudes as well results in a predicted 49.1% of the vote share for President Obama, yielding a net benefit of two percentage points. Mr. Romney would be expected to get 39.0% of the vote under these conditions.<sup>7</sup>

#### Discussion

These analyses suggest that Mr. Obama's approval rating has been 2 to 3 percentage points lower in 2010 and 2012 than it would have been in the absence of anti-Black attitudes. And the impact of such attitudes on Mr. Obama's and Mr. Romney's vote shares appear to be 4 to 5 percentage points. These latter numbers

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<sup>7</sup> We estimated the parameters of the parsimonious and exhaustive models predicting electoral choice to assess the potential range of the effects of racial attitudes. In the most parsimonious model, President Obama is predicted to receive 44.6% of the vote to Mr. Romney's 46.1% of the vote under actual levels of racial attitudes. After neutralizing anti-Black attitudes, Mr. Obama is predicted to get 55.5% of the vote, compared to Mr. Romney's 34.1% of the vote. If anti-Black and pro-Black attitudes are neutralized, Mr. Obama is predicted to get 49.5% of the vote, and Mr. Romney is predicted to get 39.8% of the vote. In the exhaustive model, President Obama is predicted to get 44.5% of the vote, and Mr. Romney is predicted to get 45.0% of the vote under actual levels of racial attitudes. After neutralizing anti-Black attitudes, Mr. Obama is predicted to get 44.7% of the vote, compared to Mr. Romney's 43.6% of the vote. If anti-Black and pro-Black attitudes are neutralized, Mr. Obama is predicted to get 45.2% of the vote, and Mr. Romney is predicted to get 44.0% of the vote.

are quite similar to our estimate that Mr. Obama may have lost about 5 percentage points of the popular vote in 2008 due to anti-Black racism (Pasek et al. 2009).

According to both explicit and implicit measures of racial attitudes, it appears that the Obama Administration has not been a time of decline in anti-Black attitudes in America. Indeed, these data suggest that anti-Black attitudes have become slightly more prevalent over those years, especially during the last two years.

Anti-Black attitudes appeared at notable levels among Democrats, independents, and Republicans, but at higher rates among Republicans than Democrats. This gap was larger according to the explicit attitude measure than according to the implicit measure. Thus, Democrats and Republicans appear more similar at the implicit level than at the explicit level.

These estimates of the possible impact of anti-Black attitudes on performance evaluations and voting are based on a series of assumptions, so the results should be interpreted recognizing the role that these assumptions may play. For example, estimates regarding 2012 voting behavior are based upon data collected in late August and early September. And the question we asked to assess candidate choice began “if the . . . election . . . were being held today”, thus asking respondents to make their choice based on current knowledge, not based on guesses about what will occur later. Many events have happened since then and will continue to occur as we approach election day, and these events may alter the impact of anti-Black attitudes.

A second assumption underlying this analysis is that the implicit and explicit measures assess racial attitudes and only racial attitudes. Some scholars have

speculated that the survey questions used here purporting to tap symbolic racism may tap other constructs (Tesler & Sears, 2010b). If such confounding is present, the apparent impact of racism here may be partly or mainly due to other constructs. To minimize this likelihood, we report results controlling for other variables. So it is best to think of the effects reported here as upper-bound estimates.

### *Conclusion*

In sum, these results suggest that anti-Black sentiment seems to have increased slightly in America over the course of Mr. Obama's term and that this sentiment may be shaping evaluations of Mr. Obama's presidency as well as the likelihood that individuals will vote for him in 2012.

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Table 1 - Distributions of Racial Attitudes Measures by Partisanship and Year (Before Imputation)										
Explicit Attitudes (Symbolic Racism)										
	2008			2010			2012			
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Wtd. N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Wtd. N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Wtd. N	
Entire Population	.51	.15	2533	.51	.12	1030	.53	.20	1033	
Democrats	.45	.16	978	.46	.11	382	.45	.20	367	
Independents	.51	.15	850	.52	.12	404	.52	.18	377	
Republicans	.58	.12	705	.56	.11	244	.63	.15	288	
Affect Misattribution Procedure (AMP)										
	2008			2010			2012			
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Wtd. N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Wtd. N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Wtd. N	
Entire Population	.53	.12	1506	.54	.13	2402	.55	.14	1391	
Democrats	.52	.12	526	.52	.13	382	.54	.14	374	
Independents	.52	.11	458	.52	.12	404	.54	.14	406	
Republicans	.54	.12	401	.56	.11	244	.57	.14	291	

Table 2 - Ordinal Logistic Regression Predicting Obama Approval in 2012			
	Coef.	Std. Err.	p value
Explicit Racism (Symbolic)	<b>-2.87</b>	<b>.38</b>	<b>.00</b>
Affect Misattribution Procedure	.64	.46	.16
Ages 25-34	<b>.51</b>	<b>.23</b>	<b>.03</b>
Ages 35-44	.34	.23	.15
Ages 45-54	.16	.24	.50
Ages 55-64	-.12	.23	.60
Ages 65-74	-.25	.26	.33
Ages 75 and older	-.40	.35	.25
Education - High School Degree	-.28	.21	.19
Education - Some College	-.31	.22	.16
Education - BA or Higher	-.35	.24	.14
Income \$15-35k	<b>.81</b>	<b>.24</b>	<b>.00</b>
Income \$35-60k	<b>.52</b>	<b>.23</b>	<b>.02</b>
Income \$60-75k	<b>.90</b>	<b>.29</b>	<b>.00</b>
Income \$75-100k	<b>.62</b>	<b>.25</b>	<b>.01</b>
Income \$100k or more	<b>.68</b>	<b>.24</b>	<b>.01</b>
Female	<b>.31</b>	<b>.12</b>	<b>.01</b>
Black, Non-Hispanic	<b>1.08</b>	<b>.22</b>	<b>.00</b>
Other/Multiple Races, Non-Hispanic	.28	.24	.25
Hispanic	<b>.37</b>	<b>.18</b>	<b>.05</b>
Midwest	.22	.20	.27
South	.06	.18	.74
West	.16	.20	.43
Democrat	<b>1.26</b>	<b>.16</b>	<b>.00</b>
Republican	<b>-1.36</b>	<b>.18</b>	<b>.00</b>
Liberal	<b>.71</b>	<b>.17</b>	<b>.00</b>
Conservative	<b>-1.06</b>	<b>.16</b>	<b>.00</b>
Cutpoints			
Strongly disapprove Somewhat disapprove	-2.16	.48	.00
Somewhat disapprove Have mixed feelings	-1.33	.48	.01
Have mixed feelings Somewhat approve	.77	.48	.11
Somewhat approve Strongly approve	2.59	.49	.00
N (Weighted)		1057	
McFadden's Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>		.24	
AIC		2520.7	



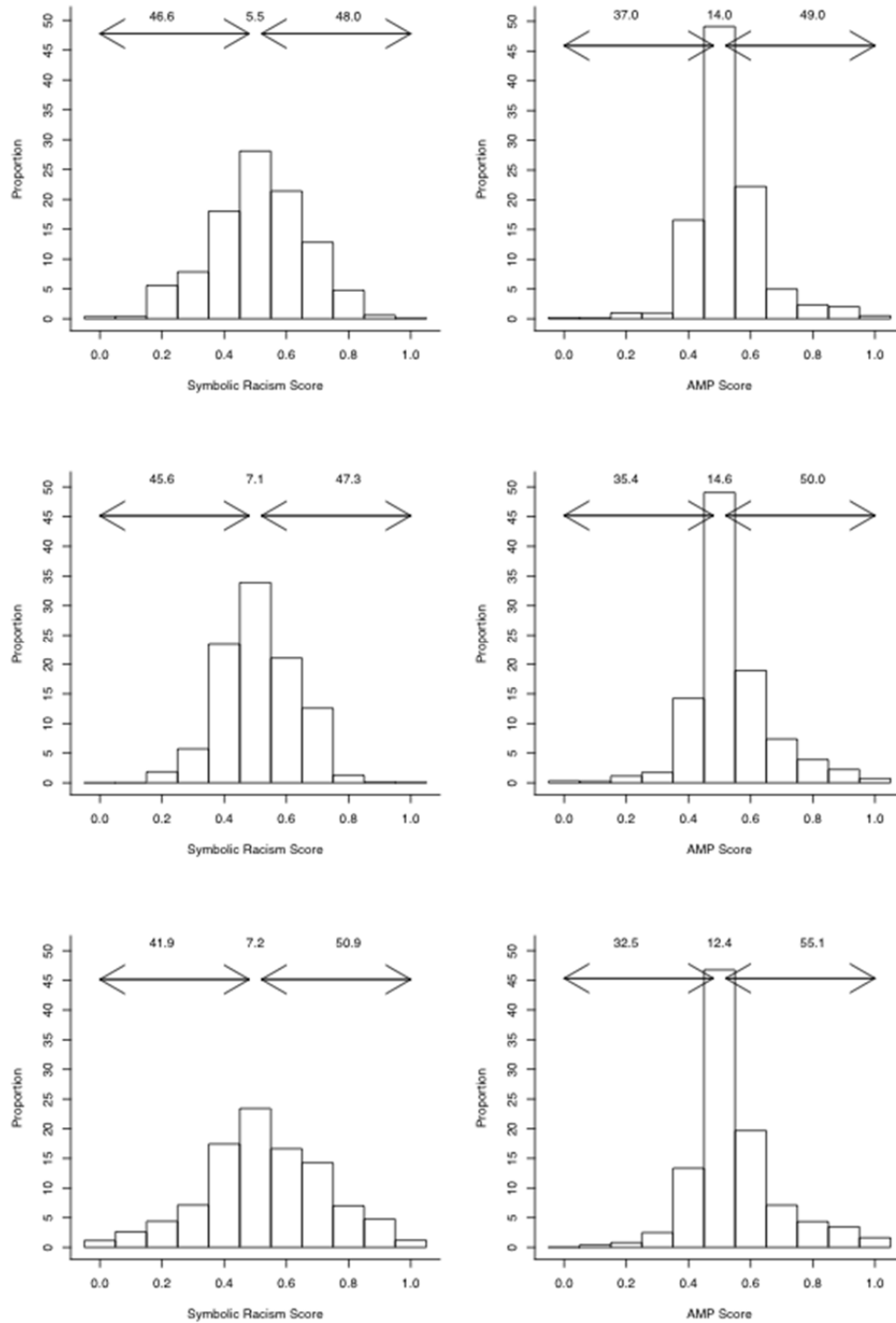
Table 3 - Ordinal Logistic Regression Predicting Obama Approval in 2010 and 2012

	Predictors in 2010			Differences Between 2010 and 2012		
	Coef.	Std. Err.	p value	Coef.	Std. Err.	p value
Explicit Racism (Symbolic)	<b>-4.94</b>	<b>.63</b>	<b>.00</b>	<b>2.18</b>	<b>.73</b>	<b>.00</b>
Affect Misattribution Procedure	-.57	.49	.25	1.18	.67	.08
Ages 25-34	-.07	.25	.78	.55	.34	.10
Ages 35-44	.29	.25	.25	.04	.34	.91
Ages 45-54	.07	.25	.79	.09	.34	.79
Ages 55-64	.16	.25	.52	-.28	.34	.41
Ages 65-74	.16	.28	.57	-.41	.38	.29
Ages 75 and older	-.02	.35	.94	-.37	.49	.45
Education - High School Degree	<b>-.51</b>	<b>.21</b>	<b>.01</b>	.25	.29	.39
Education - Some College	<b>-.58</b>	<b>.22</b>	<b>.01</b>	.28	.31	.36
Education - BA or Higher	-.29	.23	.22	-.04	.33	.90
Income \$15-35k	.27	.22	.22	.50	.32	.11
Income \$35-60k	-.03	.21	.89	.53	.31	.09
Income \$60-75k	-.09	.26	.73	<b>.96</b>	<b>.38</b>	<b>.01</b>
Income \$75-100k	.38	.24	.12	.22	.35	.53
Income \$100k or more	-.41	.24	.09	<b>1.05</b>	<b>.34</b>	<b>.00</b>
Female	-.11	.12	.40	<b>.40</b>	<b>.17</b>	<b>.02</b>
Black, Non-Hispanic	<b>1.43</b>	<b>.24</b>	<b>.00</b>	-.40	.32	.22
Other/Multiple Races, Non-Hispanic	<b>-.70</b>	<b>.26</b>	<b>.01</b>	<b>.97</b>	<b>.35</b>	<b>.01</b>
Hispanic	<b>.49</b>	<b>.20</b>	<b>.01</b>	-.15	.27	.59
Midwest	.15	.19	.44	.06	.27	.82
South	-.17	.17	.34	.23	.25	.36
West	.14	.19	.47	.01	.27	.97
Democrat	<b>.97</b>	<b>.15</b>	<b>.00</b>	.22	.21	.29
Republican	<b>-.86</b>	<b>.18</b>	<b>.00</b>	-.45	.25	.07
Liberal	<b>1.17</b>	<b>.17</b>	<b>.00</b>	<b>-.50</b>	<b>.24</b>	<b>.04</b>
Conservative	<b>-1.31</b>	<b>.16</b>	<b>.00</b>	.28	.22	.21
Year is 2012	-	-	-	<b>-2.97</b>	<b>.73</b>	<b>.00</b>
Cutpoints	-5.02	.56	.00			
Strongly disapprove Somewhat disapprove	-4.22	.56	.00			
Somewhat disapprove Have mixed feelings	-2.27	.55	.00			
Have mixed feelings Somewhat approve	-.51	.55	.36			
Somewhat approve Strongly approve						
N (Weighted)		2093				
McFadden's Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>		.24				
AIC		5080.9				

Table 4 - Multinomial Logistic Regression Predicting Preference for Romney Likely Voters, Non-Major Party Likely Voters, and Unlikely Voters (vs. Likely Obama Voters) in 2012

	Likely Romney (vs. Likely Obama)			Likely Non-Major Party (vs. Likely Obama)			Unlikely Voter (vs. Obama)		
	Coef.	Std. Err.	p value	Coef.	Std. Err.	p value	Coef.	Std. Err.	p value
Explicit Racism (Symbolic)	<b>4.04</b>	<b>.81</b>	<b>.00</b>	.63	1.03	.54	<b>1.65</b>	<b>.61</b>	<b>.01</b>
Affect Misattribution Procedure	.30	1.02	.77	.69	1.28	.59	-.05	.80	.95
Ages 25-34	.37	.63	.56	-.94	.67	.16	-.09	.41	.83
Ages 35-44	.54	.62	.38	-.95	.64	.14	-.42	.42	.31
Ages 45-54	.52	.59	.38	<b>-1.32</b>	<b>.65</b>	<b>.04</b>	<b>-1.05</b>	<b>.40</b>	<b>.01</b>
Ages 55-64	<b>1.18</b>	<b>.59</b>	<b>.05</b>	-.83	.61	.17	<b>-1.29</b>	<b>.40</b>	<b>.00</b>
Ages 65-74	1.09	.63	.08	-1.17	.64	.07	<b>-1.91</b>	<b>.44</b>	<b>.00</b>
Ages 75 and older	.83	.74	.26	-12.58	165.06	.94	<b>-2.71</b>	<b>.60</b>	<b>.00</b>
Education - High School Degree	.88	.57	.12	.90	.68	.18	.44	.35	.21
Education - Some College	.52	.59	.38	-.22	.72	.76	-.41	.36	.25
Education - BA or Higher	.61	.62	.33	.57	.73	.44	<b>-.84</b>	<b>.40</b>	<b>.04</b>
Income \$15-35k	-.46	.61	.45	-1.02	.67	.13	-.14	.41	.74
Income \$35-60k	.10	.59	.87	-.92	.68	.17	.07	.40	.87
Income \$60-75k	-.93	.67	.16	<b>-2.75</b>	<b>1.13</b>	<b>.02</b>	-.76	.49	.12
Income \$75-100k	-.38	.62	.54	-.47	.64	.47	<b>-1.31</b>	<b>.45</b>	<b>.00</b>
Income \$100k or more	-.44	.60	.46	-.80	.67	.23	-.40	.41	.33
Female	<b>-.72</b>	<b>.27</b>	<b>.01</b>	-.53	.34	.11	<b>-.40</b>	<b>.20</b>	<b>.05</b>
Black, Non-Hispanic	<b>-4.11</b>	<b>1.70</b>	<b>.02</b>	-.89	.58	.13	-.61	.33	.07
Other/Multiple Races, Non-Hispanic	<b>-1.13</b>	<b>.54</b>	<b>.04</b>	-2.49	1.10	.02	-.47	.37	.21
Hispanic	-.74	.48	.12	.42	.47	.37	-.57	.32	.07
Midwest	.27	.41	.51	<b>1.42</b>	<b>.55</b>	<b>.01</b>	.08	.33	.80
South	.56	.38	.14	.56	.55	.31	.14	.29	.63
West	.12	.45	.79	1.04	.59	.08	<b>.68</b>	<b>.33</b>	<b>.04</b>
Democrat	<b>-1.49</b>	<b>.38</b>	<b>.00</b>	<b>-1.27</b>	<b>.38</b>	<b>.00</b>	<b>-1.16</b>	<b>.23</b>	<b>.00</b>
Republican	<b>2.50</b>	<b>.41</b>	<b>.00</b>	-.23	.60	.70	.48	.40	.23
Liberal	<b>-1.81</b>	<b>.55</b>	<b>.00</b>	<b>-1.66</b>	<b>.49</b>	<b>.00</b>	<b>-1.47</b>	<b>.26</b>	<b>.00</b>
Conservative	<b>1.39</b>	<b>.31</b>	<b>.00</b>	.01	.42	.98	-.20	.27	.46
Intercept	<b>-3.73</b>	<b>1.22</b>	<b>.00</b>	-.11	1.43	.94	<b>2.02</b>	<b>.83</b>	<b>.02</b>
N (Weighted)					957				
McFadden's Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>					.38				
AIC					1609.5				

Figure 1 – Histograms showing distributions of Symbolic Racism and AMP by Year. The proportion of individuals below, at, and above neutral is shown above each histogram.



## Appendix A – Wordings for Additional Measures

*Age.* Age was represented by a set of dummy variables for six categories: 25–34, 35–44, 45–54, 55–64, 65–74, and 75 or older. Respondents ages 18–24 constituted the omitted, comparison category.

*Education.* Respondents were asked: “What is the highest degree or level of education that you have completed?” Education was represented by dummy variables for three levels: high school graduate, some college, and bachelors degree or higher. Respondents without a high school diploma constituted the omitted, comparison category.

*Income.* Income was represented by a set of dummy variables for five annual income levels: \$15,000–\$34,999, \$35,000–\$59,999, \$60,000–\$74,999, \$75,000–\$99,999, and \$100,000 or more. Respondents with incomes less than \$15,000 constituted the omitted, comparison category.

*Region.* Region was represented by a set of dummy variables for three census regions in the United States: Midwest, South, and West. Respondents living in the Northeast region constituted the omitted, comparison category.

*Female.* A dummy variable was coded 1 for females and 0 for males.

*Race.* In a series of dummy variables, respondents were coded as “White, Non-Hispanic”, “Black, Non-Hispanic”, “Hispanic”, or “Other/Multiple”. White, Non-Hispanic individuals represented the omitted comparison category.

*Party Identification.* Respondents were asked: “Do you consider yourself a Democrat, Republican, an Independent, a supporter of some other party, or none of these?” Two dummy variables identified Democrats and Republicans. All others were treated as independents and were the omitted category.

*Ideology.* Respondents were asked: “Generally speaking, do you consider yourself very liberal, somewhat liberal, moderate, somewhat conservative, or very conservative. Two dummy variables identified liberals and conservatives. All others were treated as moderates and were the omitted category.