IDEOLOGY AND THE AFFECTIVE STRUCTURE OF WHITES’ RACIAL PERCEPTIONS

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Abstract The present study tests the hypothesis that deviations from “affective bipolarity” in the relationship between the positive and negative dimensions of whites’ stereotypes of blacks—such as racial ambivalence—should be stronger among conservatives. Across two different data sets (the 2000 National Election Study and the 1991 National Race and Politics Study) and three different methodologies (heteroskedastic regression, confirmatory factor analysis, and a regression analysis of attitude-ambivalence scores), this hypothesis was supported. Further analyses indicated that the relationship between conservatism and ambivalent perceptions of blacks was mediated by conflict between humanitarian and individualistic concerns in the racial context, but not in the abstract.

The study of racial perceptions has developed into one of the most fruitful areas of social science research on racial and ethnic attitudes. Among other things, research on stereotypical perceptions of various racial and ethnic groups has documented their content (Devine and Elliott 1995; Schuman et al. 1997; Sniderman and Carmines 1997), their origins (Fiske 1998), and their impact on information processing (for reviews see Blair 2001; and Fiske 1998). More recently, researchers have also begun to take an interest in the relationship between the positive and negative dimensions of whites’ stereotypical perceptions of blacks. Although positive and negative stereotypical perceptions are perhaps most easily thought of as “bipolar” or “reciprocally related”—with the acceptance of positive perceptions implying the rejection of negative perceptions and vice versa—research differs as to whether this is...
always the case (Cacioppo and Berntson 1994; Levine, Carmines, and Sniderman 1999). In many cases, whites appear to endorse both positive and negative perceptions of blacks at the same time, suggesting a pattern of ambivalence (Katz and Hass 1988). The purpose of the present study is to examine the hypothesis that these deviations from bipolarity in the organization of whites’ perceptions of blacks may vary as a function of ideology, with deviations from bipolarity being more likely as one moves to the political right.

The Structure of Whites’ Racial Perceptions

In general, what does research on racial and ethnic attitudes have to say about the affective structure of whites’ stereotypical perceptions of blacks? Like research in a number of other attitude domains, research on stereotypes typically assumes that stereotypical perceptions can be conceptualized in terms of a single bipolar affective dimension, with positive perceptions (e.g., blacks are hardworking) at one end and negative perceptions (e.g., blacks are lazy) at the other (see Schuman et al. 1997; see also Cacioppo and Berntson 1994; Green and Citrin 1994). As noted earlier, this assumption implies that the endorsement of positive and negative perceptions should be reciprocally related, with the acceptance of positive stereotypical perceptions necessarily leading to the rejection of negative ones. In many ways, this conceptual assumption is a product of the instruments typically used to measure racial attitudes and perceptions. Most of these instruments have taken the form of Likert scales or semantic-differential items, both of which force the respondent to indicate their attitudes or perceptions on a single positive-versus-negative dimension (see Schuman et al. 1997). While these bipolar measures have provided numerous benefits in terms of economy and simplicity, their use may have discouraged researchers from considering the possibility that positive and negative stereotypical perceptions of blacks may not always be reciprocally related: in and of themselves, measures that force respondents to make an either-or choice between the endorsement of positive or negative perceptions minimize attention to situations where the two may coexist (Cacioppo and Berntson 1994; Cacioppo, Gardner, and Berntson 1999; Levine, Carmines, and Sniderman 1999).

Despite these assumptions, a growing body of work suggests that the organization of positive and negative racial perceptions may frequently deviate from a pattern of strict bipolarity. At the most basic level, studies have shown that positive and negative responses to blacks are both empirically distinguishable and statistically independent of one another. For example, in a study of over 4,000 high school students, Patchen, Hofmann, and Davidson (1976) found that positive and negative attitudes toward blacks and whites fell on
Ideology and Racial Perceptions

separate dimensions in a factor analysis and that these dimensions were relatively orthogonal to one another. Similarly, Katz and Hass and their colleagues (Hass et al. 1992; Katz and Hass 1988) found that measures of “pro-black” and “anti-black” attitudes tend to load on different factors, with the correlation between the measures again being minimal. For a sizable number of the whites studied by the Katz and Hass group, this deviation from bipolarity manifested itself as racial “ambivalence,” or a tendency to have both positive and negative attitudes toward blacks at the same time (see especially Katz and Hass 1988).

At a somewhat deeper level, studies have also suggested that positive and negative responses toward blacks and other racial outgroups may have different antecedents. In this vein, Patchen and colleagues (1977) found that positive behaviors toward blacks were best predicted by prior opportunities for racial contact, while negative behaviors were best predicted by personal aggressiveness and the racial attitudes of one’s family and peers. From a slightly different perspective, both Lipset and Schneider (1978) and Katz, Wackenhut, and Hass (1986) have argued that positive and negative attitudes toward blacks may have different antecedents, with positive attitudes being rooted in humanitarianism and negative attitudes being rooted in individualism. According to this account, humanitarian concern for disadvantaged social groups leads to positive affect in the form of sympathetic perceptions, while an individualistic concern for self-reliance and other tenets of the Protestant ethic leads to negative affect in the form of disapproval. Several studies have now provided evidence for this account (e.g., Hass et al. 1992; Katz and Hass 1988).

Interestingly, these sets of results dovetail nicely with the conclusions of a broader line of theory and research in the psychological literature on affect, which increasingly points toward the existence of distinguishable positive and negative evaluative processes (Cacioppo and Berntson 1994; Cacioppo, Gardner, and Berntson 1999). More precisely, this line of work suggests that separate “channels” may be responsible for positive and negative responses to various stimuli, and that these two channels may not always operate in a bipolar or reciprocal fashion. According to this “bivariate” model, positive and negative evaluative processes may have evolved in response to separate prerogatives related to approach and avoidance: positive affect may encourage the exploration of novel objects and the pursuit of survival-enhancing goals, while negative affect may alert the individual to the presence of dangers to be avoided (Cacioppo, Gardner, and Berntson 1999; Gray 1991; see also Marcus,

1. Other researchers have suggested that the negative correlation between these two dimensions may have been artificially depressed in previous studies by the presence of nonrandom measurement error, producing an illusory orthogonality (e.g., Levine, Carmines, and Sniderman 1999). Since some of the analyses reported here attempt to estimate the correlation between positive and negative perceptions of blacks, steps suggested by Green and Citrin (1994) and Levine, Carmines, and Sniderman (1999) were taken to correct for nonrandom measurement error.
Neuman, and MacKuen 2000). Additional evidence suggests that positive and negative evaluative processes may have different neuropsychological substrates, with positive and negative stimuli leading to higher levels of activation in different neural circuits (see Davidson 1993; and Gray 1991; for a review see Cacioppo, Gardner, and Berntson 1999). As such, deviations from bipolarity in the affective structure of whites’ racial perceptions may be part of a more general tendency in the appraisal of social stimuli.

**But Whose Racial Perceptions Deviate from Affective Bipolarity? The Role of Ideology**

While a variety of studies suggest that whites’ stereotypical perceptions of blacks may not always be bipolar or reciprocally related, researchers have devoted less attention to question of whose racial perceptions are more likely to deviate from bipolarity. In this vein, studies have repeatedly shown that there are reliable individual differences in the degree to which whites’ racial attitudes actually do so. For example, Katz and Hass and their colleagues (Hass et al. 1992) and Monteith (1996) have found that individuals differ in the extent to which they endorse both positive and negative opinions of blacks. More generally, Cacioppo, Gardner, and Berntson (1999) have argued that a two-channel affective system may permit a variety of overall response patterns, depending on the circumstances: some situations may encourage a bipolar response pattern, while others may lead to a shift away from it, resulting in phenomena like ambivalence.

So, given the potential for variability in the relationship between positive and negative racial perceptions, how might we explain individual differences in the structure of this relationship? One factor that may be relevant is ideology. While this variable has not received a great deal of attention in the literature on the affective structure of whites’ racial perceptions, studies have more generally suggested that ideology may intersect with racial attitudes in a number of ways (Sidanius, Singh, Hetts, and Federico 2000; see also Sniderman and Carmines 1997; and Sniderman, Crosby, and Howell 2000). Interestingly, one of the chief conclusions of this broader line of research is that political conservatism is reliably associated with more negative perceptions of African-Americans (Federico and Sidanius 2002a, 2002b; Sidanius, Pratto, and Bobo 1996; Sidanius et al. 2000). While this finding appears to be relatively robust (Federico and Sidanius 2002b), there are a number of reasons to suspect that this emphasis on the relationship between conservatism and negative perceptions of blacks may actually obscure a more subtle relationship between conservatism and deviations from affective bipolarity that result in conflicting perceptions of blacks. Among other things, this tendency may have something to do with the racial-attitude measures used in most studies of the relationship between ideology and racial perceptions: almost all of these measures have
been bipolar in nature, forcing respondents to express either a positive or a negative attitude toward blacks (e.g., Federico and Sidanius 2002a, 2002b; Sidanius, Pratto, and Bobo 1996). As noted above, measures of this sort leave little or no room for the assessment of deviations from bipolarity.

Assuming that this is true, why might the probability of having both positive and negative perceptions of blacks at the same time increase as one moves to the political right? Importantly, existing work on racial ambivalence and other deviations from affective bipolarity in the racial domain suggests that conflicting perceptions of blacks themselves may stem from deeper forms of attitudinal conflict. As noted earlier, both Lipset and Schneider (1978) and Katz, Wackenhut, and Hass (1986) argue that positive and negative attitudes toward blacks may have different sources—i.e., humanitarianism and individualism, respectively. In turn, this suggests that individuals who tend to endorse both humanitarian and individualistic sentiments may be more conflicted about blacks themselves: while humanitarian concerns lead them to endorse positive perceptions of blacks, individualistic concerns lead them to endorse negative perceptions of blacks as well (Hass et al. 1992; Katz and Hass 1988).

In this vein, there are a number of reasons to believe that conservatives may be more likely to approach racial matters with this critical combination of both humanitarian and individualistic concerns. These reasons—and the implication that they may result in more value conflict on the right—have received some attention in race and politics literature (Sears 1988; Sears et al. 2000; Sniderman and Carmines 1997). On one hand, the success of the civil rights movement has made basic humanitarian concern for blacks a consensual political norm: for the most part, both liberals and conservatives agree that unequal treatment is a violation of basic liberal-democratic values central to American life (McClosky and Zaller 1984; Sniderman and Carmines 1997; Sniderman and Piazza 1993), although some studies reveal slight ideological differences in this regard (Sidanius, Pratto, and Bobo 1996). As such, there is little reason to believe that conservatives should be much less bothered than anyone else by the inhumane treatment of minorities. On the other hand, public opinion research clearly suggests that conservatives are more troubled than liberals or moderates by the perception that African-Americans may not be doing enough to help themselves and by black demands for what they perceive to be “special” treatment (Sears 1988; Sniderman and Carmines 1997). So, individualistic concerns do seem to be in stronger evidence on the right.

Taken together, these two considerations suggest that the chronic coactivation of humanitarian and individualistic concerns needed for the emergence of racial ambivalence may increase as one moves to the political right, leading conservatives’ perceptions of blacks to deviate more strongly from affective bipolarity. In operational terms, this hypothesis leads to a number of specific predictions. First of all, political conservatism should be positively associated with various measures of the degree to which respondents’ racial perceptions
deviate from affective bipolarity. Second, the relationship between conservatism and the degree to which respondents’ perceptions deviate from bipolarity should be mediated by a tendency to endorse both humanitarian and individualistic concerns at the same time.

Although prior work thus suggests that conflict between humanitarian and individualistic concerns is likely to mediate the relationship between conservatism and deviations from affective bipolarity in whites’ racial perceptions, it is somewhat less clear whether conflict between these two sets of concerns will be most influential at a general level or a specifically racial level. On one hand, a number of previous studies have focused on conflict between humanitarian and individualistic concerns at the level of generalized values (see Katz and Hass 1988; Katz, Wackenhut, and Hass 1986). These studies suggest that individuals who simultaneously emphasize both social justice and self-reliance across a variety of social domains are more likely to have ambivalent attitudes toward blacks. According to this account, the conflict between humanitarian and individualistic concerns does not have to be specifically focused on racial matters in order to generate ambivalence toward blacks themselves. On the other hand, as noted above, a number of perspectives also suggest that the most serious conflicts between humanitarian and individualistic concerns may occur specifically in the domain of racial politics (Lipset and Schneider 1978; Sniderman and Piazza 1993; see also Sears 1988). In this case, humanitarian concern for blacks as a result of the specific injustices experienced by the group may come into conflict with individualistic concerns that blacks in particular make excessive demands for redress and fail to live up to the self-reliant tenets of the Protestant ethic—particularly among conservatives. Unfortunately, the consequences of this form of conflict have not been investigated as thoroughly. Nevertheless, with regard the “individualistic” component of whites’ racial perceptions, a growing body of research suggests that attitudes toward blacks are more closely related to the perception that blacks violate individualistic values than they are to support for those values in the abstract (Kinder and Mendelberg 2000; Sears and Henry 2003). Given this possibility, the mediating role of both types of conflict will be examined.

Overview

The purpose of this study was to examine these predictions in the context of whites’ perceptions of African-Americans. As a first step, recent data from the National Election Studies was used to examine the relationship between ideology and an indirect measure of the degree to which respondents had “mixed” perceptions of blacks, i.e., the implied variability of their responses (cf. Alvarez and Brehm 1997). This served as an initial test of this study’s basic hypothesis about conservatism and deviations from affective bipolarity in the structure of
whites’ racial perceptions. In a second step, data from the 1991 National Race and Politics Study (Sniderman and Carmines 1997) were used to replicate and expand on this basic analysis. Importantly, this data set included separate measures of whites’ perceptions of blacks along positive and negative stereotype dimensions. Using these measures, two tests of the relationship between ideology and the affective structure of whites’ racial perceptions were performed: (1) a multigroup confirmatory factor analysis, which looked at the correlation between latent factors corresponding to positive and negative perceptions of blacks among subgroups of liberal and conservative whites; and (2) a conceptual replication of this analysis using a psychological measure of ambivalence as the key dependent variable in a regression model. In the final multivariate analysis, the mediating role of conflict between humanitarian and individualistic concerns—both at the general and specifically racial levels—was also examined.

Method

DATA SOURCES

This study used data from two surveys: the 2000 National Election Study (NES; \(N = 1,807\)) and the 1991 National Race and Politics Study (NRAP; \(N = 2,223\)). The 2000 NES interviewed respondents both before and after the 2000 election using a nationally representative sample. Respondents were randomly assigned to be interviewed either face-to-face or via telephone. The preelection interviews were conducted between September 5 and November 6. Response rate 1 (American Association for Public Opinion Research 2006) was 64.3% in the face-to-face mode and 56.5% via telephone. In the postelection panel, 1,555 of the preelection respondents were interviewed again between November 8 and December 21. Response rate 1 for this wave was 86 percent in the face-to-face mode and 85.9 percent via telephone. The 1991 NRAP was conducted in two stages: a computer-assisted telephone survey, which reached a full sample of 2,223 respondents; and a second-wave mail-back questionnaire completed by 1,198 of the original respondents. The sampling frame for the study was all English-speaking adults 18 years of age or older from households with telephones, within the 48 contiguous states. Response rate 1 was 65.3 percent for the initial wave and 46.1 percent for the mail-back wave. Since some of the items needed for the 1991 analyses were contained only in the mail-back survey, only respondents who completed both waves were used. In each survey only the white respondents were used, resulting in final sample sizes of \(N = 1,393\) for the 2000 NES and \(N = 1,061\) for the 1991 NRAP. Except for age and income, variables from both data sets were recoded to run from 0 to 1. Details about the original measures can be found in the appendix.
MEASURES FROM THE 2000 NES

Political Ideology. This was assessed using a two-item composite based on: (1) respondents’ self-placement on the NES ideology scale and (2) the difference between respondents’ thermometer ratings of conservatives and liberals ($\alpha = .70; M = .54, SD = .21$).

Stereotypical Perceptions of Blacks. This variable was measured using three items asking respondents to rate blacks on three 7-point trait dimensions. Responses were coded such that higher scores indicated positive ratings, and the items were averaged ($\alpha = .80; M = .49, SD = .16$).

Control Measures. In order to account for other influences on the ambivalence of respondents’ racial perceptions, several control measures were also considered. First, two sophistication-related variables were considered. Political expertise was measured using eight factual items (KR-20 = .82; $M = .43, SD = .29$). Political interest was measured using four items asking about interest in political campaigns and public affairs, media use, and frequency of political discussion ($\alpha = .74; M = .55, SD = .28$). Two “cognitive-motivational” variables often linked to ambivalent response patterns were also assessed (Bizer et al. 2004; Cacioppo et al. 1996). The need to evaluate, or the degree to which one is motivated to form crystallized opinions, was measured using two items ($\alpha = .70; M = .57, SD = .23$). The need for cognition, or the degree to which one is generally motivated to engage in cognitive elaboration, was also measured using two items ($\alpha = .63; M = .61, SD = .35$). Finally, two measures of cognitive engagement in the survey itself were considered: the interviewer’s ratings of the respondent’s cooperativeness ($M = .90, SD = .16$) and interest in the interview ($M = .72, SD = .23$).

Demographics and Education. Four demographics were also considered: age (in years), income (in thousands of dollars per year), region (−1 = non-South, 1 = South), and gender (−1 = female, 1 = male). Education was measured using the NES highest-degree item. Since earlier work on the role of education has focused on the completion of a college degree as the critical experience responsible for the development of complex attitude structures (e.g., Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991), responses were used to create a dummy variable with two categories: those who had not completed a bachelor’s degree (coded as −1; $n = 924$) and those who had (coded as 1; $n = 469$).

MEASURES FROM THE 1991 NRAP

Political Ideology. This was measured using a 7-point scale, built from a set of four branching items. Scores ranged from strongly liberal to strongly conservative ($M = .56, SD = .29$).
Humanitarian and Individualistic Concerns. At the general value-orientation level, humanitarian concerns were measured using a single item asking how much one should be concerned about others \( (M = .87, \ SD = .19) \), while individualistic concerns were measured using a scale consisting of two items asking whether respondents believed that effort leads to economic success and security \( (\alpha = .83; \ M = .78, \ SD = .21) \). Both measures were coded so that higher scores indicated higher levels of each construct. In the specific context of racial politics, humanitarian concerns were measured using a single item asking whether respondents were angered by other “people being treated unfairly because of their race” \( (M = .88, \ SD = .20) \), while individualistic concerns were assessed using a scale consisting of five items asking respondents whether they believed that blacks (rather than whites) are to primarily blame for black disadvantage, that the government goes overboard fighting racism, and that minorities receive too much attention from the government; and whether respondents were angered by “special advantages for minorities” and by “minority spokesmen complaining about racism” \( (\alpha = .67; \ M = .57, \ SD = .20) \).

Control Measures. Two controls related to cognitive ability and engagement were also included. First, a measure of political expertise was constructed from two factual-knowledge items asking about the maximum number of presidential terms and the number of justices on the Supreme Court. Correct responses were given a score of 1 and all other responses a score of 0; each respondent’s scores were then summed and divided by two to generate an expertise index \( (M = .57, \ SD = .30) \). Second, a single-item measure of respondent cooperativeness was used to assess cognitive engagement in the survey itself \( (M = .79, \ SD = .17) \).

Stereotypical Perceptions of Blacks. The NRAP contained unipolar measures of perceptions of blacks on both positive and negative trait dimensions (see Levine, Carmines, and Sniderman 1999). Fourteen items asked respondents to indicate how well a series of traits described blacks on a 0 to 10 scale, with 0 indicating that the trait described blacks very inaccurately and 10 indicating that it described blacks very well. Nine traits were positive, and five were negative. Three additional items asked respondents to indicate how true or false a series of trait statements about blacks were on a 4-point scale ranging from “definitely true” to “definitely false.” Two were positive, and one was negative. These last three items were reversed prior to the analyses. Descriptive statistics for measures created from these items are discussed below.

Demographics and Education. The same demographics considered in the 2000 NES were considered in the NRAP and coded in the same fashion. However, an additional dummy indicator for homeownership was also included. Education was assessed using the survey’s six-category measure of educational attainment. Two categories were created: those who had completed a bachelor’s degree \( (n = 560; \ coded \ as \ 1) \) and those who had not \( (n = 1,281; \ coded \ as \ -1) \).
Results

VARIABILITY IN STEREOTYPICAL PERCEPTIONS AS A FUNCTION OF IDEOLOGY

An indirect test of the hypothesis that the structure of conservatives’ perceptions of blacks may be less bipolar in nature can be obtained by looking at whether conservatives show less variability in their perceptions of blacks along standard positive versus negative (i.e., bipolar) stereotype items. Three items of this sort were available in the 2000 NES. Using a composite of these three items, this basic prediction was examined using a heteroskedastic regression technique. This technique allows the error variance of the dependent variable—as well as scores on the dependent variable itself—to vary systematically as a function of several independent variables. Two equations are simultaneously tested using maximum-likelihood estimation: a mean equation, which predicts actual scores on the dependent variable; and a variance equation, which models the implicit error variances associated with these predicted scores (Greene 2003; Harvey 1976). Thus, in contrast to traditional ordinary least squares regression, which assumes that errors of prediction are constant across levels of the independent variables included in the mean equation, heteroskedastic regression parameterizes these errors as a function of a second set of independent variables. The implied error variance associated with a given predicted value will be larger when respondents’ scores on the dependent measure are more variable, making it a useful proxy for response variability. Since a higher level of response variability suggests greater intra-attitudinal conflict (Alvarez and Brehm 1997; Zaller 1992), the variance-model estimates can be used as an indirect indicator of the degree to which deviations from bipolarity vary as a function of the variables included in that model.

In the analysis reported here, the demographic variables, the college-degree variable, political expertise, and ideology were used to predict stereotypical perceptions of blacks in the mean equation. In turn, the variance equation was specified to include these seven basic predictors, as well as five other variables theoretically relevant to the variability of survey responses:

2. The variance equation for an analysis of this sort takes the following general functional form (Greene 2003; Harvey 1976):

\[
\text{Var}(\varepsilon_i) = e^{z_i'\gamma}
\]

(1)

where \(\varepsilon_i\) is the error term for the mean equation, \(z_i\) is a vector of observations on the independent variables in the variance equation, and \(\gamma\) is the vector of coefficients for the variance equation. The likelihood function for the overall analysis takes the following general form:

\[
\log L = -\frac{n}{2} \ln 2\pi + \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^{n} \varepsilon_i \gamma - \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^{n} e^{z_i'\gamma}(y_i - x_i\beta)^2
\]

(2)
political interest, the need to evaluate, the need for cognition, cooperativeness, and interest in the interview. The results of this analysis are summarized in table 1. The results for the mean equation, shown in the top panel of the table, are largely consistent with the results of prior research (e.g., Federico 2004; Federico and Sidanius 2002a, 2002b; Sidanius, Pratto, and Bobo 1996). Having a college degree and higher levels of political expertise were associated with more positive perceptions of blacks, while greater conservatism was associated with more negative perceptions of blacks.

Table 1. Ideology and Stereotypical Perceptions of Blacks: Heteroskedastic Regression Estimates (2000 National Election Study)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>SE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean Equation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.0004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>−.0004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College degree</td>
<td>−.02*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political expertise</td>
<td>−.04*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology</td>
<td>.05*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>.48***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Variance Equation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.01*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>−.06***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>.23*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College degree</td>
<td>−.25*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political expertise</td>
<td>−.43*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political interest</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to evaluate</td>
<td>−.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for cognition</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent cooperativeness</td>
<td>.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in interview</td>
<td>−.45*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology</td>
<td>.48*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>−3.74***</td>
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</tbody>
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Log-likelihood: −1401.26
Wald $\chi^2$ (df): 21.36 (7)**
N: 1035
Likelihood ratio $\chi^2$ test for heteroskedasticity (df): 50.68 (12)**

*p < .10.
*p < .05.
**p < .01.
***p < .001.
The results for the variance equation—summarized in the bottom panel of table 1—are more interesting. First of all, a likelihood-ratio test for the presence of heteroskedasticity\(^3\) rejected the null hypothesis of constant error variances: with 12 degrees of freedom, this test generated a \(\chi^2\) value of 50.68, which was highly significant \((p < .001)\). In turn, the actual estimates for the model indicated that the implied variability of respondents’ perceptions of blacks significantly increased with age and residence in the South and significantly decreased with income, the completion of a college degree, political expertise, and interest in the interview. However, the effects for age, expertise, and interest in the interview were only marginally significant \((p < .10)\). More important, though, the variance equation estimates indicated that the variability of respondents’ perceptions of blacks significantly increased with conservatism \((p < .05)\), as predicted. As such, these results of this analysis provide initial support for the hypothesis offered earlier.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS OF BLACKS AS A FUNCTION OF IDEOLOGY

In order to replicate this basic finding with different data and methods—and examine the hypothesis that the relationship between conservatism and deviations from bipolarity would be mediated by conflict between humanitarianism and individualism—the 1991 National Race and Politics data were employed. More precisely, these data were used in two analyses aimed at looking directly at differences in the relationship between positive and negative perceptions of blacks as a function of ideology: (1) a multigroup confirmatory factor analysis and (2) a multivariate analysis of the relationship between ideology and a direct measure of racial ambivalence.

Ideology and Stereotype Dimensionality: Factor-Analytic Evidence. As noted earlier, a great deal of research (e.g., Green and Citrin 1994; Katz and Hass 1988; Lavine 2001; Levine, Carmines, and Sniderman 1999; Thompson, Zanna, and Griffin 1995) suggests that positive and negative attitudes toward a given object may not always represent opposed ends of a single underlying evaluative dimension. Rather, they may represent relatively independent unipolar dimensions of evaluation. In the context of racial perceptions, this model suggests that individuals who have positive perceptions of blacks may not uniformly reject negative perceptions of them as well. Consistent with this perspective, studies suggest that positive and negative responses to various racial groups do separate into two distinct but correlated

\[ LR = 2 \times (L_{\text{H}} - L_{\text{S}}) \]  

where \(L_{\text{H}}\) is the log-likelihood for the full heteroskedastic regression model and \(L_{\text{S}}\) is the log-likelihood for a null model in which the variance equation contains only the constant.

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3. This likelihood ratio test took the following form (Alvarez and Brehm 1997):
factors (e.g., Levine, Carmines, and Sniderman 1999; see also Katz and Hass 1988). However, the hypothesis proposed here suggests that the relative orthogonality of these two factors may vary as a function of ideology, with the negative correlation between the two factors being smaller among conservatives.

This prediction was tested using a multigroup confirmatory factor analytic model, in which the correlation between latent factors was defined by the positive and negative NRAP stereotype items compared across groups differing in ideological self-identification. AMOS 4.0 (Arbuckle 1999) was used to estimate the parameters of this model. For this analysis, individuals who identified themselves as liberal or moderate with liberal leanings were classified as “liberal,” while those who identified themselves as conservative or moderate with conservative leanings were classified as “conservative.” Moderates with no leaning and respondents with incomplete data on the stereotype items were excluded from the analysis, resulting in final subgroup sizes of 378 liberals and 554 conservatives. Importantly, a number of analyses have suggested that models that fail to account for both random and nonrandom sources of measurement error may underestimate the negative correlation between positive and negative responses to the same object (Green and Citrin 1994). In order to deal with this problem, a specification procedure developed by Levine and his colleagues (1999) for the 1991 NRAP data was used. First, in addition to the 14 basic NRAP stereotype items, three other items using a different response scale were included in the analysis. Second, in the measurement model used in each subgroup, the error terms for all items using the same response scale—regardless of their valence—were allowed to covary. These two steps made it possible to correct for nonrandom error attributable to method variance shared by items using the same response format (for details see Green and Citrin 1994). Finally, one additional step was taken in order to simplify (and empirically identify) the model in the multigroup context: corresponding error covariances were constrained to equality across the two groups since there was no expectation that the responses of liberals and conservatives would show different amounts of nonrandom error. The parameters of the model were then estimated using the maximum-likelihood method.

The results of this analysis are summarized in table 2. As the global fit statistics indicate, the model fit the data adequately. Given its general sensitivity to sample size (Hu and Bentler 1995), the chi-square for the overall multigroup model was significantly different from zero \( (p < .001) \). However, two statistics that are less sensitive to sample size—the comparative

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4. Since there were missing data on some cases, the factor analytic models were also run using a full-information maximum likelihood procedure (Arbuckle 1999). These analyses produced identical results, so only the traditional maximum-likelihood estimates are reported.

5. Levine, Carmines, and Sniderman (1999) estimated a similar model in the full NRAP mailback sample of whites and also obtained a significant \( \chi^2 \) value.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stereotype Item</th>
<th>Liberals</th>
<th></th>
<th>Conservatives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dependable</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligent in school</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>1.04 (.10)</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>1.06 (.14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smart with everyday things</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.82 (.11)</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>1.04 (.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law-abiding</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.92 (.11)</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>1.13 (.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determined to succeed</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>1.09 (.12)</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>1.45 (.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardworking</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>1.02 (.10)</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>1.38 (.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.84 (.10)</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.85 (.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep up property</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>1.11 (.13)</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>1.06 (.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good neighbors</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>1.08 (.11)</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>1.03 (.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do as well as whites in school</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.41 (.14)</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>1.35 (.34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use opportunities</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.86 (.16)</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>1.37 (.36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent</td>
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<td>.52 1.00</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lazy</td>
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<td>.53 1.11 (.12)</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>1.06 (.12)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boastful</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.47 (.12)</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.53 (.12)</td>
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<td>.42</td>
<td>.74 (.11)</td>
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<td>Complaining</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>.83 (.12)</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>.70 (.13)</td>
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<td>Carry knives</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.99 (.20)</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>1.32 (.36)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interfactor correlation ((\phi))</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.948**</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.581*</td>
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<tr>
<td>(N)</td>
<td></td>
<td>378</td>
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<td>554</td>
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<tr>
<td>(\chi^2) (142)</td>
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<td>304.98***</td>
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<tr>
<td>CFI</td>
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<td>RMSEA</td>
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<td>.035</td>
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**NOTE.**—Entries are maximum-likelihood estimates; standard errors are given in parentheses. All factor loadings were significant at the \(p < .05\) level. Std. = standardized; Unstd. = unstandardized.
fit index (CFI) and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)—were well within the acceptable range (see Hu and Bentler 1995). More important, however, the interfactor correlations for each subgroup revealed a pattern consistent with the predictions outlined earlier: the negative correlation between the positive and negative factors was much weaker among conservatives ($\phi = -0.581$) than among liberals ($\phi = -0.948$).

In order to confirm this pattern of results, the multigroup model was rerun with the interfactor correlation constrained to equality across the two groups. This produced $\chi^2 = 315.58$, with $df = 143$. A $\chi^2$ difference test indicated that this change was significant ($\Delta\chi^2 (1) = 10.60$, $p < .01$), suggesting that the two subgroup correlations were indeed different. Thus, positive and negative perceptions of blacks are less likely to be reciprocally related among conservatives.

Ideology and Ambivalent Perceptions of Blacks: Multivariate Analyses. While a factor analytic strategy of this sort makes it possible to correct for the effects of nonrandom error variance when estimating the relationship between positive and negative perceptions of blacks, it is not without its limitations. To begin with, the relative magnitude of the correlation between positive and negative perceptions of blacks is only a crude index of the degree to which respondents’ perceptions depart from affective bipolarity. Although a weaker negative correlation between these two stereotype dimensions suggests the uneasy coexistence of positive and negative perceptions of blacks, it provides an incomplete picture. In this respect, recent psychological treatments of ambivalence—one of the most common indicators of a departure from bipolarity—suggest that it consists not only of a tendency to attribute both positive and negative characteristics to an object, but also a tendency to see both sets of characteristics as extremely representative of that object (Thompson, Zanna, and Griffin 1995; see also Craig, Kane, and Martinez 2002). While the interfactor correlations reported above provide an index of the degree to which respondents are likely to attribute both sets of characteristics to blacks at the same time, they do not speak to the second issue of mutual extremity. Moreover, a multivariate analysis of the relationship between ideology and departures from bipolarity cannot easily be conducted in the context of multigroup confirmatory factor analysis, since the sample must split into groups differing on some key variable (i.e., ideology). This makes it difficult to control for other predictors of the degree to which respondents’ racial perceptions departed from bipolarity and to test the critical hypothesis that the relationship between conservatism and deviations from bipolarity would be mediated by conflict between humanitarian and individualistic concerns.

In order to get around these problems and take the analysis one step further, respondents’ ratings of blacks on the positive and negative NRAP stereotype dimensions were used to construct an individual-level measure of
ambivalence. Scores on this index were then used as the dependent variable in an ordinary least squares regression model. In this model, ambivalence scores were regressed on age, income, region, gender, homeownership, cooperativeness, political expertise, the college degree indicator, and the critical ideology variable. In order to deal with potential heteroskedasticity problems, HC3 robust standard errors were used in this analysis, as recommended by Long and Ervin (2000). Unstandardized estimates for this model can be found in table 3. The results suggest a pattern consistent with both the predictions outlined earlier and the other sets of analyses: conservatism was significantly associated with

6. This measure was computed using an ambivalence formula developed by Thompson, Zanna, and Griffin (1995):

\[ Ambivalence = \frac{(P + N)}{2} - \left| P - N \right| \]  

where \( P \) is the respondent’s score on the positive perceptions scale and \( N \) is the respondent’s score on the negative perceptions scale. For this purpose, the items included in the positive and negative dimensions from the confirmatory factor analyses were averaged to form composite measures of respondents’ positive and negative perceptions of blacks (\( \alpha = .87, M = .59, SD = .14 \), for positive perceptions; \( \alpha = .79, M = .50, SD = .17 \), for negative perceptions). The scores produced by this formula were recoded to run from 0 to 1 (\( M = .63, SD = .16 \)). Note that this measure assesses “objective” ambivalence rather than “subjective” or “felt” ambivalence (Thompson, Zanna, and Griffin 1995). Analyses using both types of measures would be desirable; however, subjective indices were not included in either the 1991 NRAP or the 2000 NES.
higher levels of ambivalence ($b = .06$, $p < .001$), even after the effects of the other predictors were taken into account. Moreover, cooperativeness, political expertise, and the possession of a college degree were associated with decreased ambivalence (both $p < .01$), consistent with earlier work and the heteroskedastic regression results reported above.

**Mediation Analysis.** The logic of the model tested here also suggests that this relationship between conservatism and ambivalence should be mediated by conflict between humanitarian and individualistic concerns. As noted above, it is an open question as to whether the most important conflict between these two concerns occurs at a general level or a specifically racial level. Therefore, separate measures of conflict between humanitarianism and individualism at the general and racial levels were constructed.\(^7\) The mediating role of each variable was then assessed using Baron and Kenny’s (1986) technique. This analysis is summarized in figure 1. According to Baron and Kenny, mediation is demonstrated when (1) the dependent variable is reliably associated with the independent variable; (2) the independent variable is significantly associated with the hypothesized mediator of the relationship.

\[^7\] Each of the conflict scores was computed using a variant of the Thompson, Zanna, and Griffin (1995) formula, modified to assess the degree to which respondents endorsed humanitarian and individualistic concerns at the same time and to the same degree:

\[
\text{Conflict} = \frac{(H + I)}{2} - \left|H - I\right|
\]

where $H$ is the respondent’s score on the relevant humanitarianism scale and $I$ is the respondent’s score on the relevant individualism scale. Note that these scores are not ambivalence scores. Rather, the formula itself merely provides a numerical index of the degree to which two measured attitudes are held at the same time and with a relatively similar level of intensity; it becomes an “ambivalence” index only when the two attitude terms correspond to positive and negative evaluations of the same object. The scores produced by these two calculations were recoded to run from 0 to 1 ($M = .74$, $SD = .20$, for general conflict; $M = .57$, $SD = .20$, for conflict in the racial context). Scores on the two conflict measures were only modestly correlated ($r = .134$, $p < .001$).
between the dependent and independent variables; and (3) the net association between the dependent variable and independent variable is reduced to nonsignificance—or at least significantly reduced in magnitude—in a regression containing both the independent variable and the mediator, with the mediator remaining significant.

The first of Baron and Kenny’s (1986) criteria is satisfied by the key result shown in table 3 (in parentheses in Figure 1): conservatism was associated with more highly ambivalent perceptions of blacks \((p < .001)\). In turn, Baron and Kenny’s second criterion was tested by regressing the general conflict and racial conflict variables on ideology and the same set of controls used in the regression model summarized in table 3. These estimates are shown on the left side of figure 1. While conservatism was positively associated with both forms of conflict, it was more strongly related to conflict between humanitarianism and individualism in the racial context \((b = .17, p < .001)\) than in general \((b = .057, p < .05)\)—a difference that was significant in a multivariate regression that estimated both models simultaneously, \(F(1,972) = 14.31, p < .001.8\) Baron and Kenny’s third and final criterion was tested by adding the two mediators to the table 3 regression model. These estimates are shown on the right side of figure 1. As the figure shows, conflict between humanitarianism and individualism in the racial context predicted ambivalence about blacks \((b = .189, p < .001)\), while general conflict did not \((b = .036, p > .10)\). Moreover, the direct effect of ideology was reduced to nonsignificance \((b = .028, p > .10)\).9 In turn, the indirect effect via each mediator is given by the product of the relationship between ideology and each mediator and the relationship between that mediator and ambivalent perceptions of blacks. For conflict in the racial context, the indirect effect was .032, while the corresponding effect via general conflict was a smaller .002 A pair of Sobel tests (see Baron and Kenny 1986) indicated that the mediated effect via conflict between humanitarianism and individualism in the racial context was highly significant, \(z = 5.09, p < .0001\), while the mediated effect via general conflict was nonsignificant, \(z = 1.18, p > .10\).10 Thus, the relationship between ideology and deviations from

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8. The model developed here also suggests that the higher level of racial conflict among conservatives is due to the fact that there is more ideological variance in racial individualism than racial humanitarianism. To verify this, racial individualism and racial humanitarianism were simultaneously regressed on the set of predictors used in table 3 in a multivariate regression; for this analysis, both dependent variables were coded such that a higher score indicated a more antiblack position. As expected, conservatism was a much stronger predictor of racial individualism \((b = .18, p < .0001)\) than low racial humanitarianism \((b = .06, p < .01)\), \(F(1,982) = 17.99, p < .0001.\)

9. The overall regression model used to predict general conflict was marginally significant, \(F(9,972) = 1.82, p < .06, R^2 = .018\), while the overall model for conflict in the racial context was highly significant, \(F(9,982) = 12.24, p < .0001, R^2 = .114.\) Moreover, the overall model for the third and final stage of the mediation analysis—in which the two mediators were added to the model—was significant as well, \(F(11,920) = 11.83, p < .0001, R^2 = .121.\) The addition of the two mediators also produced a significant increase in \(R^2\) over and above the \(R^2\) for the table 3 \((p < .001)\).

10. Identical results were obtained when the mediating role of each conflict variable was tested in a separate analysis.
affective bipolarity is mediated more strongly by conflict between humanitarianism and individualism in the context of race than in the abstract.\textsuperscript{11}

Discussion

Historically, research on racial attitudes has assumed that the affective structure of whites’ perceptions of blacks is bipolar and reciprocal in nature. Nevertheless, a growing body of research suggests that positive and negative attitudes toward blacks may be statistically independent of one another and that they may each have unique antecedents (Katz and Hass 1988; Katz, Wackenhut, and Hass 1986; Patchen, Hofmann, and Davidson 1976; Patchen et al. 1977; but see Levine, Carmines, and Sniderman 1999). Importantly, there appear to be individual differences in the degree to which whites’ racial attitudes deviate from bipolarity in this fashion (e.g., Hass et al. 1992). The purpose of this study was to address the relatively unexplored question of how these individual differences might be explained. In particular, this study examined two hypotheses about whites’ racial perceptions: (1) that political conservatism would be related to stronger deviations from affective bipolarity in the structure of whites’ perceptions of blacks; and (2) that this relationship would be mediated by higher levels of conflict between humanitarian and individualistic concerns. The analyses also addressed the question of whether it is conflict between humanitarian and individualistic concerns at the level of general value orientations or conflict between them in the specific context of racial politics that plays the hypothesized mediating role.

Data from two different surveys provided a clear pattern of support for these hypotheses. To begin with, a heteroskedastic regression analysis using data from the 2000 NES suggested that conservatism was associated with greater variability in whites’ perceptions of blacks, providing indirect evidence for the hypothesis that conservatives’ perceptions would deviate more strongly from bipolarity. In turn, multigroup confirmatory factor analyses using data from the 1991 NRAP indicated that the negative correlation between separate measures of positive and negative perceptions of blacks was weaker among conservatives, while a multivariate analysis of the same data indicated that conservatism was associated with higher scores on a related measure of racial ambivalence. Finally, a series of analyses using the NRAP data suggested that the relationship between conservatism and deviations from

\textsuperscript{11} Note that the items used to construct the dependent measure and the critical mediator in this analysis both contained references to African-American “complaints.” While the NRAP item asking respondents whether they were angered by blacks complaining about discrimination was ultimately included in order to maximize the reliability of the “racial individualism” scale, the use of this item may have inflated the relationship between racial-level conflict and ambivalence by increasing the two measures’ shared method variance. However, when the “complaint” item was dropped from the racial individualism scale and a new racial-level conflict measure was constructed, the results remained the same: ideology continued to have a significant indirect effect on ambivalence via racial-level conflict (indirect effect = .030, $z = 5.07$, $p < .0001$).
bipolarity was mediated by higher levels of conflict between humanitarianism and individualism, but only with regard to conflict between these two concerns in the particular context of racial politics.\textsuperscript{12}

Taken together, these findings suggest that ideology may play a role in the affective organization of whites’ racial perceptions. In doing so, they help fill a notable gap in the literature on racial attitude structure. In this vein, a number of studies have suggested that whites may differ in the extent to which to their perceptions of blacks deviate from affective bipolarity (e.g., Hass et al. 1992). Nevertheless, researchers have not devoted much attention to the possible antecedents of these individual differences. While an extant body of work suggests that deviations from affective bipolarity (e.g., racial ambivalence) may stem from increased conflict between humanitarian and individualistic concerns (e.g., Katz, Wackenhut, and Hass 1986; Katz and Hass 1988), it has little to say about when or for whom these two

\textsuperscript{12} Ambivalence is typically defined as the coexistence of positive and negative feelings about the same object (e.g., Thompson, Zanna, and Griffin 1995). Since the items used to construct the positive and negative perceptions scales ask about many different characteristics of blacks, one might argue that the ambivalence measure is tapping into mixed feelings about multiple objects (i.e., different and possibly weakly related attributes of blacks) rather than a single object (i.e., blacks). However, the use of scale items measuring multiple attributes of blacks is quite common in studies of racial ambivalence (e.g., Katz and Hass 1988), and additional analyses suggest that their use is not problematic here either. First, both scales were internally consistent ($\alpha = .87$, for positive; $\alpha = .79$, for negative). Second, separate exploratory factor analyses performed on the positive and negative items using the iterated principal factors method indicated that a single dominant factor explained each set of items. For the positive items, this factor explained 73 percent of the variance. For the negative items, the first factor explained 84 percent of the variance. More important, these findings held up even after only positive and negative items corresponding to the same trait dimension were used to construct an ambivalence score. These pairs of items were “hardworking” versus “lazy” and “dependable” versus “irresponsible.” The Thompson, Zanna, and Griffin (1995) formula was applied separately to each pair. Since the two resulting ambivalence scores were highly consistent ($\alpha = .76$), they were averaged to form a single index. Use of this index did not change the results: conservatism was still related to ambivalence ($b = .07, p < .001$), and this relationship was more strongly mediated by racial conflict (indirect effect = .033, $p < .0001$) than by general conflict (indirect effect = .004, $p = .08$).

The relationship between ideology and ambivalence may also stem from the fact that the trait items cover stereotypes associated with both “old-fashioned” racism (e.g., blacks as unintelligent and violent) and “symbolic” or “modern” racism (blacks as lazy and irresponsible). Current work suggests that conservatives tend to reject the former but not the latter, while liberals tend to reject both (Mendelberg 2001; Sniderman and Piazza 1993). Given the mixed content of the trait items, this differential pattern of endorsement may manifest itself as greater ambivalence among conservatives. However, for several reasons, this is not likely to be the case. First, both the positive and negative scales contain a mix of items corresponding to the two types of racism (e.g., “intelligent in school” and “hardworking” on the positive side, “violent” and “lazy” on the negative side). Since the Thompson, Zanna, and Griffin (1995) formula reflects similarity between the positive and negative terms rather than inconsistency within either, ideological differences in the endorsement of each racism type are unlikely to have produced greater ambivalence among conservatives. Second, the trait items are highly and similarly consistent for both liberals ($\alpha = .89$, for positive; $\alpha = .80$, for negative) and conservatives ($\alpha = .87$, for positive; $\alpha = .79$, for negative), suggesting little variance between the items with respect to what type of racism they represent, regardless of ideology. Third, as indicated previously, the findings hold up even when the ambivalence measure is restricted to stereotype items presumably associated with symbolic racism (i.e., hardworking/lazy and dependable/irresponsible).
concerns are likely to come into conflict in the first place. Picking up where
these studies left off, the present study not only found evidence for a rela-
tionship between deviations from affective bipolarity and conflict between
humanitarianism and individualism in the racial context, but it also sug-
gested that this conflict may be at least in part a function of whites’ ideo-
logical predispositions. This implies that conflict between humanitarianism
and individualism may simply be one node in a broader set of relationships
connecting ideology with variance in the affective structure of whites’ racial
perceptions.

However, in addition to placing conflict between humanitarianism and indi-
vidualism in the context of a broader set of relationships, the results also sug-
gest that conflict between these two concerns may be more relevant to whites’
racial perceptions—and to the relationship between ideology and the affective
structure of these perceptions—when the conflict occurs at a specifically
racial level. While some studies have suggested that humanitarianism and
individualism need only to come into conflict at the level of general value
orientations in order to produce stronger deviations from affective bipolarity
in racial perceptions (e.g., Katz and Hass 1988), the data analyzed here were
more consistent with the conclusion that they need to come into conflict spe-
cifically in the context of racial politics. This conclusion is consistent with a
growing body of research indicating that value-based considerations intersect
with racial attitudes not at the level of general orientations but at the level of
beliefs about how those values relate to the life circumstances of particular
racial groups. This appears to be particularly true with regard to individualis-
tic concerns. For example, the “symbolic racism” approach to white racial
attitudes has long suggested that hostility toward blacks should stem from a
blend of anti-black affect and individualism (e.g., Sears 1988). However,
recent studies suggest that hostility toward blacks is more closely linked to the
belief that blacks violate individualistic values than it is to abstract support for
those values (Kinder and Mendelberg 2000; Sears and Henry 2003). In a simi-
lar vein, the results of the present study suggest that researchers who are inter-
ested in the relationship between value conflicts and racial perceptions may
want to pay closer attention to the multiple levels at which these conflicts
might occur.

These results have other implications as well. In particular, by focusing spe-
cifically on the relationship between conservatism and the affective structure
of whites’ perceptions of blacks, the present study highlights relatively novel
aspects of the relationship between ideology and racial perceptions. As noted
earlier, most of the research on this topic has focused on the association
between political conservatism and negative perceptions of blacks (see Federico
and Sidanius 2002a, 2002b; Sidanius, Pratto, and Bobo 1996; and Sidanius
et al. 2000). In contrast, the findings reported here paint a more nuanced pic-
ture of white conservatives’ racial perceptions: on average, conservatives’
perceptions of blacks were more negative than they were positive, but they
were also more affectively conflicted. For example, while the heteroskedastic regression analysis of the 2000 NES data suggested that conservatives were more likely to hold negative racial perceptions, it also suggested that their actual racial perceptions were more variable relative to the predictions made by the equation used to model the overall relationship between ideology and perceptions of blacks.

More broadly, results like these attest to the importance of moving beyond the assumption that racial perceptions have an affectively bipolar structure. As noted earlier, most studies of the relationship between ideology and racial perceptions have made this assumption, as suggested by their heavy reliance on “bipolar” stereotype items, which force respondents to choose between positive and negative options (e.g., Sidanius, Pratto, and Bobo 1996). Consequently, they may have emphasized the relationship between conservatism and negative racial perceptions while ignoring the possibility of a subtler relationship between conservatism and conflicting racial perceptions. As such, researchers interested in racial perceptions—and the relationship between racial perceptions and broader predispositions like ideology—may want place a greater emphasis on assessing the positive and negative dimensions of these perceptions separately.

As a final comment, it is worth noting that these results raise an important question for future research—namely, the question of why the conservative belief system has held on to an ambivalence-producing combination of value concerns in the racial domain. While a thorough examination of this issue is beyond the scope of this investigation, two possibilities may be suggested. First, certain psychological traits of conservatives—such as cognitive rigidity (Jost et al. 2003)—may simply allow them to more effectively compartmentalize discordant beliefs. Second, rather than being a feature of the psychology of conservatism, the pattern of conflict highlighted here may be an “inherent” feature of the conservative belief system as it has evolved in elite discourse: that is, a combination of humanitarian concern for the historical victims of discrimination and concern about how well certain groups live up to the central value of individualism may be the normative pattern of belief enunciated by the activists, commentators, and political officials responsible for the development of belief systems (McClosky and Zaller 1984; Zaller 1992).

13. This relationship may be an artifact of various response sets. For example, if liberals and conservatives differ in the degree to which they show acquiescence, halo effects, or social desirability bias on the trait items, this might be reflected in different levels of inconsistency—and thus ambivalence—across the items. However, several features of the data argue against this interpretation. First, the fact that the relationship between ideology and ambivalence holds up in both surveys despite controls for a number of cognitive and motivational variables suggests that ideological variance in acquiescence or halo effects is not a problem, since the latter are largely indicative of a failure to cognitively engage each item as a unique stimulus (Paulhus 1991). Second, supplementary analyses in the 1991 NRAP using respondents’ scores on a short form of the Crowne-Marlowe (1960) social desirability index (10 items; \( \alpha = .72 \)) produced exactly the same pattern of results produced above, suggesting that liberal-conservative differences in social desirability are not responsible for the present findings.
Since sophistication-related variables like expertise and education have been linked to the ability to organize one’s beliefs consistently and the learning of elite patterns of political belief (Craig, Kane, and Martinez 2002; Zaller 1992), future work may want to pay attention to whether they are capable of moderating the relationships examined here.

Appendix


2000 National Election Study

Ideology: “We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. When it comes to politics, do you think of yourself as a liberal, a conservative, or a moderate, or haven’t you thought much about this?” or “We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. When it comes to politics, do you think of yourself as extremely liberal, liberal, slightly liberal, moderate or middle of the road, slightly conservative, conservative, extremely conservative, or haven’t you thought much about this?” (v446) and a difference score based on the 0–100 feeling thermometers for conservatives (v1310) and liberals (v1311).

Perceptions of Blacks: “Where would you rate blacks on a scale of 1 to 7? (where 1 indicates hardworking, 7 means lazy, and 4 indicates most blacks are not closer to one end or the other)” (v1575); “Where would you rate blacks on a scale of 1 to 7? (where 1 indicates intelligent, 7 means unintelligent, and 4 indicates most blacks are not closer to one end or the other)” (v1579); and “Where would you rate blacks on a scale of 1 to 7? (where 1 indicates trustworthy, 7 means untrustworthy, and 4 indicates most blacks are not closer to one end or the other)” (v1583).

Political Expertise/Factual Items: “Do you happen to know which party had most members in the House of Representatives before the election (this/last) month?” and “Do you happen to know which party had most members in the U.S. Senate before the election (this/last) month?” (v1356 and v1357); “Now we have a set of questions concerning various public figures. We want to see how much information about them gets out to the public from television, newspapers, and the like. The first name is Trent Lott. What job or political office does he now hold?” (v1447), “William Rehnquist” (v1450), “Tony Blair” (v1453), and “Janet Reno” (v1456); and “What U.S. state does George W. Bush live in now?” (v1458); “Which U.S. state is Al Gore from originally?” (v1462).

Political Interest: “Some people don’t pay much attention to political campaigns. How about you? Would you say that you have been very much interested, somewhat interested, or not much interested in the political campaigns so far this year?” (v1201); “Would you say you watched a good many, several, or just one or two [programs about the campaign on television]?” (v1203); “How many days in the past week did you talk about politics with family or friends?” (v1205); and “Some people seem to follow what’s going on in government and public affairs most of the time, whether there’s an election going on or not. Others aren’t that interested. Would you say you follow what’s going on in government and public affairs most of the time, some of the time, only now and then, or hardly at all?” (v1367).
Need to Evaluate: “Some people have opinions about almost everything; other people have opinions about just some things; and still other people have very few opinions. What about you?” (v862); and “Compared to the average person, do you have fewer opinions about whether things are good or bad, about the same number of opinions, or more opinions?” (v866).

Need for Cognition: “Some people like to have responsibility for handling situations that require a lot of thinking, and other people don’t like to have responsibility for situations like that. What about you?” (v870); and “Some people prefer to solve simple problems instead of complex ones, whereas other people prefer to solve more complex problems. Which type of problem do you prefer to solve: simple or complex?” (v871).

Respondent Cooperativeness: Based on interviewer observation (v1032).

Interest in the Interview: Based on interviewer observation (v1036).

Education: Based on the NES summary measure (v913).

Demographics: Age (v908); income (v997); gender (v1029); region (v92).

1991 National Race and Politics Study

Ideology: Based on IDEO (“Generally speaking, would you consider yourself to be a liberal, a conservative, a moderate, or haven’t you thought much about this?”), LIB (“Do you think of yourself as a strong liberal or a not very strong liberal?”), CONS (“Do you think of yourself as a strong conservative or a not very strong conservative?”), and IDE2 (“Do you think of yourself as more like a liberal or more like a conservative?”).

Perceptions of Blacks: Trait Dimensions—“Now I’ll read a few words that people sometimes use to describe blacks. Of course, no word fits absolutely everybody, but, as I read each one, please tell me using a number from 0 to 10 how well you think it describes blacks as a group. If you think it’s a good description of most blacks, give it a 10. If you feel a word is a very inaccurate description of most blacks, give it a 0.” The items included “dependable,” “intelligent in school,” “smart with everyday things,” “law-abiding,” “determined to succeed,” “hardworking,” “friendly,” “keep up property,” and “are good neighbors” (positive; S1, S2, S5, S6, S8, S9, S10, S12, S14); and “violent,” “lazy,” “boastful,” “irresponsible,” and “complaining” (negative; S3, S4, S7, S11, S13). Trait statements—The average black child in America does as well in school as the average white child” and “When they have the chance to improve their economic position, most blacks make good use of such opportunities” (positive; M7A, M7C); and “Poor black children are more likely to carry knives and other dangerous weapons to school than poor white children are” (negative; M7B).

Humanitarian Concerns: General—“Everyone should be concerned about the well-being of other people” (agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, disagree strongly; M4H).

In the racial context—“When people are treated unfairly because of their race? On a scale from zero to ten, how much does this anger you?” (ANG2).

Individualistic Concerns: General—“Anyone who is willing to work hard has a good chance of succeeding”; and “If people work hard they can make a good life for themselves” (agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, disagree strongly; M4D and M4E).

In the racial context—“This country sometimes goes overboard in its efforts to fight racism these days” (agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, disagree strongly; OVBD); “Taking everything into consideration, do you think the government has been paying too much attention to the problems of minorities,
about the right amount of attention, or do you think they haven’t been paying enough attention to these groups?” (ATTN); “Giving blacks and other minorities special advantages in jobs and schools? On a scale from zero to ten, how much does this anger you?” and “Spokesmen for minorities who are always complaining that blacks are being discriminated against? On a scale from zero to ten, how much does this anger you?” (ANG4 and ANG8); and a “blame index” based on BLAM (“To sum up, whose fault would you say it is that blacks are worse off than whites—would you say that white people are mostly to blame, that blacks themselves are mostly to blame, or would you say that they both share the blame equally?”), BB (“Even though you feel it’s mostly the fault of whites, would you say blacks are partly to blame, or that blacks should bear none of the blame?”), and BW (“Even though you feel it’s mostly the fault of black people, would you say that whites are partly to blame, or that whites should bear none of the blame?”).

**Political Expertise:** “How many (four-year) terms can the president of the United States serve?” (PRES); and “Please tell me how many members of the U.S. Supreme Court there are” (CORT).

**Respondent Cooperativeness:** Based on interviewer observation (IN10).

**Education:** Based on the NRAP summary measure (EDUC).

**Demographics and Controls:** Age (AGE); gender (SEX); income (ISUM); region (REGION); homeownership (DWEL).

**References**


