Race Politics Research and the American Presidency: Thinking About White Group Identities and

Vote Choice in the Trump Era and Beyond

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Abstract

Heeding the call of the special issue, we look at the past decade's advances in our understanding of the

relationship between white racial identities and Presidential voting preferences. Following a short review

of developments in the literature during the Obama years, we critically evaluate four theories explaining

whites' support for Trump: racial resentment, xenophobia, sexism, and white identity. Using data from

three ANES studies, we test the relative explanatory power of all four approaches in predicting a vote for

Trump during the 2016 Republican primary, the 2016 election, and intent to vote for him in 2020. The

results suggest that xenophobia had the most consistent and strongest effect across all models, followed by

racial resentment and sexism. White identity appears to have influenced voting for Trump in the primary

and it could also have an impact if Biden is the 2020 Democratic nominee, but its effect in the 2016 general

election general election does not appear to have been consistent with theoretical expectations. Finally, we

use these results to think critically about the state of the field and propose new questions and challenges

for research.

High in the tower, where I sit above the loud complaining of the human sea, I know many souls that toss

and whirl and pass, but none that intrigue me more than the Souls of White Folk.

W.E.B. DuBois

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Introduction

The JREP retrospective on "Race and the American Presidency" offers an opportunity for scholars of race to think through what the post-Obama era has taught us about the relationship between white racial identities and voting preferences at the national level. What may have been the "worst of times" for the nation may have been "the best of times" for the race and politics field in that both the Obama and the Trump presidencies have invigorated the field, led to serious questioning if not outright falsification of dominant paradigms, introduced new challenges, new theories, new measures, and opened new avenues of research.

First, empowered by their strong theorizing of the Obama era, scholars of intergroup relations and racial resentment such as Sides, Tesler, and Varveck (2019) moved the field forward by examining the role of racial prejudice in white voters' support for Trump in the Republican primary and in the general election. Valentino, Wayne, and Oceno (2018) and Cassese and Holman (2018) jumped into the fray with additional explanations drawn from the literature on gender politics and sexism, while Hopkins (2018) argued for the importance of xenophobia and Lajevardi and Abrajano (2019) targeted more narrowly islamophobia. More recently, Jardina (2019) introduced us to a new perspective that privileges the role of white ingroup favoritism as a predictor of support for Trump. Other studies, using a variety of measures have also identified white ingroup processes as key to understanding Trump voters (Sides, Tesler, and Varveck 2019, Lopez Bunyasi 2019). However, these four competing explanations have not been systematically tested against each other in the context of either the Republican primary or the 2016 general election. And so far, we have no insights on how these ingroup and outgroup processes may play out in the context of the 2020 general election.

Our goal in this article is threefold. First, we provide a retrospective account of the theoretical landscape as it relates to "Race and the Presidency" from the perspective of public opinion. We start out highlighting the key theoretical advances that emerged during the Obama era and the challenges to extant theory introduced by developments on the ground and in the discipline. Then we move to the Trump era and the new insights into the role of both outgroup and ingroup processes in white voters' support for

candidate Trump. Collectively, the Trump studies have contributed to the falsification of seminal paradigms such as the "principled conservatism" thesis (Sniderman and Piazza 1995) and the theory of racial priming (Mendelberg 2001). This has important implications for our understanding of the strength of racial norms as well as the prevalence of outgroup prejudice in white Americans' political choices.

The third step in our exploration consists of using data from three ANES studies that span the period from the 2016 primary season to the 2018 election, to systematically test the relative importance of racial resentment, xenophobia, sexism, and white ingroup identity as predictors of white Americans' support for Donald Trump in the 2016 Republican primary and the 2016 general election. We also move the needle forward, in considering the effects of these ingroup and outgroup factors on support for Trump relative to Joe Biden and Elizabeth Warren in the 2020 general election. This exercise not only gives us an early peek in what may be in store in November 2020, but, more importantly, provides insights as to which of the four predictors may be more important in which type of contests.

Our analyses suggest that xenophobia was the strongest predictor of white support for Trump both in the Republican primary and the 2016 general election, and that it is likely to be key in the 2020 contest, at least if either Joe Biden or Elizabeth Warren win the Democratic nomination. The effects of racial resentment and sexism were strong as well, especially in the general election and this will likely be the case in the 2020 contest, even if the candidate is Joe Biden. The influence of white identity is more modest and less consistent across contests: we find a significant effect of white identity in support for Trump in the 2016 Republican primary, but its effect in the general election against Clinton appears to be negative and, in one case, significant. The analysis of possible 2020 matchups suggests that white identity may play a significant role in pushing support for Trump in a contest against Biden but not against Warren. Finally, we use our results to reflect critically about new questions and avenues for research on the role of racial dynamics in white presidential voting preferences, thinking through what a "post-Trump" era may look like for political science research on race and voting behavior.

The Obama Presidency and Race Politics Research: Setting the Context

Quite conclusively, the Obama era closed the door on the optimistic, if not quixotic, notion that American society could any time soon become "post-racial," a term understood as racial identities becoming less relevant to the political preferences of white Americans (Tesler and Sears 2010, Kinder and Dale-Riddle 2012). In this article, we follow the conceptualization of identity proposed by Abdelal et al. (2006): identities are social categories that are individually meaningful. They consist both of an understanding of the traits that delineate the ingroup and of relational accounts of how the ingroup differs from key outgroups. Therefore, in our view, *both* conceptions of the ingroup in social and political terms combined with ingroup favoritism, as well as outgroup attitudes are constitutive parts of racial identities.

As the Obama Presidency progressed, scholars reported that anti-black attitudes and especially racial resentment or "modern racism" had become even more consequential for white political attitudes and behavior. Tesler (2012) argued that healthcare policy preferences had become racialized, while Filindra and Kaplan (2016) introduced evidence of racialization in the domain of preferences for gun control. Wilson and Brewer (2013) and Appleby and Federico (2017) brought the research closer to key democratic institutions by showing, respectively, that racial attitudes colored support for voter ID laws and beliefs about the legitimacy of electoral results. Most consequentially, Tesler (2016) argued that racial identities now undergirded partisanship and ideology, a finding that upends our understanding of causal relationships in politics. In *Post-Racial or Most-Racial*, the author shows that anti-black attitudes have been a constitutive part of Republican identity among many white Americans.

Inspired by the immigrant mobilizations of the era as well as the emergence of the Tea Party, a parallel line of research zeroed-in on the role of xenophobia, or anti-immigrant bias, in shaping the political and policy judgements of white Americans. Obama's record on immigration was decidedly mixed: he used executive orders to offer temporary legal residency to undocumented minors and youth, known as DREAMers, but at the same time he presided over the expansion of deportations and removals at the U.S. border and failed to pursue a comprehensive immigration reform that could regularize the status of 11 million undocumented immigrants. At the same time, the Obama Presidency gave rise to a vocal conservative movement, dominated by whites. Parker and Barreto (2013) elucidated the links between

xenophobia, the rise of the Tea Party, and opposition to Obama. Soon after the conclusion of the Obama era, Abrajano and Hajnal (2017) moved this research further by linking xenophobia to the white partisan realignment and to partisan and ideological identities. In *White Backlash*, the authors showed that it was not only anti-black prejudice, but also anti-immigrant sentiment that incentivized many whites to shift from the Democratic to the Republican Party.

Foregrounding what was to come, Jardina and Traugott (2019) showed that among white Republicans, racial prejudice fueled the "birther" movement, a conspiracy theory promoted and expanded by Donald Trump that questioned Obama's American citizenship and thus his legitimacy as President. In retrospect, "birtherism" was a harbinger of things to come: it combined several dimensions that had come into focus within the discipline during the Obama era. Birtherism offered evidence of the ascendance of overt, old-fashioned racism which appeared to have made a comeback as a decisive predictor of white political preferences in multiple contexts (Tesler 2013, Knuckey and Kim 2015). Furthermore, the prominence of this conspiracy theory highlighted what Valentino, Neuner, and Vandenbroek (2017) and more recently Reny, Valenzuela, and Collingwood (2019) have argued: we are back full-circle in an era (if we ever really left it) when white elites can deliver derogatory racial messaging directly and overtly seemingly without electoral cost and possibly with electoral benefit. Norms of racial equality that Mendelberg (2001) had pronounced so strong as to necessitate implicit delivery of racial content in political campaigns, appear to no longer have the same power to regulate political behavior, and maybe they never did. The belief that Obama was a Muslim foreigner who had usurped the highest office in America, if not the world, also linked the movement to xenophobia and nativism, not to mention islamophobia. And of course, this conspiracy theory provided a platform which facilitated Donald Trump to make a switch from "the Apprentice" to the White House.

The Donald Trump Presidency and the State of Race Politics Research

Donald Trump announced his candidacy for the Republican presidential nomination on June 16, 2015. Under the banner of "Make America Great Again," a slogan attributed to the Second Klan (Gordon

2017), Trump complained that "when Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best... They're sending people that have lots of problems... They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists." The threat of ISIS, Iran, and Islamic terrorism also featured prominently in the speech, along with a promise to "repeal and replace the big lie, Obamacare" (Time.com 2015). In one speech, Trump hit multiple dimensions of outgroup bias and did so openly and overtly with zero regard for norms: xenophobia, anti-Latino bias, islamophobia, and anti-black prejudice were key components of his inaugural speech as a presidential candidate. Within weeks, Trump's attacks on FoxNews' Megyn Kelly who challenged him in one of the Republican primary debates, made clear that a deep sexism was an equal part of his repertoire. Charges of sexism followed Trump throughout his general election campaign and tenure in the White House as critics in the media have focused on the "Access Hollywood" tape, his relationship with pedophile Jeffrey Epstein, and his treatment of Hillary Clinton, Nancy Pelosi, Elizabeth Warren, and Kamala Harris, among others.

Scholars quickly began to investigate the issues raised by Trump's political rise. Perhaps an early victim to the Trump candidacy was the "principled conservatism" thesis (Sniderman and Piazza 1995), which argued that the prevalence and effect of racial prejudice in American society declined markedly after the Civil Rights movement, and thus opposition to racial policies such as affirmative action should be attributed to the white public's desire to follow the principles of ideological conservatism. In this view, the measure of racial resentment captured conservatism more so than prejudice. The model of implicit/explicit priming (Mendelberg 2001), a focal point of the literature over the past two decades, suffered major wounds as well. Finally, the race/immigration scholarship also showed that political economic theories that sought to explain support for Trump as the result of economic insecurity among white working class people (Lamont, Park, and Ayala-Hurtado 2017) may have been popular with the pundits but could not account for white enthusiasm for Trump. The breadth and depth of the effects of the colorline became impossible to deny.

The theory of racial resentment has been a dominant paradigm throughout the literature on Trump, even though questions about its meaning continue to abound (Kam and Burge 2018), while measures of

old-fashioned racism made a strong comeback. Racial resentment had to compete with new measures of prejudice (DeSante and Smith 2020), islamophobia (Lajevardi and Abrajano 2019), and a variety of traditional explicit measures of xenophobia and Latino prejudice (Hopkins 2018). Later in the Trump era, a new theory of white identity coupled with its own new measure (Jardina 2019) offered fresh insight to white Americans' voting behavior from the perspective of ingroup favoritism.

By early 2016, Sides, Tesler, and Vavreck (2016) had identified racial resentment as a key predictor of voter support for Trump. In their view, the experience of the birther movement taught Trump that overt racial prejudice can activate a significant portion of the Republican electorate. Not being a political professional and thus lacking socialization in political norms, Trump went "hunting where the ducks [were]" (Sides, Tesler, and Vavreck 2018, also see, Tolbert, Redlawsk, and Gracey 2018). Not only did overt racism enable Trump to beat more than a dozen opponents in the primary, but it greatly contributed to his win against Hillary Clinton in the general election (Sides, Tesler, and Varveck 2019). Hopkins (2018) also showed the effect of old-fashioned racism, or racial stereotypes, in whites' support for Trump, a relationship absent in previous election cycles. Trump's response to the Charlottesville riots in which he refused to condemn white supremacist violence, underscored the importance of racism in the relationship between the President and his electoral base.

Yet, the strong and early focus on racism tended to overshadow the important influences of xenophobia and sexism in the 2016 election. Trump's evolving promises to build a "beautiful" wall on the southern border and to institute a ban on the entry of Muslim immigrants and visitors, along with his obvious contempt for Hillary Clinton and, late in the season, the now infamous "Access Hollywood" tape in which he proudly advocated sexual assault, meant that scholarship foregrounding anti-immigrant attitudes and sexism was not to be far behind. First came blog posts arguing that xenophobia is what differentiated Trump supporters from other Republicans (Nteta and Schaffner 2016). Soon after, Oliver and Rahn (2016) linked Trump support to nativism, while Lajevardi and Abrajano (2019) made a connection to islamophobia. Hopkins (2018) along with Hooghe and Dassonneville (2018) found a correlation between voting for Trump and anti-Latino and anti-immigrant prejudice. More recently, Reny, Collingwood, and Valenzuela (2019)

showed that anti-black and anti-immigrant attitudes were key in predicting switching from Obama to Trump among white voters.

At the same time, a powerful challenge came from gender scholars who identified the potent role that sexism played in the 2016 election. The first presidential general election contest to feature a female candidate for President introduced important new questions for pundits and scholars of gender alike. Would white women vote their gender and reject Trump's misogyny, or vote their race, embracing his racism? The odds were stacked: as Jane Junn (2017) has argued, white women's position in the American racial stratification system and the benefits they reap from their status as members of the dominant racial group ensured that racial attitudes would be key in explaining white women's support for Trump. "The gender gap, is a race gap," Junn and Masuoka (2020) have recently concluded, a finding that bridges the Obama and Trump elections. Exit polls confirmed that a majority of white women voted for Trump. But in addition to racial prejudice, was sexism a factor in white women's decision-making? The answer came from Frasure-Yokley (2018) who found that the effects of sexism were not limited to men; in fact, there was no gender difference in the effect of sexism on candidate choice in the 2016 election.

Schaffner, Macwilliams, and Nteta (2018) showed that controlling for racial resentment, sexism was a significant predictor of support for Trump over Clinton in the 2016 election, a finding that Cassese and Holman (2018) strengthened further with experimental work. In a follow-up study, Cassese and Barnes (2019) showed that the effect of sexism on support for the Republican presidential candidate increased substantially between 2012 and 2016, suggesting that Trump has been especially adept at activating outgroup biases. Valentino, Wayne, and Oceno (2018) extended our understanding by experimentally showing that the mechanism through which sexism influenced voter choices in the 2016 election was anger.

Closer to the end of the Trump era, Jardina (2019) introduced a fresh perspective on how racial identities may influence white political behavior. Sociologist Howard Winant (2004) argued that whiteness is a political identity with multiple antecedents and dimensions, drawing on a variety of ideological racial projects. Relying on social identity theory in psychology (Tajfel and Turner 1986) and theories of group consciousness prevalent in studies of minority group politics in political science (e.g., Sanchez 2006,

Masuoka 2006, McClain et al. 2009), Jardina (2019) argued that whiteness is no longer simply a cultural identity but has taken on a political dimension. As a result of demographic change and racial-political sorting, whites may be developing a white political identity, or an understanding that they share common political and social goals in the preservation of their status in American society. From this perspective, ingroup favoritism is conceptually and analytically independent of outgroup bias: people can score high on ingroup consciousness and willingness to defend the interests of the group, but low on racial prejudice. Jardina (2019) also developed a measure of "white identity" based on three items that gauge how important is being white to the respondent, how important is it for whites to work together to change laws that are deemed unfair to their group, and how likely is it that whites are unable to find jobs because employers prefer to hire minorities.

The study of white identity is a major new development for the field and several scholars, using a variety of measures, sought to capture the effects of white identity in white electoral choices. In an early study, Petrow, Transue, and Vercellotti (2018) cautioned that white ingroup favoritism may play a role only in inter-racial contests, but more recent evidence suggests this may not be the case. First, using the 2016 ANES Pilot and an original study, Jardina (2019) demonstrated that white identity was a significant predictor of support for Trump both in the Republican primary which did include non-white opponents (Cruz, Carson, and Rubio) and in the 2016 general election against Clinton. This was the case, even after controlling for racial resentment. Using a different measure of white identity, one based on perceptions of how much discrimination whites face, Sides, Tesler, and Varveck (2019) confirmed Jardina's (2019) findings. Lopez Bunyasi (2019) further substantiated the role of white identity, measured yet in a different way, in predicting support for Trump.

Given the rapidity with which scholars sought to respond to the challenge of explaining the emergence and victory of Donald Trump, first in the Republican primary and then in the general election, it is no surprise that many of these explanations have developed on independent tracks, not accounting for many of the other significant group-level predictors. Sexism and racial resentment explanations are tested against each other in one study (Schaffner, Macwilliams, and Nteta 2018), anti-black prejudice and

xenophobia in a different one (Hopkins 2018), and racial resentment is combined with white identity-based hypotheses in two (Jardina 2019, Sides, Tesler, and Varveck 2019). No study of either the 2016 Republican primary, or the 2016 general election has systematically tested all four explanations. Yet, given the state of our understanding of the predictors of white voting behavior in contemporary presidential races, a test of all four theories is essential to move the discipline forward and also to generate new questions and challenges for the field.

Data and Methods

Our analyses are based on the 2016 ANES Pilot (data collected in January 2016), the 2016 ANES timeseries study (data collected in October and November 2016), and the 2018 ANES Pilot (data collected in December 2018).² We employ three binary dependent variables:

- Vote choice in the 2016 Republican primary between Trump (1) and several other candidates who
 were not analyzed separately but only as "other" (0).³ This question is included in both the 2016
 ANES Pilot (vote intent) and in the 2016 ANES timeseries (vote recall).
- 2. Vote choice in the 2016 general election between Trump (1) and Hillary Clinton (0). This question is included in all three datasets. In the 2016 ANES Pilot it gauges intended support for Trump, while in the other two it measures stated voting behavior.
- 3. Vote choice in the 2020 general election between Trump (1) and Joe Biden (0) or Trump (1) and Elizabeth Warren (0). This is included in the 2018 ANES Pilot and it measures intent to vote for Trump.⁴

Across all models and datasets, racial resentment is operationalized using the four items from Kinder and Sanders (1996) and white identity is measured using the three items developed by Jardina (2019). Models using the white discrimination measure as a proxy for white identity in the tradition of Sides, Tesler, and Varveck (2019) are included in Appendix Tables B1-B3 and are discussed in the main text only in terms of their similarities and differences in performance relative to the Jardina measure. Xenophobia and sexism are measured somewhat differently across dataset because the three sources do not

include identical measures. For the xenophobia items, we combined all the measures from each dataset that referenced immigrants and refugees (six items for ANES 2016 Pilot, ten items for ANES 2016 Timeseries, and seven items for ANES 2018 Pilot). The exact items are listed in Appendix E. The indices for racial resentment, xenophobia and sexism across datasets are reliable (alpha>0.7). The white identity measure exhibits lower levels of reliability. Binary correlations between these key independent variables suggest that these relationships range between 0.2 and 0.6 and thus do not present any multicollinearity issues.

The models also include the following controls: evaluation of the economy, partisanship, ideology, gender, age, education (college degree), income, Protestant religion, and residence in the South. Unlike the Pilot studies, the 2016 ANES timeseries includes four additional measures that have been shown to influence candidate choice: authoritarianism, egalitarianism, small government ideology, and moral traditionalism. For reasons of consistency in presentation, we opted not to include these variables in the analyses exhibited in the main text. In Appendix D, we present all 2016 ANES models with these four measures included. The key findings remain unchanged. All models are based on non-Hispanic white respondents alone. We recoded all variables on 0 to 1 scales consistent with their original nature. Using consistent scaling facilitates comparisons across models. Descriptive statistics for all three datasets are in Appendix Tables C1-C3.

a. The 2016 Republican Primary

Our first set of models explore the role of white ingroup favoritism and outgroup biases, in predicting support for Trump in the 2016 Republican primary. This question was asked of all ANES respondents in the 2016 Pilot and of all who indicated that they voted in a party primary in the 2016 timeseries study. As a result, we present two sets of analyses: one set includes all white respondents and a second set includes only white Republican identifiers and leaners.

[TABLE 1-HERE]

Table 1 Model 1, shows the results of support for Trump in the 2016 Republican primary among all white respondents. White identity, racial resentment, and xenophobia are statistically significant and

positive consistent with the prediction that higher scores on these measures should correlate with stronger support for Trump. However, sexism is significant (p<0.1) but negative which indicates that white voters who scored high on sexism may have intended to vote for Republican candidates other than Trump. Turning to substantive effects, white identity and xenophobia appear to have the strongest effect on voters who participated in the Republican primary. Specifically, a shift from the lowest to the highest level of white identity corresponds to a 51% increase in the likelihood of casting a vote for Trump, while holding all other independent variables constant at their means. A shift from the lowest to the highest point on the xenophobia scale corresponds to a 61% increase in the probability of voting for Trump over a different Republican. The effects of racial resentment and sexism are in a second tier of predictors. A change in racial resentment from its minimum to its maximum value corresponds with a 31% increase in the likelihood of voting for Trump, while a similar change in the sexism scale correlates with a 30% decline in support for Trump. Table 1, Model 2, shows very similar results, albeit with qualitatively larger maximum effects, when the regression is restricted to Republicans and Republican leaners. In Table 1, Model 2, ideology is also statistically significant and negative which suggests that Republicans who also identified as conservative were less likely to vote for Trump in the primary than were more liberal Republicans.

The fact that sexism had not been associated with Trump in the primary context by January 2016 is somewhat surprising given the extensive coverage that his response to Megyn Kelly had generated and media scrutiny of his personal life and relationships. It is possible that at this stage of the campaign, sexist Republicans preferred more hawkish hopefuls and candidates who took more explicitly conservative positions on issues such as abortion and traditional family values.

Table 1, Model 3 is based on the 2016 ANES and thus it represents respondents' recall of their vote in the 2016 Republican primary. The study asked voters if they had participated in the Republican primary and if they did, it asked which candidate they voted for. As in the case of Model 1, Model 3 includes all respondents, regardless of partisan affiliation, who said they voted in the Republican primary. Once again, xenophobia is statistically significant and positive. White identity is statistically significant and positive but only at p<0.1. Racial resentment and sexism are positive but they are not statistically significant. The

result for sexism here is inconsistent with what we report for the 2016 ANES Pilot where sexism was *negative* and significant in both models. In this model, gender (female), South, and education (College degree) are all statistically significant and negative suggesting that women, Southerners and those with a college degree were less likely to report having voted for Trump in the Republican primary. Once again, xenophobia has the strongest substantive effect (74%) while white identity is in a second tier of predictors (24%), followed by being female (-14%), education (-18%), and residence in the South (-15%).

When we subset the 2016 ANES data to include only Republican identifiers and leaners (Table 1, Model 4), xenophobia continues to be positive and statistically significant while racial resentment strengthens and becomes significant at p<0.1. However, white identity loses statistical significance while sexism is also not significant. As was the case with Model 3, gender, education, and residence in the South are all negative and statistically significant. In this model, ideology is also statistically significant and negative indicating that conservative Republicans were less likely to recall voting for Trump in the primary. In terms of substantive effects, the results are almost identical to Model 3. Xenophobia has the strongest effect (71%) while racial resentment is in a second tier of predictors: a change in anti-black attitudes from the lowest to the highest value corresponds to a 23% increase in the likelihood that a white Republican voter would report having voted for Trump in the primary.

As a robustness check, we specified the same models but swapped white identity with the white discrimination measure. As Appendix Table B1 shows, white discrimination is positive and statistically significant in three of the four models but the substantive effects are somewhat smaller than those for white identity, possibly because the measure consists of a single item.

b. The 2016 Presidential Election

Our next set of models turn to the 2016 general election where Donald Trump competed as the Republican nominee against Democrat Hillary Clinton. These models include only those white respondents who indicated that they intended to vote or voted for either Trump or Clinton in the election. Here we present four parallel models. One model is from the 2016 ANES Pilot which records intent to vote for

Trump in the general election well before Trump is the Republican nominee. A second model uses data from the 2016 ANES pre-election wave which was fielded in October 2016 and asked intent to vote for Trump or Clinton a few weeks before the election took place. A third model is based on the 2016 ANES post-election wave and asks respondents to recall who they voted for in the general election. And the fourth model is also a recall question from the 2018 ANES Pilot, two years after the 2016 election. It is important to note that in the last model we omit the economic evaluation measure because the 2018 ANES Pilot does not include voters' assessment of the economy in 2016 which would be the theoretically appropriate item.

[TABLE 2-HERE]

Table 2, Model 1 based on the 2016 ANES Pilot, shows that xenophobia is positive and statistically significant as a predictor of vote intent for Trump in early 2016. This is consistent with theory and with the results from the primary election contest that we presented above. Racial resentment is also positive and statistically significant. White identity and sexism are both negative but lack statistical significance. As expected, partisanship and ideology are both positive and significant, while residence in the South is also positive and significant consistent with what would be expected for the general election. Prospective economic evaluation is significant and negative, suggesting that voters who were pessimistic about the economy were more likely to vote for Trump (the non-incumbent party).

Turning to maximum effects, partisanship is the strongest predictor of intent to vote for Trump over Clinton. Whites who identify as strong Republicans are 82% more likely to express an intent to vote for Trump than are whites who identify as strong Democrats. Racial resentment (65%), xenophobia (60%), prospective economic evaluation (54%), and ideology (59%) fall in a second tier of predictors in terms of substantive effects. Residence in the South is in a lower tier: Southerners are 28% more likely than non-Southerners to express intent to vote for Trump over Clinton in early 2016.

Table 2, Model 2 shows the model for intent to vote for Trump based on the 2016 ANES preelection wave which was recorded in October 2016. Here again we see that xenophobia and racial resentment are statistically significant and positive, indicating that those who score higher on these measures are more likely to express an intent to vote for Trump over Clinton. In this model which captures attitudes closer to the election, sexism is also significant and positive. However, white identity is null and the sign of the coefficient is negative. Consistent with expectations, partisanship, ideology, and residence in the South are positive and statistically significant; prospective economic evaluation is also significant but negative.⁸

In terms of substantive effects, xenophobia (92%) and partisanship (83%) are in the top tier of predictors. The effect of xenophobia appears increased by about 30% relative to January 2016 which likely reflects the centrality of anti-immigrant pronouncements in Donald Trump's messaging. Sexism is in a second tier of correlates, along with ideology (59%) and prospective economic evaluation (-52%). A shift from the lowest to the highest level of sexism corresponds to a 62% increase in the probability of expressing an intent to vote for Trump over Clinton in October 2016. Between January and October 2016, the predicted effect of sexism appears to have tripled, again reflecting the change in the information environment which by now has included the "Access Hollywood" tape. By contrast, the maximum effect of racial resentment is 36%, half as strong as in January 2016. In the lowest tier of predictors, residency in the South has a substantive effect of 13% which is also lower than in January 2016.

Table 2, Model 3 presents results of reported vote choice in the Presidential election among white Americans as recorded in the 2016 ANES post-election wave. In this model, xenophobia, racial resentment, and sexism are all statistically significant and positive, as expected. White identity is also statistically significant but carries a negative sign which suggests that those who score higher on white ingroup favoritism were *more likely* to report voting for Clinton over Trump in the general election. This contradicts earlier findings by Jardina (2019) and Sides et al. (2019) who showed a positive correlation between measures of white identity and support for Trump in the national election. As expected, partisanship, ideology, and residence in the South are all positive and statistically significant while prospective economic evaluation is negative and statistically significant.

The maximum effects column shows that similar to other models, xenophobia (88%) and partisanship (81%) are in the top tier of predictors, followed by ideology (63%), racial resentment (58%), sexism (58%), and prospective economic evaluation (-43%). White identity is in a lower tier of predictors:

a shift from the highest to the lowest value of the white identity scale corresponds with a 30% decline in the probability of reporting having voted for Trump over Clinton.

Table 2, Model 4 shows the results of a model based on recall of vote choice in 2016 that was recorded in the 2018 ANES Pilot. Once again, xenophobia, racial resentment and sexism are all statistically significant and positive, indicating that higher values predict higher likelihood of reporting to have voted for Trump over Clinton in 2016. In this model too, white identity is not statistically significant. Partisanship, and ideology are also positive and statistically significant, consistent with the previous models and with theory. This model does not include a measure of prospective economic evaluation because the survey did not ask respondent's recall of the state of the economy in 2016.

In terms of substantive effects, this model is very consistent with the previous three models. Once again, xenophobia (85%) and partisanship (85%) are in a top tier of correlates, followed by racial resentment (38%), sexism (34%) and ideology (28%).

Models with white discrimination in lieu of white identity also produced null results for most of the Trump v. Clinton models. Only in the 2016 ANES pre-election model was white discrimination statistically significant, but unlike it was the case with white identity, the direction of the coefficient is positive indicating that stronger beliefs that whites are being victims of racial discrimination correspond to a higher likelihood to vote for Trump over Clinton, relative to weaker beliefs in white discrimination (See Appendix Table B2).

c. The 2020 Election Contests

The 2018 ANES Pilot includes two questions related to the 2020 national election. It asks all respondents to decide whether they would vote for Donald Trump or Joe Biden, or for Donald Trump or Elizabeth Warren. These items allow us to move past the 2016 election and investigate the likely role of outgroup biases and white ingroup identity in the upcoming 2020 election. Needless to say, there are important limitations with these analyses. First, they are based on voters' responses recorded in late 2018, before candidates had formally declared, long before Bob Mueller submitted his report to the Department

of Justice, the Ukraine scandal broke, and Donald Trump was impeached. The Ukraine scandal is especially important because it involves not only Trump but also Joe Biden who was implicated in a conspiracy theory involving his son's dealings in that country. Second, unlike the 2016 election, it is not yet clear who may be the Democratic frontrunner in 2020, especially given these allegations against Biden. It is thus likely that outgroup biases as well as ingroup favoritism may be even more influential in the Trump v Biden choice if the data had been collected today.

[TABLE 3-HERE]

Table 3, Model 1 shows the results of a logistic regression related to the choice between Trump and Biden. Racial resentment, xenophobia, sexism and white ingroup identity are all statistically significant at conventional levels (p<0.05) and positive, denoting that individuals who score higher in each of these sets of attitudes are more likely to support Trump over Biden in a hypothetical presidential matchup. It is important to note that this is the first model of a national election contest where we find that white identity has a statistically significant effect in the expected positive direction. Partisanship and ideology are also significant and positive; as expected, Republicans and conservatives are more likely to declare intention to vote for Trump over Biden. Prospective economic evaluation is also positive and statistically significant, consistent with extant theory arguing that, all else being equal, voters who have a positive view of the economy are more likely to vote for the incumbent President/party. White women are less likely to vote for Trump in a matchup against Biden and this is also statistically significant. None of the other demographic variables are statistically significant.

Turning to the size of the substantive effects, prospective economic evaluation has the stronger effect on voter choices: a change in beliefs about the economy from the most pessimistic to the most optimistic is associated with an 86% increase in the likelihood of voting for Trump. Similarly, a shift from the strong Democrat to the strong Republican end of the partisanship scale is associated with an 81% increase in the probability of voting for Trump. Among the group-level measures, xenophobia exhibits the strongest substantive effect: a shift from the lowest to the highest level of xenophobia is associated with a 65% increase in the likelihood of voting for Trump. The substantive effects of ideology (37%), racial

resentment (40%), sexism (39%) and white identity (38%) are practically identical and fall in a second tier of predictors. The effect of white identity here appears to be smaller than what we saw for the models of the Republican primary.

Table 3, Model 2 shows the results of the Trump v. Warren vote choice. Here, racial resentment xenophobia and sexism are the three group-level indicators that are statistically significant. All are positive which is the expected direction of effect. White identity is not statistically significant in the model with Elizabeth Warren, much like it was not statistically significant in two of the three models involving Clinton. As a reminder, the 2016 ANES analyses showed a statistically significant but negative correlation between white identity and support for Trump against Clinton. The other two models related to the 2016 election showed a null effect of white identity. Among key controls, partisanship and prospective economic evaluation are positive and statistically significant while age and being female are significant but negative.

Looking at substantive effects, here again, prospective economic evaluation (92%), partisanship (83%) and xenophobia (85%) are in the top tier of predictors. For our purposes, it is important to note that the effect of xenophobia appears to be stronger in Trump's matchup with Warren than in the one with Biden. Racial resentment (48%) and sexism (42%) are in a second tier of predictors. Again racial resentment appears to have stronger effects in the match-up against Warren than in the one against Biden.

It is important to note that the models using the white discrimination measure showed null effects for this ingroup favoritism item for both the Biden and the Warren model (Appendix Table B3).

Discussion

Our analyses based on three ANES studies confirm that xenophobia was a key component of Trump's electoral appeal since the primaries, a link that only grew stronger in the general election. The 2018 ANES Pilot results also suggest that xenophobia will continue to be a potent motivator of support for Trump in a 2020 contest against either Biden or Warren. This is not surprising given the central role that the border wall and the "Muslim ban" have had in the Trump campaign and the willingness of the candidate to portray undocumented immigrants as criminals and refugees as a social and security threat. Thus we can

expect to see further pushes from the Trump Administration on the "Wall," exclusions on the basis of "public charge provisions," and other dimensions of immigration restrictionism as we approach the general election. Racial resentment was also a key predictor of support for Trump since the primaries and it will likely continue to play an important role in the upcoming 2020 election. However, across the board, racial resentment took a second seat relative to xenophobia.

The refusal to condemn racist violence in Charlottesville and dog-whistling about crime and violence in Chicago, notwithstanding, Trump actually took awkward steps to appeal to African-Americans by bragging on Twitter that under his watch unemployment among Blacks "is at its lowest number in history" (The Fix 2020). Certainly the absence of a Black candidate from the Democratic ticket may have rendered racial attitudes less central to voting decisions in the 2016 election relative to the Obama era. Yet, looking to the future, we need to understand better whether, how, and to what degree Biden's association with Obama may influence whites' vote intentions both in the Democratic primary and in a possible Trump v Biden contest. On one hand, retrospective job approval for Obama which stood at 63% in 2018 according to Gallup, may boost Biden's chances. On the other hand, Biden's role as Obama's Vice President may have "racialized" him, that is, associated him with negative racial attitudes in white minds.

Certainly more research is needed on this to determine whether the heightened racial effects associated with policy and political personnel attitudes during the Obama era (Tesler 2016) may have subsided or given rise to stronger associations between political cognitions and xenophobia. Given that our results suggest that racial resentment is affecting support for a number of white candidates, some associated with Obama (e.g., Clinton and Biden), but others less so (Warren), we may want to think more about the possibility that racial stereotypes have developed for the parties themselves, a possibility consistent with the conclusion of the racial realignment and the studies showing that racial attitudes (and xenophobia) predict partisanship.

Our results introduce challenges for the new measure and theory of white identity. First, across three ANES studies, the measure displays relatively low levels of statistical reliability which is a problem in itself (see Footnote 5). This may be because even though the measure purports to tap ingroup favorability,

at least one of the items also taps competition with outgroups ("whites may be losing jobs to minorities"). Second, and given the measure's low alpha score, it is not surprising that the item is statistically significant only in a subset of models. Our results provide relatively consistent evidence that white identity may have influenced support for Trump in the Republican primary. However, it is not clear whether this is because his strongest opponents were Latinos (Cruz and Rubio) which would be consistent with the Petrow, Transue, and Vercellotti (2018) thesis that white identity comes to play only in interracial contests, or if political judgements in primary settings are qualitatively different than in general elections. In essence, a primary election may require white voters to determine who best represents two key identities: party and race. Thus the importance of the positive white ingroup dimension may be accentuated in such as setting. Obviously, additional theorizing and testing is necessary to understand how the meanings associated with partisan and racial identities within each party may differ and in what ways.

When it comes to general election contests, unlike Jardina (2019) and Sides et al. (2019), we find that white identity had no effect on support for Trump relative to Clinton when controlling for xenophobia and sexism in addition to racial resentment. In fact, in one model, we find that white identity is *negative* and significant which suggests that it contributed to increased rather than decreased support for Clinton. Equally puzzling is that in the 2018 data, white identity is a significant predictor of support for Trump against Biden, but not against Warren. If these results are not an artifact of the measure, additional research is needed to understand the relationship between a candidate's race/gender and the activation of white identity in interparty contests. Our exploration shows no evidence of a statistically significant interaction between partisanship and white identity in any of the models, so more thinking needs to go into these issues.

Ashley Jardina (2019) suggests that ingroup and outgroup processes are likely independent of each other. This opens up the question of whether, how, and to what degree they interact and what effect do such interactions may have on support for Presidential candidates whether in primary or general election settings. What may be the effects of combinations not only of ingroup-directed vs. outgroup-focused messaging, but also whether these combinations have differential effects in explicit or implicit messaging are also important open questions that the literature should address in the future.

Conclusion

Apocryphal attributions suggest that the phrase "may you live in interesting times" is a Chinese curse. As citizens, over the past decade, we have been exposed to rising racial prejudice and anti-immigrant bias in public life, increasing social inequality, and more recently a direct assault on governmental institutions and what those norms that Levitsky and Ziblatt (2017) have termed "the soft guardrails of democracy." As researchers, both the white reactionary mobilization that led to the election of Donald Trump and the subsequent erosion of national democratic norms, and the resistance to it coming from various quarters represent fertile ground for study. These changes in the political environment have tested our assumptions about the prevalence of various forms of outgroup bias within white American society, the centrality and power of norms of racial equality as well as the mechanisms through which they may work or even become muted. New ideas have emerged that focus on intersections of race, gender, and outgroup attitudes, and fresh perspectives advocate for a closer look at ingroup identities, at the role of leaders and followers within political and racial groups, and the impact that this new environment has on minorities, their identities, their politics, and their attitudes. It is unfortunate that progress in our field and our discipline's emergent vibrancy and increased recognition within Political Science comes at such immense social and political cost which may take decades to fully identify and measure.

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Table 1: Logistic Analyses of Vote Choice in the 2016 GOP Primary (White respondents only)

DV: Voted for Trump (1) v. other candidates (0) in GOP primary

2016 ANES Pilot 2016 ANES Timeseries GOP GOP identifiers identifiers All GOP All GOP and leaners and leaners Primary Primary Voters Max. only Max. Voters Max. only Max. Effects Effects Effects Effects Model 1 Model 2 Model 3 Model 4 2.445 *** White Identity 0.51 2.584 *** 0.56 0.961 * 0.24 0.808 0.20 (0.52)(0.64)(0.49)(0.52)1.610 ** 2.669 ** Racial Resentment 0.31 0.44 0.748 0.18 0.961 * 0.23 (0.68)(1.05)(0.53)(0.57)3.277 *** 3.471 *** 3.799 *** 4.081 *** Xenophobia 0.61 0.65 0.74 0.71 (0.73)(0.79)(0.99)(0.75)Sexism -1.443 * -0.30 -1.968 ** -0.43 0.736 0.16 0.776 0.16 (0.78)(0.97)(0.65)(0.67)Economic Eval. -0.773 -0.17 0.263 0.07 0.593 0.13 0.630 0.14 (0.61)(0.83)(0.63)(0.68)Age 30-44 -0.438 -0.09 -0.536 -0.13 0.799 * 0.19 0.776 * 0.19 (0.46)(0.56)(0.43)(0.45)Age 45-64 -0.606 -0.442 -0.13 -0.11 0.419 0.10 0.446 0.11 (0.45)(0.51)(0.39)(0.41)Age 65 & over -0.06 0.063 0.02 0.588 0.15 0.647 -0.270 0.16 (0.47)(0.53)(0.40)(0.42)-0.590 *** -0.581 *** Female 0.0660.01 -0.337 -0.08 -0.14 -0.15 (0.35)(0.23)(0.27)(0.22)Protestant -0.068 -0.02 -0.125 -0.03 -0.177 -0.04 -0.167 -0.04 (0.25)(0.32)(0.20)(0.21)-0.241 -0.592 *** -0.651 *** South -0.05 0.060 0.01 -0.15 -0.16 (0.25)(0.32)(0.22)(0.24)-0.733 *** -0.697 *** College degree -0.400 -0.09 -0.096 -0.02 -0.18 -0.16 (0.31)(0.37)(0.20)(0.22)-0.206 -0.05 -0.04 -0.488 -0.12 -0.435 -0.11 Income -0.157 (0.50)(0.58)(0.40)(0.43)Income - Not Known 0.1000.02 0.420 0.10 -0.665 -0.16 -0.705 -0.17 (0.41)(0.58)(0.57)(0.60)Republicanism (PID) 0.721 0.16 0.032 0.01 (0.55)(0.53)-2.638 *** -0.735 *** Conservatism (Ideology) -0.727 -0.17 -0.56 -0.527 -0.13 -0.15 (0.70)(0.77)(0.69)(0.74)-2.535 ** -3.268 *** -2.824 *** Constant -2.636 (0.84)(0.81)(0.98)(1.10)N 342 577 657 648 McFadden's Pseudo-R2 0.246 0.255 0.161 0.147 *** -311.900 Log-Likelihood -333.496 -184.083 -341.246 Chi-sq value 123.790 71.396 87.637 75.927

Table 2: Logistic Regression Analyses of Projected and Recalled Vote Choice in 2016 Election (White Respondents Only)

DV: Trump v. Clinton

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	2016 ANES	Max.	2016 ANES	Max.	2016 ANES	Max.	2018 ANES	Max.
	<u>Pilot</u>	Effects	pre-election	Effects	Post-election	Effects	<u>Pilot</u>	Effects
White Identity	-0.768	-0.14	-0.656	-0.16	-1.291 **	-0.30	0.371	0.07
	(1.17)		(0.69)		(0.55)		(0.72)	
Racial Resentment	3.368 ***	0.65	1.567 ***	0.36	2.706 ***	0.58	1.858 **	0.38
	(1.22)		(0.57)		(0.68)		(0.83)	
Xenophobia	3.348 *	0.60	6.747 ***	0.92	5.925 ***	0.88	5.219 ***	0.85
	(1.78)		(1.16)		(0.91)		(1.20)	
Sexism	-1.171	-0.21	3.687 ***	0.62	3.118 ***	0.58	1.704 ***	0.34
	(2.05)		(0.87)		(0.85)		(0.61)	
Economic Eval.	-3.048 *	-0.54	-2.352 **	-0.52	-1.895 ***	-0.43	_	_
	(1.77)		(0.92)		(0.70)			
Age 30-44	-1.675 *	-0.36	0.008	0.00	0.303	0.07	-0.315	-0.06
	(0.93)		(0.60)		(0.56)		(0.73)	
Age 45-64	-1.320	-0.25	-0.105	-0.02	0.075	0.02	-1.034	-0.21
_	(0.91)		(0.61)		(0.59)		(0.66)	
Age 65 & over	-1.102	-0.22	0.194	0.05	0.391	0.09	-1.041	-0.22
	(0.83)		(0.59)		(0.54)		(0.67)	
Female	-0.287	-0.05	0.282	0.07	0.307	0.07	-0.362	-0.07
	(0.67)		(0.24)		(0.23)		(0.32)	
Protestant	-0.587	-0.11	0.086	0.02	-0.128	-0.03	0.081	0.02
	(0.56)		(0.29)		(0.26)		(0.40)	
South	2.027 **	0.28	0.564 *	0.13	0.765 ***	0.17	-0.704 **	-0.15
	(0.83)		(0.30)		(0.27)		(0.36)	
College Degree	0.923	0.15	0.093	0.02	-0.074	-0.02	0.208	0.04
	(0.79)		(0.28)		(0.26)		(0.42)	
Income	-0.899	-0.17	-0.226	-0.05	-0.397	-0.09	-0.301	-0.06
	(1.05)		(0.61)		(0.58)		(1.09)	
Income - Not Known	1.428	0.18	-0.390	-0.1	-0.267	-0.06	-0.017	0.00
	(1.01)		(0.58)		(0.64)		(0.67)	
Republicanism (PID)	5.818 ***	0.82	4.752 ***	0.83	4.553 ***	0.81	5.702 ***	0.85
•	(1.51)		(0.50)		(0.43)		(0.63)	
Conservatism (Ideology)	3.445 *	0.59	2.628 ***	0.57	2.901 ***	0.61	1.319	0.26
	(1.90)		(0.74)		(0.65)		(0.89)	
Constant	-4.361 **	_	-7.924 ***	_	-7.906 ***	_	-6.869 ***	_
	(1.83)		(1.05)		(0.90)		(0.86)	
N	275		1786		1878		1315	
McFadden's Pseudo-R ²	0.725		0.736		0.719		0.789	
Log-Likelihood	-46.448		-302.290		-336.317		-159.121	
· ·	61.949 ***		250.136 ***		316.453 ***		272.207 ***	
Chi sq value	01.949 ***		250.130 ***		310.433 ***		212.201	

^{***} p < 0.01; ** p<0.05; * p<0.10 (two-tailed)

Robust standard errors in parentheses. All analyses weighted.

The models exclude respondents who did not identify either Trump or Clinton as their prefered candidate (i.e., don't know, third party candidates).

Table 3: Logistic Regression Analyses of Projected Vote Choice in 2020 Election (White Respondents Only)

	Model 1 Model 2			
	Trump v	Max.	Trump v.	Max.
	Biden	Effects	Warren	Effects
White Identity	1.613 **	0.38	0.450	0.09
	(0.64)		(0.77)	
Racial Resentment	1.758 **	0.40	2.338 ***	0.48
	(0.86)		(0.91)	
Xenophobia	3.281 ***	0.65	5.084 ***	0.85
	(1.03)		(1.32)	
Sexism	1.685 ***	0.39	2.074 **	0.42
	(0.65)		(0.85)	
Economic Eval.	5.599 ***	0.86	6.536 ***	0.92
	(1.04)		(1.18)	
Age 30-44	0.200	0.05	-0.543	-0.12
	(0.59)		(0.68)	
Age 45-64	-0.828	-0.20	-1.656 ***	-0.36
	(0.57)		(0.60)	
Age 65 & over	-0.571	-0.14	-1.418 **	-0.32
	(0.62)		(0.71)	
Female	-1.021 ***	-0.25	-1.014 **	-0.21
	(0.34)		(0.41)	
Protestant	0.191	0.05	0.027	0.01
	(0.36)		(0.39)	
South	-0.474	-0.12	0.369	0.07
	(0.35)		(0.44)	
BA	-0.130	-0.03	-0.261	-0.05
	(0.36)		(0.41)	
Income	-1.313	-0.31	-0.236	-0.05
	(1.03)		(1.07)	
Income - Not Known	0.039	0.01	-0.035	-0.01
	(0.57)		(0.64)	
Republicanism (PID)	4.563 ***	0.81	5.147 ***	0.83
	(0.66)		(0.71)	
Conservatism (Ideology)	1.597 *	0.37	1.108	0.23
	(0.85)		(0.93)	
Constant	-9.660 ***	_	-10.329 ***	_
	(1.18)		(1.44)	
N	1530		1475	
McFadden's Pseudo-R ²	0.801		0.852	
Log-Likelihood	-181.282		-127.102	
Chi sq-value	240.130		220.648	

^{***} p < 0.01; ** p < 0.05; * p < 0.10 (two-tailed)

Robust standard errors in parentheses. All analyses weighted.

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¹ Kelly asked Trump to comment on accusations that he is sexist, noting that "You've [Trump] called women you don't like fat pigs, dogs, slobs and disgusting animals." In a post-debate comment, Trump told CNN that "there was blood coming out of her [Kelly's] eyes, blood coming out of her wherever."

² All datasets, codebooks, and information on survey methodology can be found at the ANES website: https://electionstudies.org/

³ We opted for this model specification for several reasons: first, we are interested in what predicts voting for Trump among Republican voters in 2016 not necessarily differences across all possible candidates; second, we do not have the power required for a full multinomial model and such a model with more than three categories would be very difficult to interpret; third, it would make more difficult comparisons between the results from the 2016 ANES Pilot which includes almost all Republican candidates in the question, and the 2016 ANES timeseries, which includes only those candidates who survived through the late primaries.

⁴ In all cases, "don't know" responses were coded as missing data and not included in the analyses. In the matchup analyses with Clinton, Biden, and Warren, responses indicating preference for an "other"/third party candidate were also treated as missing data. However, analyses that included these cases (we can think of them as a Trump/not Trump choice) produced very similar results.

⁵ The Cronbach's alpha for each dataset is: 2016 ANES Pilot= 0.64; 2016 ANES = 0.59; 2018 ANES Pilot=0.69.

⁶ This means that, for example, a 4-point ordinal scale continues to have an ordinal form but rather than 0,1,2,3 the values are 0, 0.33, 0.66, and 1.

⁷ A parallel model that includes authoritarianism, moral traditionalism, small government ideology, and egalitarianism produced similar results. See Appendix Table D1.

⁸ A parallel model that includes authoritarianism, moral traditionalism, small government ideology, and egalitarianism produced similar results. See Appendix Table D2.

⁹ A parallel model that includes authoritarianism, moral traditionalism, small government ideology, and egalitarianism produced similar results. See Appendix Table D2.