Economic concerns appear to be weak predictors of White political identity*

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ABSTRACT   Do economic or political threats explain reported White Political Identity? Overall, the social identity literature would suggest that White Political Identity would increase in response to economic threats. However, a number of those that study White Political Identity, specifically, argue that it results from concern about political influence. Considering what Whiteness means historically and contemporaneously, I argue that we should expect that political threats reflect stronger associations with White Political Identity. Using data from the 2012, 2016, and 2020 American National Election Study, I consider a single model using penalized regression containing proxies of economic and political threats. I find evidence suggesting that in the post-Trump era, White political identity is strongly associated with reported feelings of Whites' loss of political influence as opposed to economic threats, as some suggest and may expect.

KEYWORDS   White Political Identity; economic threat; cultural threat

Introduction

There is a growing literature suggesting that White Political Identity predicts a number of important political outcomes. For example, some evidence suggests that White Political Identity predicts support for Trump in the 2016 Presidential Election (Jardina, Kalmoe, and Gross 2021). Nevertheless, the existing literature is a bit less clear about the predictors of White Political Identity. I advance an argument as to why we might consider the expression of a White Political Identity to be a reflection of concerns around cultural threat as opposed to economic threat. The primary contribution of the note is that I provide an omnibus test to tease out whether cultural or economic threats are more reliable predictors of a White individual's expression of racial identity in the United States.

As the American National Election Study is a long-running survey of those residing in the United States, it provides some of the most consistent measures on common political attitudes and behaviors. Using data from the 2012, 2016, and 2020 administrations of the ANES, I fit an omnibus model with penalized regression to examine the degree to which individual measures of economic and cultural status and perceptions of influence explain an individual's uptake of White Political Identity as well as to examine the degree to which changes in the social context may increase or decrease the explanatory power of these measures. From this test, I find that measures reporting concerns about Whites' cultural influence are stronger explanatory factors than proxies of economic influence in the post-Trump era.

Identity and White Political Identity

One perspective on what explains racial identity among Whites in the United States are that they are responding to threats to their economic status and power. Realistic Conflict Theory suggests that a racial identity and racial prejudice come as a response to a collective concern among members of a particular racial group about the loss of economic influence and the status a group holds relative to other racial groups (Blumer 1958; Bobo and Hutchings 1996). Some evidence suggests that Whites living in areas with shrinking job opportunities respond to this with an increased desire to protect the interests of their racial confederates (Baccini and Weymouth 2021). Others have experimental evidence supporting this perspective that White Political Identity is motivated by material concerns (Pérez et al. 2022). Further, (jardina_White_2019?) who provides one of the most comprehensive treatments of conceptualizing, measuring, and examining the outcomes of White Political Identity includes indicators of economic status and power in the primary model.

Social identity theory, and its offshoots, would suggest an alternative perspective: that Whites expressing a racial identity are responding to political, cultural, and societal threats. While these threats are a bit more hard to define, there are a number of examples that demonstrate Whites are responsive to cultural or political changes that present as a threat. A common touchstone of Social Dominance Theory suggests that members of a racial group with the highest status are likely to find ways to maintain the racial hierarchy (Jim Sidanius and Felicia Pratto 2012). From this perspective, many argue that Whites in the United States have and continue focus their efforts on maintaining influence in our institutions so that they may continue to wield political influence (Rile Hayward 2013; lopez_White_2006?). For

example, Mutz (2018) finds little support for the claim that the 2016 Presidential Election – which support for Trump is associated with an expression of racial identity among Whites (Jardina, Kalmoe, and Gross 2021) – was a response to the economic effects of a globalizing economy and instead argues that it was a response to concerns about the cultural changes brought about by globalization and the racial-diversity it promotes. Others demonstrate that the behavioral manifestations of a White constituency in the United States was a reflection of the saliency of race in politics (Agadjanian and Lacy 2021).

A final example demonstrated that exposure to a story about discrimination about a White person lead individuals concerned with the racial hierarchy to report that Whites faced similar amounts of institutional racism as Blacks (Marshburn, Reinkensmeyer, and Knowles 2022); that is, these Whites moved away from a color-blind ideology of race and expressed a more race-conscious ideology of White grievance (Smith 2023). Others have made similar arguments through historical lenses by arguing that while race and class are highly correlated, but that the correlation is due to a pattern of using class to disenfranchise non-Whites (See Rile Hayward 2013). Others point to the many examples of our institutions in the United States that continue to make race a salient group by which we structure our thinking about who has status and power (Helms and Carter 1990; Dawson 1994; Rile Hayward 2013). This perspective fits with many arguments that the United States is not as class-conscious as they are race-conscious (Hajnal 2020).

Political versus economic threats

In this note, I am using a popular conceptualization of racial identity among Whites: that expression of it reflects homophily toward's one's own racial group (Ellemers, Spears, and Doosje 2002; **jardina_White_2019?**). As identity conceptualized this way may predict negative intergroup attitudes, it reflects a desire to find ways to find similarities rather than differences between one's self and other in-group members (Ellemers, Spears, and Doosje 2002). Identity is largely an elusive concept to operationalize (see Leach and Vliek 2008). Though there are implicit measures of White Political Identity (see **knowles_White_2005?**), the common and measure of White Political Identity is a response to the question, "How important is being White to your identity?" This measure captures a significant feature of an identity: the centrality or the importance of that identity to an individual (**jardina_White_2019?**). Though a rather rough measure of something as complex as identity, it has been shown to produce similar results to more complex measures of White Political Identity and holds a significant amount of face validity (**jardina_White_2019?**).

Threat is also quite difficult to measure directly. However, we can make a number of reasonable guesses about who may feel economic and political threat. There are two key things that threats affect. Status and power. Status refers to the respectability of the group whereas power refers to the influence of the group (Craig and Phillips 2023). Threat refers to either a manifestation of economic or political challenges to the current racial hierarchy. I do not distinguish between these two sources of threat as common survey measures are too crude to distinguish between how the threat manifests. Here, I am focusing on what types

of non-material threats activate White Political Identity in the context of politics and will, as a shorthand refer to political, cultural, and societal threats as political threats.

A reasonable approach to measuring economic threat is to measure the economic circumstances that White individuals find themselves in. We may expect that Whites who are facing bottom-up economic competition, will be those that experience the strongest desire to identify themselves with their racial group. As the dominant racial group in the United States, Whites that are unemployed, are surrounded by other Whites who are experiencing economic hardship and those who have limited capacity to switch careers are those that may be the most motivated to identify with the dominant racial group to defend Whites' influence and status in society (Bobo and Hutchings 1996). Therefore, measures of employment, finances, family finances, finances of those they know, and educational attainment all seem likely predictors of racial identity for Whites. This fits with measures that Dawson (1994) used to examine the influence of economics in Black Americans' identity. These measures also fit with Lindsay (2023) who found that many of these items predicted racial resentment among Whites.

Here I conceptualize of political threat as perceptions that politics and political institutions no longer primarily serves White people. Existing work demonstrates that Whites who express a desire to maintain the racial status quo with Whites on top are more likely to express the belief that Whites are discriminated against at similar levels as Blacks (Marshburn, Reinkensmeyer, and Knowles 2022). As Whiteness is often a central component of Whites' conceptualization of American society (see Green and Staerklé 2013), changes to "traditional American values" may reflect concern about changes to the influences of White values. Finally, a common finding is that expression of White Political Identity is heavily

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wrapped up in the perception that racial stratifications are by meritocratic means (Lowery et al. 2012). As members of a dominant social group, when given information that either threatens one's belief that their merits are earned or that their group operates as a way to maintain inequality, we expect lower levels of expression in identification with that group. The classic items of racial resentment construct capture these ideas in that they revolve around the idea that Blacks are not disadvantaged as the result of systematic oppression by Whites. Though many have often used racial resentment as a measure of prejudice which would be a possible outcome of White Political Identity, some make the compelling argument that it is distinct as a concept and operationalization (Davis and Wilson 2022).

Data

To examine whether Whites' attitudes expressing concern about political threats are more robust correlates than their perceptions of the economy, I use the 2012, 2016, and 2020 American National Election Studies (ANES). The studies are nationally representative questions that capture several questions that lend themselves to testing the relationship between economic and political concerns while also asking White respondents to report how important being White is to their identity.

Though I am using the more crude measure of White Political Identity and am limited in the predictors I can choose from, a larger concern is that the degree to which these threats may vary as a result of changes to the political landscape. Specifically, in 2008 the United States experienced a massive recession that lead hit the housing market quite hard. In 2012, the economy was still recovering. In 2016, Donald Trump became infamous for an election

where he made race and gender extremely salient (Banda and Cassese 2022). Finally, in 2020, Trump had been in office for four years with an improving economy. Each of these three years reflect a different context and may offer the opportunity to observe how economic and political threats operate differently.

Question wording for each of the items in the following models are included in Table 1 which is located in the Supplementary Materials. I include descriptive statistics for the measures in these samples in Table 2, Table 3, and Table 4 located in the Supplementary Information.

Evidence from a penalized regression

The primary contribution of this paper is to examine which, of several competing measures, of different types of threat may predict White Political Identity for individuals. As this requires an omnibus test, I elect to use a penalized regression. I provide a more detailed discussion of the reasons why I use an estimator with an L2 regularization parameter, often referred to as a LASSO model in the supplementary materials. In practice, the model applies a penalization term so predictors that have relatively fewer explanatory power have much smaller coefficients than the variables that do provide significant predictive power.

My measure of White Political Identity is ordinal. Therefore, I apply a ordered logistic link function. Though it creates a more complicated computational task, it is a more appropriate model specification given the available measure and my assumptions about the concept (Liddell and Kruschke 2018).

To account for potential problems stemming from missing data, I impute my data by using multiple imputation with chained equations (MICE) where the particular model I use is a

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random forest model to allow for more flexibility and to reduce model dependence (Buuren and Groothuis-Oudshoorn 2011; Marbach 2022).[1] I report the results of the model fitted using listwise deletion in the Supplementary Information.

Results

Figure 1 presents the estimates of my fitted ordinal models with the LASSO shrinkage prior.[2] These models are fit on 6 chains with 2000 iterations each. To examine the evidence of whether a particular predictor "matters" for predicting White political identity, I examine the estimated credible intervals, which report the probability that the true estimate falls within the estimated range. I construct these credible intervals by reporting estimates between the 2.5% and 97.5% quantiles. This means that for a given credible interval, there is a two-tailed 95% probability that the true value falls within that range. For values outside the range of the credible interval, it is relatively implausible that the given value is the true value.

Examining the figure, we see that none of the proxies for economic threat consistently correlate with White political identity; however there is at least one proxy of political threat that does. For economic threats, we see that when the economy was recovering from the recession and Obama was in Office, those who perceived that the economy was better off retrospectively and with a lower reported level of education were correlated with expressing a higher White Political Identity. However, when the economy was better and Trump was

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[1]I impute 10 datasets and simultaneously fit my Bayesian LASSO on each dataset and pool the results. Uncertainty reflected in my reported credible intervals not only reflects the uncertainty from one model, but my reported uncertainty also reflects the uncertainty generated from the imputation procedure. One drawback with this particular approach is that my normalized split-$\hat{R}$ will likely be greater than the widely recognized 1.01 cutoff that indicates model convergence due to the pooling of my multiply imputed datasets.

[2]The full tables of results are included in the Supplementary Information.
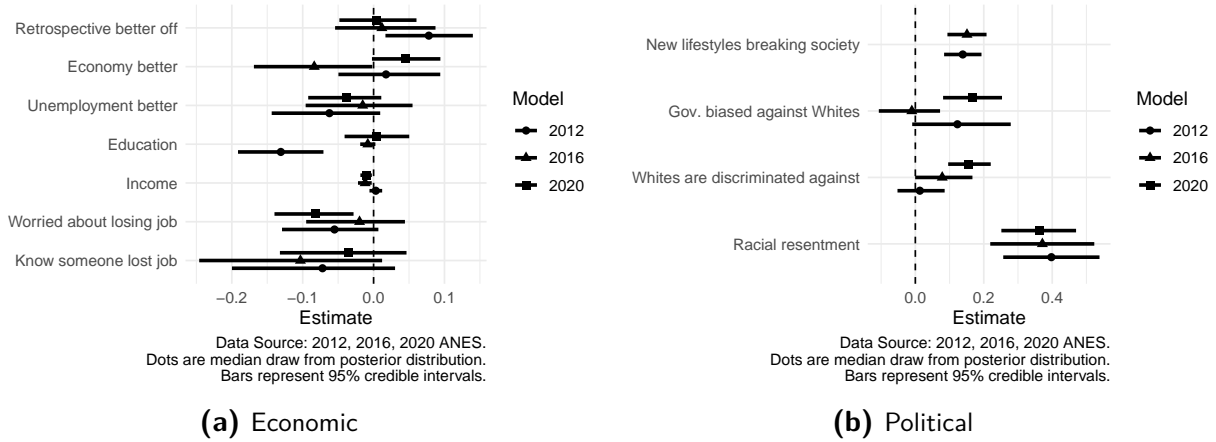
(a) Economic

(b) Political

Figure 1: Economic factors are weak predictors of White Political Identity

in office, we see that those less worried about losing a job were reported a higher White Political Identity.

For political threats, we see that in both instances where Obama was in the White House that those who reported being concerned with "new lifestyles" as well as those with a higher score on the racial resentment measures were associated with having higher White political identities. When Trump was in the White House, we see that those who felt that the government was biased against Whites, that Whites were discriminated against, and who scored higher on the racial resentment measures all reported higher levels of White political identity.

An additional question worth examining is that economic or political threat may appear differently for partisans and for female respondents. Evidence suggests that racial attitudes are guided by partisanship (Engelhardt 2021). Specifically, some evidence suggests that White Democrats are much more sensitive to their racial identity than White Republicans due to the higher amount of racial heterogeneity within the Democratic party (Pérez et al. 2022). This may mean for White Democrats that they have more exposure to intergroup competition

for power within the party (such as the choice to support Hillary Clinton versus Barack Obama) and may have higher White identification as a result. The second way that these threats may matter more or less for Whites is on the dimension of sex. Sex-based differences in economic influence and status remains quite high. We therefore may expect that female individuals are more sensitive to economic threats than their male counterparts. In addition to the omnibus model, I also include two additional models where I split the samples along the dimension of partisanship (including "leaners" in each) and on the dimension of sex.

(a) Female, Economic

(b) Female, Political

(c) Male, Economic

(d) Female, Economic

Figure 2: Economic factors are weak predictors of White Political Identity

We see in both Figure 2 and Figure 3 that indicators of economic and political threat do not have much substantial variation between male and female respondents and Republican
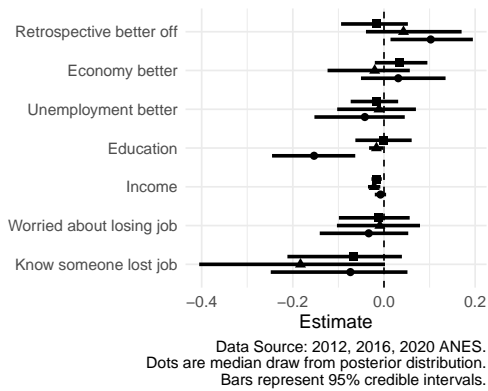
(a) Republican, Economic
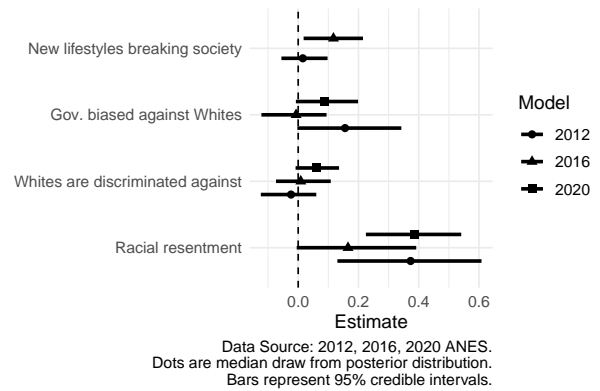
(b) Republican, Political
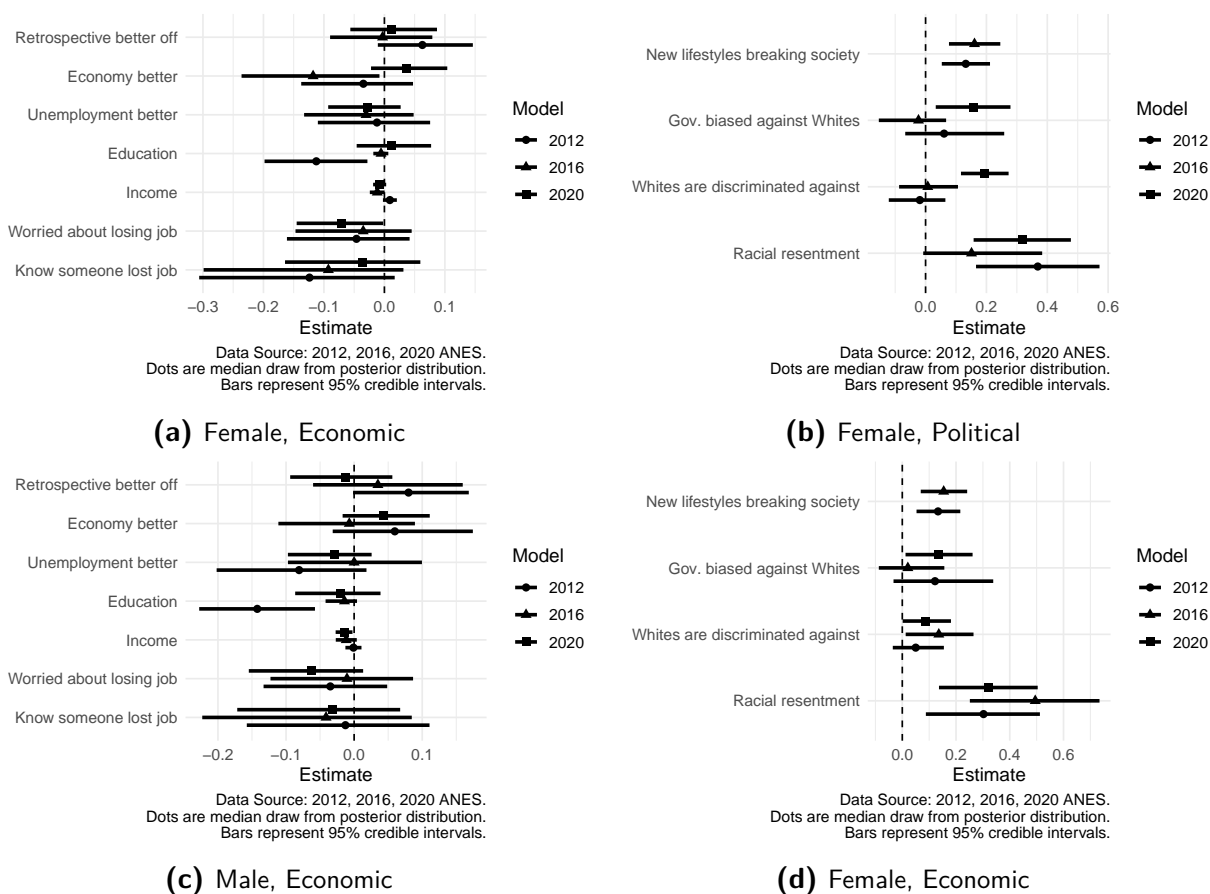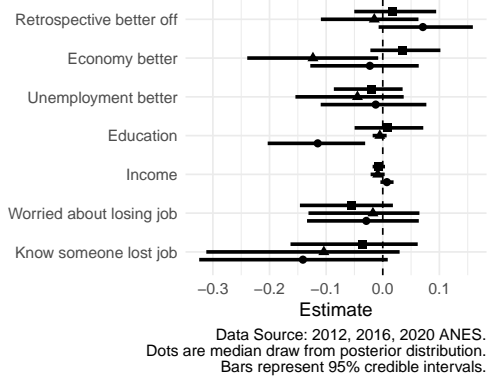

(c) Democrat, Economic
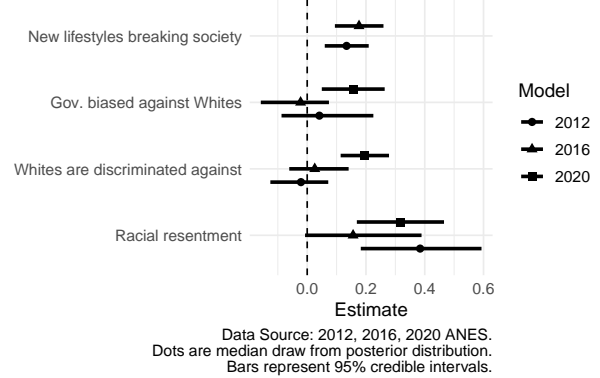
(d) Democrat, Economic

Figure 3: Economic factors are weak predictors of White Political Identity

and Democrat respondents. The full table of results for the model are included in Table 6, Table 9, Table 12, Table 7, Table 10, and Table 13 in the Supplimentary Materials.

Discussion and conclusions

Overall, these results suggest that common proxies of economic threat are at least inconsistent measures of White Political Identity. Even in a time where the economy is recovering from a collapse, more proxies of political threat seemed to predict White Political Identity. When a White president well-known for his penchance for racial dog-whistles takes office, we see support for the idea that White grievance politics was at a high as evidenced by those who felt that political institutions and that the direction of society was turning away from the racial status quo were those that reported their racial identity as more central to who they are.

There are a few important points that are illustrated here. First, suggestions that White political identity is something occuring for those who are most economically threatened appear to have weak theoretical and empirical backing when directly pitted against symbolic forms of threat. Second, when thinking about what is driving racial identity among Whites, evidence from this omnibus test suggests that it is more symbolic forms of threat as opposed to material.

These findings provide a direction for scholars to take when examining the factors driving Whites to take on a White political identity. While this particular analysis is not causal, it provides a basis for those wondering whether, when put together, economic or political threats are more fruitful to engender a rise in White political identity.

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Supplementary Information

Measures

Table 1: ANES Measures

Abbreviated question	ANES Coding
White Political Identity | How important is being White to your identity | 1 = Extremely important; 2 = Very important; 3 = Moderately important; 4 = A little important; 5 = Not at all important; <1 Missing, not asked, etc | 1 = Not	

Economics

Retrospective better off	How much better worse off than 1 year ago	1 = Much better; 2 = Somewhat better; 3 = The same; 4 = Somewhat worse; 5 = Much worse, < 1 Missing, not asked, etc	-2 = Much worse; -1 = Somewhat worse; 0 = The same; 1 = Somewhat better; 2 = Much better; NA = Missing, not asked, etc	2012, 2016, 2020
Economy better	U.S. economy better worse off than 1 year ago	1 = Much better; 2 = somewhat better; 3 = Stayed about the same, 4 = Somewhat worse; 5 = Much worse; < 1 Missing, not asked, etc	-2 = Much worse; -1 = Somewhat worse; 0 = The same; 1 = Somewhat better; 2 = Much better; NA = Missing, not asked, etc	2012, 2016, 2020

Unemployment better	Unemployment better or worse than 1 year ago	1 = Much better; 2 = somewhat better; 3 = Stayed about the same, 4 = Somewhat worse; 5 = Much worse; < 1 Missing, not asked, etc	-2 = Much worse; -1 = Somewhat worse; 0 = The same; 1 = Somewhat better; 2 = Much better; NA = Missing, not asked, etc	2012, 2016, 2020
Education	Educational attainment	1 = < than High school; 2 = High school; 3 = Some post-High school; 4 = Bachelor's degree; < 1 Missing, not asked, etc	1 = < than High school; 2 = High school; 3 = Some post-High school; 4 = Bachelor's degree; NA = Missing, not asked, etc	2012, 2020
Education (2016)	Educational attainment	See ANES codebook	See ANES codebook; NA = MIssing, not asked, etc	2016

Income	Total family income	See ANES codebook; < Missing, not asked, etc	See ANES codebook; NA = MIssing, not asked, etc	2012, 2016, 2020
Worried about losing job	How worried about losing job in near future	1 = Not at all; 2 = A little; 3 = Moderately; 4 = Very; 5 = Extremely; < 1 Missing, not asked, etc	-2 = Not at all; -1 = A little; 0 = Moderately; 1 = Very; 2 = Extremely	2012, 2016, 2020
Immigrants take jobs	How likely immigration will take away jobs	1 = Extremely; 2 = Very; 3 = Somewhat; 4 = Not at all; < 1 Missing, not asked, etc	1 = Not at all; 2 = Somewhat; 3 = Very; 4 = Extremely; NA = Missing, not asked, etc	2012, 2016, 2020

| Worried about family finances | Worry about family financial situation | 1 = Extremely; 2 = Very; 3 = Moderately; 4 = A little; 5 = Not at all; < 1 Missing, not asked, etc | 1 = Not at all, 2 = A little; 3 = Moderately; 4 = Very; 5 = Extremely; NA = Missing, not asked, etc | 2012, 2016, 2020 |
| Know someone lost job | Know someone who lost job | 1 = Someone lost job; 2 = No one lost job; < 1 Missing, not asked, etc | 0 = No one lost job; 1 = Someone lost job; NA = Missing, not asked, etc | 2012, 2016, 2020 |

Political

| New lifestyles breaking society | Newer lifestyles breaking down society | 1 = Agree strongly; 2 = Agree somewhat; 3 = Neither; 4 = Disagree somewhat; 5 = Disagree strongly; < 1 Missing, not asked, etc | -2 = Disagree strongly; -1 = Disagree somewhat; 0 = Neither, 1 = Agree somewhat; 2 = Agree strongly | 2012, 2016 |

Government biased against Whites	Does the Administration favor Blacks or Whites (2012 only) Does the Federal Gov treat Blacks or Whites Better	1 = Favors Whites; 2 = Favors Blacks; 3 = Treats both the same; < 1 Missing, not asked, etc	-1 = Favors Whites; 0 = Treats both the same; 1 = Favors Blacks; NA = Missing, not asked, etc	2012, 2016, 2020
Whites influence politics	How much influence do Whites have on U.S. politics	1 = Too much; 2 = Just about right; 3 = Too little; < 1 Missing, not asked, etc	-1 = Too little; 0 = Just about right; 1 = Too much; NA = Missing, not asked, etc	2012, 2016, 2020

Whites are discriminated against	Discrimination in U.S. against Whites	1 = A great deal; 2 = A lot; 3 = A moderate amount; 4 = A little; 5 = None at all; < 1 Missing, not asked, etc	1 = None at all; 2 = A little; 3 = A moderate amount; 4 = A lot; 5 = A great deal; NA = Missing, not asked, etc	2012, 2016, 2020
Controls				
Racial Resentment	Standard, 4-item, battery	5-point Likert scale	Avg of four questions; NA = Missing, not asked, etc	2012, 2016, 2020

| Party ID | Standard battery | 1 = Strong Dem; 2 = De; 3 = Leans Dem; 4 = Independent; 5 = Leans Rep; 6 = Rep; 7 = Strong Rep; < 1 Missing, not asked, etc | 1 = Strong Democrat; 2 = Democrat; 3 = Leans Democrat; 4 = Independent/Neither; 5 = Leans Republican; 6 = Republican; 7 = Strong Republican; < 1 Missing, not asked, etc | 2012, 2016, 2020 |
| Female | Sex of respondent | 1 = Male, 2 = Female; < 1 Missing, not asked, etc | 0 = Male, 1 = Female; NA = Missing, not asked, etc | 2012, 2016, 2020 |

Table 2: 2012 ANES Descriptive Statistics

	Unique (#)	Missing (%)	Mean	SD	Min	Median	Max
White Political Identity	6	7	2.8	1.3	1.0	3.0	5.0
Retrospective better off	6	1	−0.2	1.2	−2.0	−1.0	2.0
Economy better	6	1	−0.3	1.1	−2.0	0.0	2.0
Unemployment better	6	1	−0.3	1.1	−2.0	0.0	2.0
Education	6	1	3.1	1.1	1.0	3.0	5.0
Income	29	3	14.9	8.1	1.0	15.0	28.0
Worried about losing job	6	45	−1.2	1.0	−2.0	−1.0	2.0
Worried about family finances	6	7	2.7	1.2	1.0	3.0	5.0
Know someone lost job	3	7	0.4	0.5	0.0	0.0	1.0
New lifestyles breaking tradition	6	7	0.5	1.3	−2.0	1.0	2.0
Government biased against Whites	4	8	0.3	0.5	−1.0	0.0	1.0
Whites influence politics	4	7	0.1	0.5	−1.0	0.0	1.0
Whites discrimminated against	6	7	2.2	0.9	1.0	2.0	5.0
Racial resentment	18	7	0.0	0.5	−2.0	0.0	2.0
Party ID	8	0	4.2	2.1	1.0	4.0	7.0
Female	2	0	0.5	0.5	0.0	1.0	1.0

NAs are included in Unique column.

Data source: 2012 American National Election Study, unweighted.

Descriptive statistics

Table 3: 2016 ANES Descriptive Statistics

	Unique (#)	Missing (%)	Mean	SD	Min	Median	Max
White Political Identity	6	15	2.6	1.3	1.0	3.0	5.0
Retrospective better off	6	0	0.0	1.0	−2.0	0.0	2.0
Economy better	6	0	−0.2	1.0	−2.0	0.0	2.0
Unemployment better	6	0	0.0	1.0	−2.0	0.0	2.0
Education	18	0	11.9	7.1	1.0	11.0	95.0
Income	29	4	16.3	7.9	1.0	17.0	28.0
Worried about losing job	6	36	−1.3	1.0	−2.0	−2.0	2.0
Worried about family finances	6	14	2.6	1.2	1.0	3.0	5.0
Know someone lost job	3	13	0.4	0.5	0.0	0.0	1.0
New lifestyles breaking tradition	6	14	0.3	1.4	−2.0	1.0	2.0
Government biased against Whites	4	15	−0.1	0.7	−1.0	0.0	1.0
Whites influence politics	4	15	0.2	0.5	−1.0	0.0	1.0
Whites discrimminated against	5	18	2.0	0.8	1.0	2.0	4.0
Racial resentment	18	14	0.0	0.5	−2.0	0.0	2.0
Party ID	8	0	4.2	2.1	1.0	4.0	7.0
Female	3	1	0.5	0.5	0.0	1.0	1.0

NAs are included in Unique column.

Data source: 2016 American National Election Study, unweighted.

Table 4: 2020 ANES Descriptive Statistics

	Unique (#)	Missing (%)	Mean	SD	Min	Median	Max
White Political Identity	6	11	2.4	1.3	1.0	2.0	5.0
Retrospective better off	6	0	0.1	1.0	−2.0	0.0	2.0
Economy better	6	0	−0.7	1.3	−2.0	−1.0	2.0
Unemployment better	6	0	−1.1	1.3	−2.0	−2.0	2.0
Education	6	1	3.4	1.1	1.0	3.0	5.0
Income	23	3	12.3	6.6	1.0	13.0	22.0
Worried about losing job	6	33	−1.3	1.1	−2.0	−2.0	2.0
Worried about family finances	6	0	2.1	1.1	1.0	2.0	5.0
Know someone lost job	3	0	0.4	0.5	0.0	0.0	1.0
Government biased against Whites	4	12	−0.3	0.7	−1.0	0.0	1.0
Whites influence politics	4	12	0.3	0.6	−1.0	0.0	1.0
Whites discrimminated against	6	11	2.1	1.0	1.0	2.0	5.0
Racial resentment	18	10	0.0	0.5	−2.0	0.0	2.0
Party ID	8	0	4.2	2.3	1.0	4.0	7.0
Female	3	0	0.5	0.5	0.0	1.0	1.0

NAs are included in Unique column.

Data source: 2020 American National Election Study, unweighted.

Model

The literature surveyed above suggests that there are a small number of variables that do predict White political identity, and there are many others that have no effect. Imagining an assumed hypothesis about the distribution of coefficients, this implies that the L2 regularization parameter equals 0. This is because the L2 regularization parameter shrinks coefficients asymptotically toward zero. The L1 regularization parameter, however, does allow for a shrinkage parameter to pull coefficients to 0. Given this, it suggests that the more appropriate model to capture this debate would be the LASSO penalized regression.

Rather than use the classical LASSO with Leave One Out Cross Validation (LOOCV), I take advantage of a type of Markov Chain Monte Carlos (MCMC) called a Hamiltonian Monte Carlo for my LASSO due to a number of benefits outlined by Van Erp, Oberski, and Mulder (2019). As the literature leads me to hold *apriori* expectations about the distribution of predictors that meaningfully effect White political identity, I specify a Laplace distribution as my prior density function. I suspect that there are a large number of included predictors that have null effects and a relatively smaller proportion of predictors that *do* have an effect but am relatively unsure about how large their coefficients might be. This characterization of my prior fits with that of an L2 Shrinkage parameter specified in a LASSO regression. As I am not using LOOCV, I am able to interpret the results of the model through my credible intervals.

Full tables of results

Table 5: Predictors of White Identity in 2012

	2012 LWD	2012
Economic		
Retrospective better off	0.101	0.078
	[0.013, 0.187]	[0.017, 0.140]
Economy better	0.003	0.018
	[−0.088, 0.095]	[−0.050, 0.094]
Unemployment better	−0.070	−0.062
	[−0.180, 0.025]	[−0.144, 0.009]
Education	−0.154	−0.131
	[−0.241, −0.068]	[−0.191, −0.071]
Income	0.004	0.003
	[−0.007, 0.017]	[−0.006, 0.012]
Worried about losing job	−0.060	−0.055
	[−0.151, 0.017]	[−0.129, 0.007]
Worried about family finances	0.083	0.050
	[−0.001, 0.172]	[−0.006, 0.111]
Know someone lost job	−0.032	−0.072
	[−0.193, 0.087]	[−0.200, 0.030]
Non-material		
New lifestyles breaking society	0.115	0.139
	[0.036, 0.191]	[0.084, 0.193]
Gov. biased against Whites	0.050	0.123
	[−0.078, 0.238]	[−0.009, 0.279]
Whites are discriminated against	0.042	0.013
	[−0.039, 0.144]	[−0.052, 0.086]
Racial resentment	0.271	0.398
	[0.070, 0.479]	[0.257, 0.538]
Demographics		
Party ID	−0.017	−0.028
	[−0.066, 0.027]	[−0.064, 0.006]
Female	0.140	0.077
	[−0.009, 0.319]	[−0.024, 0.201]
Thresholds		
Threshold 1	−1.167	−1.412
	[−1.678, −0.641]	[−1.769, −1.049]
Threshold 2	−0.166	−0.469
	[−0.682, 0.357]	[−0.822, −0.107]
Threshold 3	1.028	0.729
	[0.508, 1.557]	[0.379, 1.090]
Threshold 4	2.175	1.982
	[1.642, 2.720]	[1.622, 2.355]

Median estimate from fitted model with 6 chains and 2000 iterations.

95 percent credible intervals in brackets.

Data source: 2012 American National Election Study.

Table 6: Predictors of White Identity in 2012 conditional on gender

	2012 Female	2012 Male
Economic		
Retrospective better off	0.063	0.080
	[−0.011, 0.146]	[−0.002, 0.168]
Economy better	−0.035	0.060
	[−0.138, 0.047]	[−0.031, 0.174]
Unemployment better	−0.012	−0.081
	[−0.110, 0.076]	[−0.202, 0.018]
Education	−0.113	−0.142
	[−0.198, −0.028]	[−0.228, −0.058]
Income	0.009	−0.001
	[−0.002, 0.021]	[−0.013, 0.011]
Worried about losing job	−0.046	−0.035
	[−0.161, 0.042]	[−0.133, 0.049]
Worried about family finances	0.005	0.101
	[−0.063, 0.079]	[0.014, 0.191]
Know someone lost job	−0.124	−0.013
	[−0.306, 0.017]	[−0.158, 0.111]
Non-material		
New lifestyles breaking society	0.132	0.133
	[0.053, 0.212]	[0.053, 0.216]
Gov. biased against Whites	0.061	0.122
	[−0.067, 0.258]	[−0.033, 0.338]
Whites are discriminated against	−0.019	0.050
	[−0.121, 0.065]	[−0.035, 0.155]
Racial resentment	0.369	0.302
	[0.166, 0.572]	[0.088, 0.512]
Demographics		
Party ID	−0.015	−0.025
	[−0.064, 0.028]	[−0.076, 0.021]
Thresholds		
Threshold 1	−1.581	−1.276
	[−2.059, −1.105]	[−1.785, −0.752]
Threshold 2	−0.620	−0.342
	[−1.090, −0.142]	[−0.851, 0.188]
Threshold 3	0.570	0.862
	[0.101, 1.054]	[0.358, 1.399]
Threshold 4	1.860	2.065
	[1.380, 2.350]	[1.554, 2.601]

Median estimate from fitted model with 6 chains and 2000 iterations.

95 percent credible intervals in brackets.

Data source: 2012 American National Election Study.

Table 7: Predictors of White Identity in 2012 conditional on partisanship

	2012 Republican	2012 Democrat
Economic		
Retrospective better off	0.103	0.071
	[0.014, 0.195]	[−0.007, 0.159]
Economy better	0.031	−0.023
	[−0.051, 0.135]	[−0.128, 0.063]
Unemployment better	−0.042	−0.012
	[−0.153, 0.046]	[−0.110, 0.077]
Education	−0.153	−0.115
	[−0.246, −0.063]	[−0.203, −0.031]
Income	−0.008	0.007
	[−0.020, 0.005]	[−0.004, 0.019]
Worried about losing job	−0.033	−0.029
	[−0.141, 0.053]	[−0.134, 0.064]
Worried about family finances	0.059	0.000
	[−0.016, 0.149]	[−0.070, 0.073]
Know someone lost job	−0.074	−0.141
	[−0.248, 0.051]	[−0.324, 0.009]
Non-material		
New lifestyles breaking society	0.015	0.134
	[−0.056, 0.097]	[0.060, 0.209]
Gov. biased against Whites	0.156	0.041
	[−0.003, 0.342]	[−0.087, 0.225]
Whites are discriminated against	−0.024	−0.021
	[−0.124, 0.060]	[−0.125, 0.072]
Racial resentment	0.373	0.384
	[0.130, 0.608]	[0.182, 0.593]
Demographics		
Female	0.025	0.000
	[−0.094, 0.178]	[−0.342, 0.335]
Thresholds		
Threshold 1	−1.626	−1.604
	[−2.151, −1.093]	[−2.187, −1.029]
Threshold 2	−0.789	−0.646
	[−1.301, −0.263]	[−1.221, −0.071]
Threshold 3	0.323	0.542
	[−0.194, 0.850]	[−0.033, 1.119]
Threshold 4	1.512	1.839
	[0.984, 2.042]	[1.264, 2.414]

Median estimate from fitted model with 6 chains and 2000 iterations.

95 percent credible intervals in brackets.

Data source: 2012 American National Election Study.

Table 8: Predictors of White Identity in 2016

	2016 LWD	2016
Economic		
Retrospective better off	0.002	0.012
	[−0.078, 0.088]	[−0.054, 0.087]
Economy better	−0.074	−0.084
	[−0.190, 0.014]	[−0.169, −0.002]
Unemployment better	−0.036	−0.015
	[−0.144, 0.043]	[−0.096, 0.055]
Education	−0.015	−0.008
	[−0.035, 0.002]	[−0.019, 0.003]
Income	−0.004	−0.012
	[−0.017, 0.008]	[−0.022, −0.003]
Worried about losing job	−0.023	−0.020
	[−0.115, 0.044]	[−0.095, 0.044]
Worried about family finances	0.026	0.023
	[−0.038, 0.117]	[−0.039, 0.088]
Know someone lost job	−0.009	−0.103
	[−0.138, 0.089]	[−0.246, 0.012]
Non-material		
New lifestyles breaking society	0.145	0.151
	[0.066, 0.224]	[0.094, 0.208]
Gov. biased against Whites	0.009	−0.010
	[−0.086, 0.111]	[−0.107, 0.072]
Whites are discriminated against	0.062	0.079
	[−0.021, 0.179]	[−0.001, 0.167]
Racial resentment	0.173	0.371
	[−0.002, 0.391]	[0.219, 0.523]
Demographics		
Party ID	0.034	0.022
	[−0.013, 0.088]	[−0.013, 0.060]
Female	0.030	0.071
	[−0.066, 0.188]	[−0.028, 0.201]
Thresholds		
Threshold 1	−0.695	−0.849
	[−1.200, −0.133]	[−1.237, −0.459]
Threshold 2	0.166	−0.072
	[−0.328, 0.729]	[−0.454, 0.319]
Threshold 3	1.360	1.083
	[0.850, 1.938]	[0.705, 1.475]
Threshold 4	2.500	2.290
	[1.983, 3.087]	[1.892, 2.701]

Median estimate from fitted model with 6 chains and 2000 iterations.

95 percent credible intervals in brackets.

Data source: 2016 American National Election Study.

Table 9: Predictors of White Identity in 2016 conditional on gender

	2016 Female	2016 Male
Economic		
Retrospective better off	−0.003	0.035
	[−0.090, 0.079]	[−0.060, 0.160]
Economy better	−0.118	−0.007
	[−0.236, −0.008]	[−0.111, 0.089]
Unemployment better	−0.030	0.000
	[−0.133, 0.048]	[−0.097, 0.100]
Education	−0.006	−0.014
	[−0.018, 0.006]	[−0.042, 0.004]
Income	−0.012	−0.012
	[−0.024, 0.000]	[−0.027, 0.004]
Worried about losing job	−0.035	−0.010
	[−0.147, 0.045]	[−0.123, 0.087]
Worried about family finances	0.013	0.036
	[−0.055, 0.103]	[−0.041, 0.133]
Know someone lost job	−0.093	−0.041
	[−0.299, 0.031]	[−0.223, 0.085]
Non-material		
New lifestyles breaking society	0.161	0.154
	[0.077, 0.246]	[0.069, 0.241]
Gov. biased against Whites	−0.023	0.021
	[−0.154, 0.067]	[−0.087, 0.156]
Whites are discriminated against	0.007	0.136
	[−0.087, 0.106]	[0.013, 0.265]
Racial resentment	0.151	0.495
	[−0.008, 0.383]	[0.251, 0.734]
Demographics		
Party ID	0.033	0.007
	[−0.014, 0.086]	[−0.042, 0.059]
Thresholds		
Threshold 1	−1.003	−0.792
	[−1.457, −0.508]	[−1.390, −0.210]
Threshold 2	−0.221	−0.013
	[−0.674, 0.273]	[−0.602, 0.568]
Threshold 3	0.926	1.175
	[0.467, 1.422]	[0.582, 1.767]
Threshold 4	2.126	2.393
	[1.658, 2.625]	[1.786, 2.999]

Median estimate from fitted model with 6 chains and 2000 iterations.
95 percent credible intervals in brackets.
Data source: 2016 American National Election Study.

Table 10: Predictors of White Identity in 2016 conditional on partisanship

	2016 Republican	2016 Democrat
Economic		
Retrospective better off	0.043	−0.015
	[−0.040, 0.170]	[−0.109, 0.063]
Economy better	−0.020	−0.123
	[−0.124, 0.057]	[−0.239, −0.008]
Unemployment better	−0.011	−0.045
	[−0.103, 0.070]	[−0.154, 0.037]
Education	−0.017	−0.005
	[−0.033, −0.002]	[−0.018, 0.007]
Income	−0.021	−0.009
	[−0.035, −0.008]	[−0.021, 0.003]
Worried about losing job	−0.009	−0.017
	[−0.103, 0.079]	[−0.131, 0.065]
Worried about family finances	0.039	0.008
	[−0.030, 0.144]	[−0.062, 0.084]
Know someone lost job	−0.183	−0.104
	[−0.405, 0.002]	[−0.312, 0.030]
Non-material		
New lifestyles breaking society	0.117	0.176
	[0.018, 0.215]	[0.094, 0.260]
Gov. biased against Whites	−0.007	−0.022
	[−0.122, 0.094]	[−0.158, 0.074]
Whites are discriminated against	0.009	0.026
	[−0.074, 0.108]	[−0.061, 0.141]
Racial resentment	0.165	0.156
	[−0.005, 0.392]	[−0.007, 0.389]
Demographics		
Female	0.055	0.000
	[−0.053, 0.255]	[−0.262, 0.259]
Thresholds		
Threshold 1	−1.446	−1.093
	[−1.921, −0.942]	[−1.583, −0.563]
Threshold 2	−0.721	−0.309
	[−1.189, −0.215]	[−0.794, 0.215]
Threshold 3	0.382	0.836
	[−0.087, 0.892]	[0.350, 1.361]
Threshold 4	1.600	2.026
	[1.133, 2.123]	[1.532, 2.569]

Median estimate from fitted model with 6 chains and 2000 iterations.

95 percent credible intervals in brackets.

Data source: 2016 American National Election Study.

Table 11: Predictors of White Political Identity in 2020

	2020 LWD	2020
Economic		
Retrospective better off	0.010	0.005
	[−0.054, 0.075]	[−0.048, 0.061]
Economy better	0.107	0.044
	[0.045, 0.171]	[−0.002, 0.094]
Unemployment better	−0.061	−0.038
	[−0.124, 0.000]	[−0.092, 0.011]
Education	0.025	0.004
	[−0.030, 0.089]	[−0.041, 0.050]
Income	−0.008	−0.011
	[−0.019, 0.002]	[−0.019, −0.002]
Worried about losing job	−0.076	−0.082
	[−0.143, −0.010]	[−0.140, −0.028]
Worried about family finances	0.027	0.006
	[−0.035, 0.099]	[−0.044, 0.059]
Know someone lost job	0.000	−0.035
	[−0.107, 0.103]	[−0.132, 0.046]
Non-material		
Gov. biased against Whites	0.136	0.166
	[0.027, 0.248]	[0.081, 0.253]
Whites are discriminated against	0.193	0.156
	[0.114, 0.267]	[0.096, 0.220]
Racial resentment	0.204	0.361
	[0.057, 0.359]	[0.251, 0.470]
Demographics		
Party ID	0.023	0.020
	[−0.011, 0.060]	[−0.006, 0.047]
Female	0.298	0.223
	[0.172, 0.424]	[0.126, 0.320]
Thresholds		
Threshold 1	0.218	−0.129
	[−0.193, 0.631]	[−0.449, 0.194]
Threshold 2	1.136	0.721
	[0.725, 1.551]	[0.403, 1.044]
Threshold 3	2.412	1.887
	[1.996, 2.836]	[1.569, 2.212]
Threshold 4	3.561	3.064
	[3.123, 4.003]	[2.732, 3.400]

Median estimate from fitted model with 6 chains and 2000 iterations.

95 percent credible intervals in brackets.

Data source: 2020 American National Election Study.

Table 12: Predictors of White Identity in 2020 conditional on gender

	2020 Female	2020 Male
Economic		
Retrospective better off	0.012	−0.013
	[−0.056, 0.087]	[−0.094, 0.056]
Economy better	0.036	0.042
	[−0.022, 0.104]	[−0.017, 0.111]
Unemployment better	−0.028	−0.030
	[−0.093, 0.027]	[−0.097, 0.026]
Education	0.012	−0.019
	[−0.046, 0.077]	[−0.087, 0.039]
Income	−0.008	−0.015
	[−0.019, 0.003]	[−0.027, −0.002]
Worried about losing job	−0.071	−0.063
	[−0.145, −0.002]	[−0.155, 0.013]
Worried about family finances	0.010	−0.006
	[−0.049, 0.077]	[−0.081, 0.065]
Know someone lost job	−0.037	−0.032
	[−0.164, 0.059]	[−0.172, 0.068]
Non-material		
Gov. biased against Whites	0.156	0.134
	[0.033, 0.279]	[0.012, 0.262]
Whites are discriminated against	0.194	0.085
	[0.116, 0.273]	[0.001, 0.181]
Racial resentment	0.319	0.320
	[0.158, 0.478]	[0.137, 0.504]
Party ID	0.007	0.049
	[−0.027, 0.042]	[0.005, 0.092]
Demographics		
Threshold 1	−0.305	−0.316
	[−0.709, 0.116]	[−0.760, 0.121]
Thresholds		
Threshold 2	0.549	0.542
	[0.146, 0.968]	[0.097, 0.981]
Threshold 3	1.746	1.648
	[1.337, 2.168]	[1.198, 2.093]
Threshold 4	2.992	2.734
	[2.573, 3.430]	[2.275, 3.190]

Median estimate from fitted model with 6 chains and 2000 iterations.
95 percent credible intervals in brackets.
Data source: 2020 American National Election Study.

Table 13: Predictors of White Identity in 2012 conditional on partisanship

	2020 Republican	2020 Democrat
Economic		
Retrospective better off	−0.016	0.016
	[−0.094, 0.052]	[−0.050, 0.094]
Economy better	0.033	0.036
	[−0.020, 0.095]	[−0.022, 0.102]
Unemployment better	−0.017	−0.020
	[−0.073, 0.031]	[−0.086, 0.035]
Education	−0.001	0.009
	[−0.063, 0.061]	[−0.050, 0.072]
Income	−0.016	−0.007
	[−0.028, −0.005]	[−0.018, 0.004]
Worried about losing job	−0.013	−0.055
	[−0.099, 0.056]	[−0.146, 0.018]
Worried about family finances	0.042	0.013
	[−0.026, 0.124]	[−0.052, 0.086]
Know someone lost job	−0.066	−0.035
	[−0.212, 0.039]	[−0.163, 0.062]
Non-material		
Gov. biased against Whites	0.088	0.157
	[−0.008, 0.199]	[0.050, 0.264]
Whites are discriminated against	0.059	0.195
	[−0.009, 0.136]	[0.114, 0.278]
Racial resentment	0.385	0.317
	[0.225, 0.541]	[0.169, 0.466]
Female	0.130	0.000
	[0.003, 0.269]	[−0.321, 0.314]
Demographics		
Threshold 1	−0.585	−0.350
	[−0.951, −0.195]	[−0.830, 0.156]
Thresholds		
Threshold 2	0.137	0.497
	[−0.229, 0.523]	[0.017, 1.007]
Threshold 3	1.195	1.701
	[0.827, 1.583]	[1.223, 2.219]
Threshold 4	2.346	2.937
	[1.966, 2.747]	[2.443, 3.470]

Median estimate from fitted model with 6 chains and 2000 iterations.
95 percent credible intervals in brackets.
Data source: 2020 American National Election Study.