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Not absent, just different:

The implications of gender on white's racial attitudes

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ABSTRACT Are common measures of racial animus and racial identity sufficient to detect gendered differences? The existing literature on gendered political socialization suggests that a number of predictors for racial attitudes, and they way they are expressed, vary depending on if one identifies as a man or a woman. As these precursors to racial attitudes vary on gender, we should expect that the ways in which men and women express their racial attitudes may vary as well. Without accounting for this variation in our measures of in-and-out-group racial attitudes, we are likely missing important information about how racial attitudes vary between self-identifying men and women. In this project, we argue that current conceptualizations and measures of racial animus and racial identity are strongly correlated with common outcomes to gendered differences in political socialization. We warn that this may lead to a misunderstanding of a gender gap in racial attitudes when we conceptualize those racial attitudes in one form and not the other. We first present data from the American National Election Study that demonstrates the strong correlation between gender and one's score on racial animus and white political identity. Then, we present a pre-analysis plan for an original survey to capture each item response to predict the gender of the respondent.

KEYWORDS white identity; racial attitudes; gender; elite messaging

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Introduction

What we learn in our adolescence and childhood often have long-term impacts on our political attitudes throughout adulthood (see Sapiro, 2004). This socialization not only influences views on taxation, but also on attitudes about race (see Sears & Brown, 2013). This socialization is not homogenous however. Women are often taught about politics differently. Women are often taught that politics is not a domain where they can manage pressures to remain feminine (Schneider & Bos, 2018), be successful in politics, and that it is not built for them (bos_et-al_20201_apsr).

We argue that one important outcome of the differences in the political socialization of men and women is differences in how White men and women express their racial attitudes. As gender identity moderates expression of social dominance orientation (Wilson & Liu, 2003), we should expect that expressions of in-and-out-group racial attitudes appear differently. We do not argue that there is a gender gap in racial attitudes, but rather that differences in socialization among White men and women lead to different ways in which racial attitudes are expressed between those who identify as a man or a woman. Specifically, we predict that White women express racial attitudes that are oriented more communally whereby they express their racial attitudes through in-group oriented racial identification and White men express it through out-group oriented racial animus.

Our argument implies that common measures of racial attitudes are highly correlated with gender as a result of underlying differences in what individuals were taught as “appropriate” for their gender. After elaborating on our argument and defining these concepts, we use the American National Election Study to establish correlations between common measures of racial identity and White political identity with gender identification. We then present a pre-analysis plan to collect

original survey data where we adjust common batteries for racial attitudes to include and exclude items that load onto Social Dominance Orientation. The implication of our project is that we must be careful about making claims about the differences in racial attitudes along the dimension of gender if we do not conceptualize or measure racial attitudes in a way that neutralize underlying differences in political socialization among men and women.

Conceptualizing social dominance orientation and racial attitudes

Social dominance orientation is conceptualized as an expression of prejudice with the functional goal of maintaining social order or hierarchy (see Levin et al., 2002). It means that those who express racial prejudice often do so with the goal of maintaining the societal status quo. This concept is distinct from right wing authoritarianism which is conceptualized as a desire for traditional views to act as an authority for how society functions (see Duckitt & Sibley, 2010).

Both social dominance orientation and right-wing authoritarianism explain individuals' racial attitudes (Kteily et al., 2011). However, social dominance orientation often moderates racial prejudice when faced with groups that are both culturally different and economically competitive, whereas right wing authoritarianism moderates attitudes toward groups that are culturally different (Duckitt & Sibley, 2010). In terms of attitudes toward immigrant groups, those high on social dominance orientation are less supportive of immigration to their own country, whereas those high in right wing authoritarianism are unsupportive of immigration more generally (Craig & Richeson, 2014).

Common conceptualizations of racial attitudes in political science are often depicted as out-

group oriented versus in-group oriented (Huddy, 2012). Out-group oriented attitudes are expressed as holding negative stereotypes and prejudice against racial groups not part of your own (Blumer, 1958) whereas in-group oriented racial attitudes reflect a willingness to identify with a racial group and a concern for the relative social positioning of one’s racial group (Huddy, 2012).

In political science, the two common measures for racial attitudes are either through a variation of the racial resentment scale, which reflects one’s support of racial stereotypes and justification of Whites’ relative racial status in American society (Kinder & Sanders, 1996). White political identity is a popular measure of Whites’ willingness to identify with other whites, view their White identity as relevant to politics, and express concern for Whites’ relative racial positioning in society (Jardina, 2019).

The American National Election Study includes a modified version of the racial resentment battery and a battery used by Jardina (2019) for white political identity is in a pilot study. However, we use what is available in the 2020 American National Election Study. The wording used for these batteries are included in Table 1.

Table 1: Common measures of racial resentment and white political identity

	Items
Racial resentment	<hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irish, Italian, Jewish and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors. • Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class. • Over the past few years, blacks have gotten less than they deserve. • It’s really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if blacks would only try harder they could be just as well off as whites

	Items
	• How important is being white to your identity?
White	
political	
identity	

We believe these items to appeal differently to white men and women based on gender-based differences in social dominance orientation. The measure of racial resentment in the American National Election Study appears to reflect desire to maintain the racial hierarchy and to engage in system justification for Black American's mistreatment. System justification is commonly associated with social dominance orientation attitudes as system legitimizing beliefs are often a reflection of beliefs that the current system creating this hierarchy is not only justified but that it also should not be changed (see Levin et al., 1998, 2002). The measures for white political identity, on the other hand, are much less focused on capturing beliefs in systems establishing hierarchy, but rather is more focused on the communal well-being of the racial group. In the realm of politics, gender stereotypes often presume that women are much more communal, less combative, and the socialization of women to buy into those stereotypes often appear in politics (see Conroy & Green, 2020; Lay et al., 2021; Wolak, 2022; Wolak & McDevitt, 2011). In the following section, we outline the mechanism through which we believe these differences arise. We believe, however, that these concepts and measures capture differences in social dominance orientation and not just whether one expresses their racial attitudes through an in-or-out-group framework.

How racial attitudes may be expressed differently based on gender

The strong correlation between common measures of racial attitudes and gender

A pre-analysis plan

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- Q: How can we move the literature of political socialization forward? What are some stereotypes of the literature?
- Argues: - There are three key arguments: 1. There should be a more comparative field of political socialization 2. We should reconsider how relevant childhood politics is 3. What is the importance of understanding the origins of political preferences - The field has two approaches: - A macro-level: where socialization inculcate's appropriate norms and practices in citizens - Micro level: the patterns and processes by which individuals engage in political development and learning - Many scholars think little about children's political attitudes and engagement, chalking it up to naive and to copying parents. There is some work that is challenging this argument by showing that some children hold some pretty jaded views as a result of exposure to these views from parents. There is also some work that shows that children are actually encouraged to participate in political deliberation in some cultures. This can help with the learning and socialization process.
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- Q: What does the literature say about where the heterogeneity in social learning on things like prejudice, partisanship, civic engagement come from? Argues: - While traditionally scholars have thought of family transmission being significant for social learning, some argues that it is not as dominant of a role. - Early socialization is often

not a sufficient condition for predicting attitudes, you must also examine the role of exogenous events in generating a generational collective memory and examine how those effects interact with prior attitudes to shift views. - Racial prejudice tends to develop later than in-group preference. Children tend to prefer playmates that look similar to them and are often neutral to other racial groups. Once they get near the pre-teen years, that's when some negative views start to really take form. Before that, they are either neutral or they root their negative attitudes in physical characteristics but don't really hold stereotypes based on abstract views.

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