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Cultivating Color-blindness?: The Impact of TV-viewing, Racial Policy Reasoning, and Colorblind Racism on Opposition toward Affirmative Action Policy

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CULTIVATING COLOR-BLINDNESS?: THE IMPACT OF TV-VIEWING, RACIAL
POLICY REASONING, AND COLORBLIND RACISM ON OPPOSITION TOWARD
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY

A Thesis Presented

by

CARMELLA NICOLE STODDARD

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
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Communication

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ABSTRACT

CULTIVATING COLOR-BLINDNESS?: THE IMPACT OF TV-VIEWING, RACIAL POLICY REASONING, AND COLORBLIND RACISM ON OPPOSITION TOWARD AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY

SEPTEMBER 2015

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I examine the effect of television viewing and ideological orientations associated with “modern” racism such as minimization of the impact of racial discrimination and individual attribution on opposition toward preferential hiring of Blacks. Using cross-sectional General Social Survey (GSS) responses from U.S. adults between 2004 and 2010, I estimate ordered logistic regression models predicting attitudes toward preferential hiring of Blacks. Additionally, I compare agreement with key tenets of abstract liberalism to the findings of previous policy reasoning studies to determine the importance of these attitudes in predicting support for affirmative action policy. In this study, I aim to address the potential real-world implications of television exposure and abstract liberalism in influencing minority group incorporation, acceptance, and societal integration.

Keywords: race, discrimination, policy reasoning, abstract liberalism, colorblind racism, affirmative action

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CHAPTER I

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

A. Introduction

On 24 June 2013, the United States Supreme Court issued its ruling in *Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin* (2013), in which Abigail Noel Fisher and several other high school seniors who had been denied admission at University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin) challenged the university's use of race in its undergraduate admissions process. Fisher, a white woman from Sugar Land, Texas, filed suit after being denied admission to the state university's flagship location. She claimed that she had suffered racial discrimination and lost her spot to less qualified African American and Hispanic students due to the school's affirmative action policy. Furthermore, *Fisher v. Univ. of Tex. at Austin* (2010a) claimed that the university could not consider race when alternative "race-neutral" programs existed to insure a diverse student population (at 31-32, 35-38, 2013; No. 09-50822, 2010a). In a statement issued to CNN, Fisher said:

I dreamt of going to UT (the University of Texas) ever since the second grade. My dad went there, my sister went there, and tons of friends and family. And it was a tradition I wanted to continue. (Strauss, 2012)

Despite her dream of continuing her family's collegiate tradition and the fact that she was offered admission at another UT school with the standard alternative admission option to transfer during her sophomore year if she earned a 3.2 GPA as a freshman (*Fisher v. Univ. of Tex. at Austin*, 2013), Fisher instead attended Louisiana State University (LSU),

graduated with a degree in finance, and is currently employed at an Austin, TX finance firm.

The alternative “race-neutral” program referred to in *Fisher v. Univ. of Tex. at Austin* (2013) is the Top Ten Percent Plan, the result of *Hopwood v. Texas* (78 F.3d 932, 5th Cir., 1996), which offers automatic admission to students graduating from Texas state secondary schools in the top ten percent of their classes based on GPA and regardless of race. Fisher graduated from a Sugar Land, TX high school with a 3.59 GPA and an SAT® score of 1180 out of 1600 (at 15, 2013). These academic credentials did not qualify Fisher for the top ten percent of her senior class or make for a competitive in-state application among other students who did not qualify for admission under the Top Ten Percent Plan and thus did not secure her undergraduate placement at UT Austin.

In-state applicants to UT are evaluated based on a two score system with one score accounting for grades and test scores and the other (the personal achievement index) assessing applicant essays, leadership skills, service, extracurricular activities, and "special circumstances," which includes race, socioeconomic status of the student or the student's school, and whether the student came from a single parent home and/or one where English was not spoken (*Fisher, et al. v. Univ. of Tex. at Austin*, No. 09-50822, at 4, 2010b; Hannah-Jones, 2013). The university thus denied Fisher’s allegations and U.S. District Court judge Sam Sparks (*Fisher v. Texas*, 556 F. Supp. 2d 603, W.D. Tex. 2008) and a Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals three-judge panel (No. 09-50822, 2010a) agreed with the school by ruling that race could be considered in the undergraduate admissions process. However, the 7-1 Supreme Court decision would effectively remand the Fifth

Circuit's ruling and return *Fisher v. Univ. of Tex. at Austin* (2013) to the lower courts for a more detailed review of the university's admissions review process.

The apparent idiosyncrasies between Fisher's initial rejection from UT Austin, her undergraduate attendance at LSU, and the lawsuit filed against UT is potentially explained by the intervention of 60 year-old, former stockbroker, founder and director of conservative legal defense fund, The Project on Fair Representation (POFR), Edward Blum. According to the fund's website, their express purpose is to "facilitate *pro bono* legal representation to political subdivisions and individuals that wish to challenge government distinctions and preferences made on the basis of race and ethnicity" (POFR, 2014a) in voting, education, contracting, and employment. POFR explicitly identifies "ending the use of race-based affirmative action in college admissions and K-12 student assignments, as well as racial considerations in awarding scholarships, fellowships, and academic enrichment programs" (POFR, 2014a) as its primary objective in litigation concerning educational institutions. *Fisher v. Univ. of Tex. at Austin* (2013) is also highlighted on the fund's website with links to PDFs of court documents (POFR, 2014b) and a two-and-a-half minute video interview with the plaintiff (POFR, 2014c).

All things considered, Fisher's occupational future seems relatively unaffected by her rejection from UT Austin, but the controversy surrounding affirmative action in undergraduate admissions reignited by *Fisher v. Univ. of Tex. at Austin* (2013) could impact generations of White and minority students nationwide as more states re-examine the use of race-conscious policies in education and employment (Ariz. S. Prop. 107, 2010; Cal. S. Prop. 209, 1996; Cal. S. Prop. 54 at 40-45, 2003; Colo. S. Initiative 46, 2008; Mo. S. Ballot Measure 009, 2008; Neb. S. Civil Rights Initiative 424, 2008; Wash.

S. Initiative 200 at 3, 14-15, 16, 32, 1998). In Michigan, a voter-approved ballot initiative (Mich. S. Proposal 2 at 5-7, 2006) upheld by the Supreme Court (572 U.S. 12-682, 2014) amended the state's constitution and effectively banned affirmative action practices in college admissions. Michigan's constitutional amendment (Mich. Const. art. I, § 26, 1963) places the state alongside California (438 U.S. 265, 1978; Cal. S. Prop. 209, 1996), Florida (Fla. S. Exec. Order 99-281, 1999), New Hampshire (N. H. HB. 0623, 2011), Oklahoma (Okla. S. Question No. 737, 2008), Texas (570 U.S. 11-345, 2013), and Washington (Wash. S. Initiative 200 at 3, 14-15, 16, 32, 1998) as one of the nation's most prominent public systems of higher education in which affirmative action has either been scrutinized, significantly limited, and/or banned outright.

Likewise, equal opportunity employment has also been characterized by contentious litigation and Supreme Court reviews. In *Griggs, et al. v. Duke Power Co.* (401 U.S. 424, No. 124, 1971), Chief Justice Warren E. Burger issued the majority opinion¹ and ruled that under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 any broad aptitude tests, such as completion of high school diploma and/or intelligence quotient (IQ) tests, used for employment purposes must be "reasonably related" (at 437, 1971) to the job in question (at 433, 1971). Justices presiding over *United Steelworkers of America v. Weber* (1979),² which upheld the employer's right to preferential hiring in order to rectify historic discrimination, *Ward's Cove Packing Co., Inc. v. Antonio* (1989), *Adarand Constructors, Inc. v. Peña* (1995), and *Ricci v. DeStefano et al.* (2009) among others largely upheld the legislative decree of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

¹ Associate Justice William J. Brennan, Jr. did not participate in consideration or deliberation of *Griggs v. Duke Power Co.* (1971).

² Associate Justices Lewis F. Powell, Jr. and John P. Stevens did not participate in consideration or deliberation of *Steelworkers v. Weber* (1979).

Recent legal challenges to affirmative action in education and employment emphasize the importance of majority group support for the continuation of initiatives intended to increase intergroup equality and diversity at all levels of society. Yet, media coverage of affirmative action issues has either been contingent upon the occasional Supreme Court case or problematically framed as intergroup conflict between Whites and Blacks over social resources (Entman, 1997; Richardson & Lancendorfer, 2004). Thus, if average Americans have little technical knowledge of Supreme Court legal proceedings and limited media exposure to such cases, any effects on support for affirmative action derived from television viewing would likely be indirectly exerted.

According to cultivation theorists, this indirect impact could arise due to television's consistent presentation of non-White minorities in a manner that may implicitly encourage opposition to affirmative action policies. These presentations may trigger negative affective attitudes toward out-groups during comparative evaluations of in-group and out-group member adherence to normative values, such as egalitarianism, individualism, and hard work for meritocratic rewards espoused in the American ideology of abstract liberalism. Within this ideology, egalitarianism maintains that all Americans deserve equal and unbiased treatment and thus allows principled opposition to preferential treatment based on race and/or any other individuating characteristic (Katz, Wackenhut, & Hass, 1986). Individualism and meritocracy serve to justify acceptance of societal inequality as the expected consequence for those less motivated and/or less willing to be hardworking and self-reliant (Katz et al., 1986). Thus, television may cultivate implicit attitudinal orientations complicit with persistent intergroup inequality

by strengthening belief in egalitarianism, individualism, and meritocracy as explanatory reasoning for intergroup status and relative social achievement.

Cultivation analysis, which examines the role of television in the lives of everyday viewers, is based on George Gerbner's (1958) conceptualization of communication as "a basic cultural inquiry" (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999, p. 11) and the parsimonious hypothesis that:

watching a great deal of television will be associated with a tendency to hold specific and distinct conceptions of reality, conceptions that are congruent with the most consistent and pervasive images and values of the medium. (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999, p. 3)

Within cultivation analysis, previous investigations of perceptions of racial and ethnic minority groups have primarily examined cultivation effects using self-reported, attitudinal measures drawn from samples of mostly White respondents. These investigations have examined the prevalence and context of stereotypical depictions of racial and ethnic identities, as well as the impact of such depictions on viewer perceptions of racial out-group members. Greater exposure to television messages has been shown to be associated with the development and maintenance of racial stereotypes in viewer evaluations of minorities, especially when direct contact is lacking (Armstrong, Neuendorf, & Brentar, 1992; Fujioka, 1999; Lee, Bichard, Irey, Walt, & Carlson, 2009; Mastro, Behm-Morawitz, & Ortiz, 2007).

Although some have argued that selective processing and perception moderate prejudiced formulations (Busselle & Shrum, 2003; Shrum, 1995, 1996, 2001, 2004; Shrum & O'Guinn, 1993), the influence of television images on mental reconstructions of racial identity by members of the dominant cultural mainstream is difficult to dismiss.

Stereotypical depictions have been shown to affect not only race role socialization among majority group members (Atkin, Greenberg, & McDermott, 1983; Hudson, 1998; Littlefield, 2008), but the self-esteem and self-perception of minorities (Berry, 1998; Berry & Mitchell-Kernan, 1982; Gentles & Harrison, 2006; Ward, 2004), minority orientation toward the dominant system (Allen & Hatchet, 1986), minority political perceptions and ideological dissidence (Matabane, 1988), as well as relative evaluations of other minority groups (Dalisay & Tan, 2009; Fujioka, 1999).

Cultivation analysis acknowledges television's function as a primary source of "repetitive and ritualized symbol systems cultivating the common consciousness" (Gerbner & Gross, 1976, pp. 173-174) of a heterogeneous mass public. Television exposure remains one of the most relevant and accessible means of race role socialization (Atkin et al., 1983; Berry & Mitchell-Kernan, 1982; Dalisay & Tan, 2009; Lee et al., 2009; Mastro & Tukachinsky, 2012; Reep & Drambot, 1989; Tan, 1982) and intergroup contact (Fujioka, 1999; Tan, Fujiokama, & Luch, 1997) for the majority of Americans. This is perhaps especially relevant for White Americans whose social acquaintance circles may be relatively less diverse compared to racial minorities due to minority and/or majority group self-segregation (Tatum, 1997), relative diversity at the local (Weber, Lavine, Huddy, & Federico, 2014), individual (Bobo & Zubrinsky, 2009; Brigham, 2006; Devine, 1989; Strack & Deutsch, 2004; Surra & Milardo, 1991; Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005; Zajonc, 1968), interpersonal (Levin, van Laar, & Sidanius, 2003; Lewis, 2012), educational (Fisher & Hartmann, 1995; Mendoza-Denton & Page-Gould, 2008; Schofield, Hausmann, Ye, Feifei, & Woods, 2010; Zisman & Wilson, 1992), and

residential levels (Farley, 2008; Farley, Schuman, Bianchi, Colasanto, & Hatchett, 1978; Massey, 1985, 2001; Massey & Denton, 1993; Zubrinsky & Bobo, 1996).

According to Nielsen's 2014 Advance National TV Household Universe Estimate (UE), the number of American homes with television sets increased from the 2012-2013 estimate of 114.2 million to 115.6 million (Nielsen.com, 2013a). Although new technologies, such as the Internet and DVR services, have been credited as major factors in the decline in the number of television-owning, American homes in 2011 (from 115.9 to 114.7 million), an estimated 96.7 percent of American homes owned televisions in the year 2011 (Caufield, 2011; Nielsen.com, 2011). If anything, new technologies buttress the influence of television by increasing viewing platforms and accessibility.

The presence of television in the homes of an estimated 294 million Americans solidifies its position as the most powerful and accessible form of mass media (Nielsen.com, 2013a). Yet, few studies have examined television as a form of social control (Shanahan & Jones, 1999) in viewer orientations toward inclusion and/or exclusion, perceptions of closeness, and notions of similarity and/or dissimilarity between racial groups. Given the accessibility and prevalence of television (Nielsen.com, 2013a) as a form of mediated intergroup contact, the role of vicarious contact, as a mechanism for maintaining the social status quo of intergroup relations, necessitates further examination. Thus, this study intends to explore the potential overlap between cultivation analysis and policy reasoning to assess the extent to which television exposure influences opinions toward racial issues and race-conscious government policies such as affirmative action.

The Master's thesis at hand will examine the influence of exposure to television on belief in meritocratic values, attitudes toward racial discrimination, and support for affirmative action as a reparative social policy. The primary empirical goal at hand is to analyze a policy reasoning model that effectively accounts for television viewing, ideological orientations associated with "modern" racism, and racial resentment and prejudice on strong opposition to preferential hiring of Blacks. This study will draw on cultivation analysis and cognitive and affective policy reasoning theories to address more recent findings of potential exemplar effects primarily introduced by President Barack Obama's 2008 election campaign. Although I do not intend to conduct an analysis of the impact of exposure to President Obama's 2008 election campaign specifically, it is important to respond to such studies given their implications for the role of abstract liberalism and "modern" racism in policy reasoning processes.

The present thesis will also address the potential real-world implications of television's role in influencing attitudes toward minority group incorporation, acceptance, and societal integration via race-conscious social policy. After detailing relevant aspects of these theoretical foundations, this thesis will review the most pertinent empirical studies and the particular limitations of previous research. Finally, the thesis will discuss the empirical goals, methodology, data analysis and results, as well as the implications and limitations of the present investigation.

B. Public Opinion and Political Discourse in the Affirmative Action Debate

In 1961, President John F. Kennedy issued Executive Order 10925 which required government contractors to "take affirmative action to ensure that applicants are

employed, and employees are treated during employment, without regard to their race, creed, color, or national origin” (Exec. Order 10925, Part III, Subpart A, § 301.1, 1961). Issued twenty years after President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Executive Order 8802 (1941) barring discrimination based on race, color, creed, and/or national origin in federal government and defense industries during World War II (1941), Kennedy’s decree potentially further ushered “affirmative action” into public and political discourse as a race-coded policy ripe for debate and legal contention. Executive Order 11246 (U.S. Dept. of Labor OFCCP, 1965), issued by President Lyndon B. Johnson, and The Philadelphia Order (1969), issued by President Richard M. Nixon further prohibited employment discrimination among federally contracted organizations (U.S. Dept. of Labor OFCCP, 1965) and required formalized submission of affirmative action plans intended to increase minority employment (Philadelphia Plan, 1969). Yet, despite the intentions of the original legislative initiatives, affirmative action policies soon came to represent preferential treatment and undeserved handouts rather than an egalitarian attempt of employment opportunity.

According to Jasmin B. Raskin (1995), professor of constitutional law at the Washington College of Law at the American University, the “ideological and political assault on any use of race-conscious government policies or programs to uplift the social or economic position of the black community” (p. 33) was concurrently initiated with Reconstruction efforts in the 1870s. Opposition to programs such as affirmative action became the fourth leg in a socially conservative ideological shift intended to restore White supremacy (p. 33) through pseudo-scientific offerings such as phrenology and Charles Murray and Richard Herrnstein’s argument for genetically determined mental

inferiority primarily dictated by race in *The Bell Curve* (p. 33) and systemic disenfranchisement of Blacks in the legislative and criminal justice systems (p. 33).

In sum, conservative arguments against affirmative action can be summarized as the contention that affirmative action violates foundational American notions of “objective merit,” “color-blindness,” and “neutrality” because it offers “preferential treatment” and entitlements to less deserving and/or qualified groups (Raskin, 1995, p. 34; NCSL, 2014). Such preferential treatment begets “reverse discrimination” against those who presumably possess the inherent ability and wherewithal to succeed, especially middle class white men, and leads to stigmatization of minority beneficiaries (Raskin, 1995, p. 34; see also Altbach & Cohen, 1990, p. 45; D’Souza, 1998; Justice Harlan’s dissenting opinion in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 1896 at 553-564).

In direct contrast to these opinions, progressive arguments in favor of affirmative action maintain that due to centuries of slavery, racial discrimination, and political and social exclusion, proactive measures must be taken to combat unilateral intergroup domination and “continuing white control of cultural institutions (‘prestige’ and ‘achievements’), universities (‘education’), corporations and employment (‘wealth’), and government (‘power’)” (Raskin, 1995, p. 37) and ensure equal opportunity for participation among all racial groups. “Merit” based on standardized testing and the notion of “colorblind” evaluations were also questioned as amorphous procedural options for maintaining White supremacy under the guise of neutrality and objectivity (Raskin, 1995, pp. 37, 38; see also Fish, 1993, 1994).

For instance, Stanley Fish (1994) and David Owen (1985) noted the questionable origin and utility of the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT®), one of several college entrance

exams endured by high school students. In 1925, Princeton University graduate and eugenicist, Carl Campbell Brigham, began his brief tenure as director of testing for the SAT®'s original parent company, the College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB; Fish, 1994, p. 135). In his text titled *A Study of American Intelligence* (1923), Brigham wrote that America confronted “a possibility of racial admixture...infinitely worse than that faced by any European country today, for we are incorporating the Negro into our racial stock, while all of Europe is comparatively free of this taint.” However, College Board does not acknowledge Brigham’s involvement in its “History of the Tests” informational video, which effectively diminishes Brigham’s involvement by skipping from 1984 to 1994 (College Board, 2014a).

Despite its initially questionable associations, the standardized testing organization maintains that its exams “provide a path to opportunities, financial support, and scholarships, in a way that's fair to all students” (College Board, 2014b) and that the SAT® is “the nation’s most widely used college entrance exam” (College Board, 2014c). The SAT® and SAT Subject Tests® are allegedly “designed to assess [students’] academic readiness for college” (College Board, 2014b) and “keep pace with what colleges are looking for today, measuring the skills required for success in the 21st century” (College Board, 2014b). However, empirical studies have consistently presented evidence of the SAT’s® relatively weak validity in predicting collegiate GPA performance (Atkinson, 2001; Baron & Norman, 1992; Bowen & Bok, 2000; College Board, 2013a, 2013b; Crouse, 1985; Crouse & Trusheim, 1988, 1991; Geiser & Santelices, 2007; Gottfredson & Crouse, 1986; Hiss & Franks, 2014; Jencks & Phillips, 1998; Klein, Benjamin, Shavelson, & Bolus, 2007; Kobrin, Patterson, Shaw, Mattern, &

Barbuti, 2008; McKay, Doverspike, Bowen-Hilton, & McKay, 2003; Rothstein, 2004; Vars & Bowen, 1998; Zahner, Ramsaran, & Steedle, 2012; Zwick & Himelfarb, 2011; Zwick & Sklar, 2005; for arguments of the SAT's® predictive validity see CEEB, 2000).

Based on College Board's own adjusted correlation calculations, the math and verbal sections for the 1994-1995 SAT® explained 23-24% of variation in within-college freshman GPA (FGPA) weighted by the number of students attending each college and averaged across all colleges (Bridgeman, McCamley-Jenkins, & Ervin, 2000, p. 5). Correlations of predictors with FGPA were corrected for range restriction with the Pearson-Lawley multivariate correction using national standard deviations and intercorrelations for relevant measures (Bridgeman et al., 2000, p. 3). The adjusted correlations with FGPA for the 1994 and 1995 math and verbal sections were $r = .49$ ($r^2 = .24$) and $r = .48$ ($r^2 = .23$), respectively (Bridgeman et al., 2000, p. 5).³ That same year, College Board correlations estimated that high school GPA (HSGPA, $r = .36$, $r^2 = .13$) explained 33% of variation in FGPA (average adjusted correlation with FGPA was $r = .57$, $r^2 = .33$; Bridgeman et al., 2000, p. 5). The ability of the SAT® to explain variation in FGPA improved only slightly after the 2005 revision of the SAT®. In 2006, SAT® math, critical reading/verbal, and writing sections explained approximately 22, 23, and 26% of variation in FGPA (adjusted correlation for math, critical reading/verbal, and writing sections were $r = .47$, $r^2 = .22$, $r = .48$, $r^2 = .23$, and $r = .51$, $r^2 = .109$, respectively; Kobrin et al., 2008, p. 5), whereas HSGPA explained 29% (adjusted correlation for HSGPA was $r = .54$, $r^2 = .29$; Kobrin et al., 2008, p. 5).

³ Unadjusted correlation for both the math and verbal section scored on the original scale were $r = .30$, $r^2 = .09$ (Bridgeman et al., 2000, p. 4).

Although the combined SAT® sections accounted for 28% of variation in FGPA ($r = .53$, $r^2 = .28$; Kobrin et al., 2008, p. 5), this is likely due to the addition of the essay writing section which tests key skills for undergraduate success: critical thinking and argumentation. The amount of variance explained by the math and critical reading/verbal sections slightly drops to 26% ($r = .51$, $r^2 = .26$; Kobrin et al., 2008, p. 5) when the essay writing section is excluded. The tenuous utility of the SAT® in predicting college performance may be further evidenced by the increment in predictive validity. The increment predictive validity for the older two-section SAT® when HSGPA was taken into account improved only slightly with the addition of the new essay writing section (.07 compared to .08, respectively, Kobrin et al., 2008, p. 5).

In a recent National Association for College Admission Counseling (2014) research endeavor, primary investigator William C. Hiss examined the performance of 123,000 students at 33 private college and public universities with optional testing admission policies (Hiss & Franks, 2014). Hiss and colleagues found “no significant differences in either cumulative GPA or graduation rates” (Hiss & Franks, 2014, p. 8) between standardized test score submitters and non-submitters when controlling for above-average testing non-submitters (Hiss & Franks, 2014, p. 8). Similar findings have prompted over 800 four-year universities and colleges (NCFOT, 2014), such as the University of Texas school system, to deemphasize the importance of test scores in admissions considerations (Perez, 2002). Unfortunately, these progressively minded schools are the minority as the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), the U.S. Department of Education, and their associated accrediting organizations recognize more than 8,300 colleges and universities (CHEA, 2014).

Overall, pro-affirmative action arguments cite the beneficial impact of culturally pluralist societies characterized by equal distribution of wealth and power (Kennedy, 1990) and diverse student body and workforce populations representative of surrounding communities (NCSL, 2014). Yet, the anti-political correctness campaign that emerged in the late 1980s was not merely a reversion to intolerance and bigotry. The shift in public and political discourse resulted in legislative attacks on multiculturalism and pluralist recognition of group difference based on race, gender, class, etc. (Raskin, 1995, p. 33) and was potentially encouraged by the 1978 Supreme Court ruling on *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*.

In *Regents v. Bakke* (1978), 33 year-old, white male, engineer, former Marine officer, and twice rejected University of California Davis medical school applicant, Allan P. Bakke filed suit against the university on the grounds that less-qualified minority students had been admitted due to a special admissions program intended to increase diversity. Bakke claimed that this program was in violation of both the U.S. and state of California Constitutions and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (*Bakke*, 1978, 438 U.S. 265 at 277-279). The Supreme Court ruling upheld the use of affirmative action efforts that accounted for race during admissions reviews, but deemed racial quotas or set-asides an impermissible violation of the Equal Protection Clause (EPC) included in the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution (NCSL, 2013). Despite upholding affirmative action programs and considerations of race in admissions, the decision in *Regents v. Bakke* (1978) may have encouraged several other college hopefuls who were denied admission to their respective institutions of choice to file lawsuits alleging reverse discrimination and civil rights violations.

One of the most notable legislative assaults on affirmative action include the Republican Party backed “California Civil Rights Initiative,” or Proposition 209, a 1996 ballot measure with the express purpose of jettisoning “preferential treatment” of racial minorities by the state of California, its municipalities, and universities (Raskin, 1995, p. 33; Cal. Const. art. I, § 31, 1997). Cases settled in the U.S. Court of Appeals have ruled that considerations of race in admissions processes violated rights guaranteed by the 14th Amendment and its EPC (78 F.3d 932, 5th Cir., 1996; 263 F.3d 1234, 11th Cir. 2001). In *Hopwood v. Texas* (78 F.3d 932, 5th Cir., 1996) and *Johnson v. Board of Regents of the University of Georgia* (263 F.3d 1234, 11th Cir., 2001), the U.S. Court of Appeals decided that neither race nor any fixed points system could be used to determine admissions (NCSL, 2013). The Supreme Court has also ruled that additive points systems in which minority students are awarded a specific number of points in admissions bids were unconstitutional (*Gratz, et al. v. Bollinger, et al.*, 539 U.S. 244, 02-516, 2003), yet they simultaneously maintained a narrow 5-4 decision to allow higher education institutions to include race as a factor in admissions decisions (*Grutter v. Bollinger, et al.*, 539 U.S. 306, 02-241, 2003). Although the Supreme Court ruling on *Grutter v. Bollinger* (539 U.S. 306, 02-241, 2003) abrogated the *Hopwood v. Texas* (1996) decision and allowed Texas colleges and universities to reinstate affirmative action efforts in admissions processes, these efforts may have been short-lived due to the recent 7-1 Supreme Court ruling to return *Fisher v. Texas* (2013) to the lower courts for a “strict scrutiny” (Howe, 2013, p. 1) test of UT-Austin’s use of race in undergraduate admissions.

Statistical evidence consistently shows gaps in standardized test scores. Whites average combined SAT® scores in 2012 were on average 145, 228, and 341 points higher than scores for American Indians, Latinos, and Blacks (Jaschik, 2012; see also Crouse & Trusheim, 1988; Jencks & Phillips, 1998). Statistics for self-identified Asian American students were the only exception to this pattern. In 2012, the average combined SAT® scores for Asian students was 63 points higher than that of Whites (Jaschik, 2012). Gaps in college enrollment and degree conferral also favor Whites. In 2009, 81.95% of the non-Hispanic White population aged 18 to 24 years old was enrolled at an institution of higher education (U.S. Census Bureau, Tables 10 and 283, 2010) compared to 61.78 and 44.23% of 18 to 24 year-old Blacks and Hispanics (U.S. Census Bureau, Tables 10 and 283, 2010). Again, only the proportion of 18 to 24 year-old Asians, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders enrolled in college (97.62%, U.S. Census Bureau, Tables 10 and 283, 2010) surpassed that of non-Hispanic Whites. (U.S. Census Bureau, Tables 10 and 283, 2010). Likewise, 72.9% of all bachelor's degrees conferred to U.S. residents in the academic year 2009-2010 were awarded to Whites, U.S. Dept. of Education, NCES 2012-045).

This pattern is also present in unemployment rates, median household earnings, and median household net worth. In the fourth quarter of 2012, the White unemployment rate was 6.3% relative to 6.0, 9.8, and 14.0% among Asians, Hispanics, and Blacks (Austin, 2013). In 2012, the real median household income among non-Hispanic Whites was \$57,009 compared to \$39,005 and \$33,321 among Hispanics and non-Hispanic

Blacks (DeNavas-Walt et al., 2013, Figure 1, p. 5).⁴ The median household income among self-identified Asian, Asian American, and/or Pacific Islanders (\$68,636 in 2012; DeNavas-Walt et al., 2013, Figure 1, p. 5) was again the exception. However, the 2010 median net household worth of non-Hispanic White households easily surpassed that of all non-White racial groups. The median net household worth of non-Hispanic Whites in 2010 amounted to \$113,149 compared to \$78,066, \$6,325, and \$5,677 for Asian, Hispanic, and non-Hispanic Black households, respectively (Taylor, Kochhar, Fry, Velasco, & Motel, 2011, p. 13). Yet, White opposition to race-conscious policies on the grounds that these initiatives are unfair to and/or negatively impact the socioeconomic status of Whites is continually justified. This contrarian position is supported by egalitarian claims to a colorblind system of distributing social rewards based on individual merit derived from self-determination and hard work (McConahay, 1986).

C. Cultivation Analysis

Cultivation analysis is situated within the Cultural Indicators project as a critical approach to studies of mass media communication (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999). Developed by George Gerbner in the late 1960s (1969, 1970), the Cultural Indicators project aimed to provide an objective account of “media practices, outputs and impacts, and therefore a better basis for judgment and policy” (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999, p. 6). These analyses were organized around three primary conceptual areas of interest:

⁴ “Real” income indicates income after adjusting for inflation with all income values adjusted to reflect 2012 dollars (DeNavas-Walt et al., 2013, p. 1). This adjustment is “based on percentage changes in prices between 2012 and earlier years and is computed by dividing the annual average Consumer Price Index Research Series (CPI-U-RS) for 2012 by the annual average for earlier years” (DeNavas-Walt et al., 2013, p. 1).

1. What are the processes, pressures, and constraints that influence and underlie the production of mass media content?
2. What are the dominant, aggregate patterns of images, messages, fact, values, and lessons expressed in media messages? and
3. What is the relationship between attention to these messages and audiences' conceptions of social reality? (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999, pp. 6-7)

According to these scholars, cultivation analysis is an area of media effects studies analyzing the long-term effects of exposure to television content (Gerbner, 1973). These effects are assumed to function by repeatedly exposing viewers to the same ideological messages coded into the fictional narratives of television content (Gerbner, 1973). Furthermore, heavy viewers of television content are assumed to be more susceptible to the attitudinal and ideological orientations espoused therein (Gerbner, 1973).

Gerbner proposed a three-prong structure for the distinct conceptual framework of the Cultural Indicators project, which included institutional process analysis (selection, production, and distribution of media messages), message systems analysis (quantification and tracking of patterns of representation), and cultivation analysis (how exposure to television impacts viewer attitudes and beliefs about the real world; Gerbner, 1973).

In the United States, cultivation analysis primarily focused on television as a system of messages composed of “stable, repetitive, pervasive and virtually inescapable patterns of images and ideologies” (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999, p. 5). Furthermore, these messages were interpreted as cumulative, “complementary, organic and coherent” (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999, p. 5) aspects of an overall system operating over extended periods of time and exposure. Accordingly, Gerbner viewed “Cultivation [as] what a culture does” because “culture is the basic medium in which humans live and learn”

(Gerbner, 1990, p. 249). Gerbner (1990) further defined culture as “the overall framework in which we imagine what we do not encounter directly and interpret what we encounter directly. It mediates between existence and consciousness of existence and contributes to both” (p. 251).

Given that culture involves the reproduction of symbols and discourses representing a set of dominant, widely shared and recognized beliefs, values, and practices, television provides an unprecedented opportunity for the dissemination of mass-produced cultural narratives buttressing social elites and the prevailing social hierarchy. The power of television as an agent of socialization lies in its extensive reach and ability to deliver consistent and complementary messages to the largest possible audience practicing a ritualistic and habitual mode of relatively unselective consumption (Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Shanahan & Morgan, 1999, p. 30). In addition, television’s role in the enculturation of mass publics is underscored by its commercial and institutional structure. This structure determines the production and distribution of television content based on the most beneficial and profitable cultural ideologies and values (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999, pp. 35-36), which maintain the social status quo and power of elites (Bogart, 1972; Gitlin, 1982; Glynn, 1956; Lazarsfeld & Merton, 1948).

Cultivation’s focus on ideological impact emphasizes television’s capacity to reinforce existing power inequalities and social hierarchies. More to the point, cultivation theorists’ interpretation of television as more than a mere magical box of light, pictures, and sound coincides with symbolic interaction, social construction, and racial formation theories. Each of these theories views social reality as the product of interactions and collective negotiations of meaning.

Like the Cultural Indicators project, symbolic interaction posits that reality, both the physical entities contained within it and the social definitions used to organize it, is the product of social interactions between the self and others (Blumer, 1969). This interpretation makes it conceptually unfeasible, or at the very least, undesirable, to separate individuals from the society within which they exist as both are created through social interaction and neither can be fully understood without reference to the other. Furthermore, symbolic interaction does not view behavior as exclusively defined by environmental pressures, internal drives and/or survival instincts. Behavior is seen as equally determined by the reflective, reflexive, and socially understood meaning of the internal and external incentives at hand (Meltzer, Petras, & Reynolds, 1975) based on the interpretation of symbols and significations communicated and negotiated through language (Blumer, 1962).

The work of Alfred Schütz (1967) contained several other foundational premises of symbolic interaction as a phenomenological approach to sociology. These premises are also relevant to cultivation analysis. Schütz was primarily concerned with the consciousness of self and other and intersubjectivity as a specific concern with the social world and the social nature of knowledge (Ritzer, 2011, p. 219). According to Schütz, the “life world” was the space within which there existed a "dialectical relationship between the way people construct social reality and the obdurate social and cultural reality that they inherit from those who preceded them in the social world” (Ritzer, 2011, p. 219). Furthermore, Schütz’s belief that the social experience of human beings was (a) “both create[d]” and “constrained by the preexisting social and cultural structures created by their predecessors" (Ritzer, 2011, p. 219) and (b) composed of experiential worlds

“distinguish[ed] between directly experienced social reality and a social reality lying beyond the horizon of direct experience” (Walsh, 1967, p. xxvii) directly influenced scholars working from a social constructionist perspective.

Influenced by Alfred Schütz (Allan, 2010), social construction theorists Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966) contend that the persons and groups interacting within a social system create concepts via mental representations of the action and identities of other social actors. Meaning and “the common objectivations of everyday life are maintained primarily by linguistic signification” communicated through language (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p. 37). Over time, mental significations become habituated into reciprocal roles each actor plays in relation to others. These roles are institutionalized through a process in which “reciprocal typifications of actions are built up in the course of a shared history” (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p. 54), when “two individuals [began to] interact *de novo*” (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p. 55, italics in original). Thus, social roles become “institutionalized” (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p. 55) when they are made available to other members of that society to use. According to Berger and Luckmann (1966):

To say that a segment of human activity has been institutionalized is already to say that this segment of human activity has been subsumed under social control. Additional control mechanisms are required only insofar as the processes of institutionalization are less completely successful. (p. 55)

It is in this process of institutionalization and the social practices through which institutionalization occurs that meaning is embedded in knowledge, cultural conceptions, and beliefs of what constitutes reality, as well as society. This cyclical process of

signification, conceptualization, interaction, habituation, and institutionalization constitute the social construction of reality.

Thus, if the knowledge embedded in the social construction of racial and ethnic identity is used to inform the initiation, maintenance, and approval of race-conscious social policy, then negative constructions and connotations could be said to function cooperatively with cultivation to perpetuate social inequalities and the stratified integration of racial minorities. African Americans must contend with cultural constructions of Black racial identity as lazy, hyper-masculine, hypersexual, violent, and aggressive despite their upward social mobility in recent decades (Banks, 2011; Cole & Omari, 2003; Collins, 1983; Landry, 1987; Pattillo, 2013). Blacks have been depicted (Cosby, 1994; Dates, 1980; Greenberg & Brand, 1994; Hudson, 1998; Seggar & Wheeler, 1973) and negatively evaluated by Whites in terms of intellect (Dixon, 2006; Mastro & Tropp, 2004; Rada, 2000; Welch & Sigelman, 2011), occupational status (Armstrong et al., 1992), educational attainment and success level (Busselle & Crandall, 2002; Gandy & Baron, 1998; Gilliam & Iyengar, 1998), personality traits (Ford, 1997; Fujioka, 1999; Punyanunt-Carter, 2008; Tan, 1982), individual will power to succeed (Gandy & Baron, 1998), personal responsibility for economic circumstances (Iyengar, 1990), and work ethic (Welch & Sigelman, 2011).

According to racial formation scholars Michael Omi and Howard Winant (1994), social constructions of inherent racial difference were determined by larger social forces and functioned to downplay the historical construction of racial categories and the impact of economics, politics, and ideology in shaping race relations. The authors used the 1982-83 lawsuit of Susie Guillory Phipps (Omi & Winant, 1994, pp. 53-54), who sued the

Louisiana Bureau of Vital Records when she was denied a change of her recorded race from black to white, to underscore the historical construction of race from the early product of European colonialism (Omi & Winant, 1994, pp. 79- 80) to its current use as a social concept around which social identities, power, and status are organized and naturalized (Omi & Winant, 1994, pp. 80-81). Through their deconstruction of race as a concept and organizer of identity in American society, Omi and Winant explain why we “see” race when the biological existence of “race,” or, rather, discernible genetic difference based on race, is relatively weak (Marks, 1996).

The process of cultivation reflects a circular model of communication, within which discursive practices selectively and creatively reproduce pre-existing texts, meanings, and patterns within a socio-cultural context. These messages and their attendant “propositions, assumptions, and points of view” (Morgan, 1995, p. 104) can only be understood within the cultural context in which they are produced. Furthermore, because these messages reformulate pre-existing relationships and contexts, they “function recursively, sustaining and giving meaning to the structures and practices that produce them” (Morgan, 1995, p. 104). Cultivation is viewed as the process through which interaction with prevailing messages both impacts and enforces the underlying terms on which said messages are based (Morgan, 1995, p. 104). Thus, cultivation is a dynamic, ongoing interaction among messages, audiences, and their contexts in which a set of shared assumptions about a constructed social reality is produced, presented, and perpetuated.

This thesis study takes the basic assumptions of cultivation theory, which views television as a cultural agent with direct impacts on the maintenance of social

homeostasis represented by intergroup inequality within American society, to inform its investigative rationale. According to cultivation theorists, “story-telling occupies a crucial role in human existence” (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999, p. 13) and “fits human reality to the social order” (Gerbner, 1986). Accordingly, it is assumed that “the stories of a culture reflect and cultivate its most basic and fundamental assumptions, ideologies and values” (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999, p. 13). The doubly important role of storytelling and the construction of social realities consonant with foundational ideologies augment television’s importance in the maintenance of ideological and cultural constructions of reality. Thus, television may play a role in cultivating implicit attitudes favorable to maintaining racial inequality at the same time that it reinforces explicit claims to general egalitarianism. More importantly, because cultivation assumes that the functional effects of television exposure result in “affirmation for the confirmed, and indoctrination for deviants” (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999, p. 36), the potential role of such effects in maintaining the position of social groups, influencing opinions on race-conscious social policy and support for affirmative action programs necessitates empirical investigation.

D. Mediated Intergroup Contact Effects

When intergroup contact theory is informed by assumptions found in social dominance theory, the theoretical propositions regarding power and hegemony align with those of cultivation analysis. According to social dominance theory, “human societies are structured as group-based social hierarchies, with dominant groups enjoying a disproportionate amount of positive social value (e.g., wealth, power, and status) while subordinate groups suffer from a disproportionate amount of negative social value (e.g.,

poverty, stigmatization, and imprisonment)” (Sidanius & Veniegas, 2000, p. 49; see also Pratto, 1999; Pratto, Sidanius, & Levin, 2006; Sidanius, 1993; Sidanius & Pratto, 1993, 1999).

Enforcement of established social hierarchies is primarily enacted through an interactive process combining social, cultural, legal, and economic factors. In his analysis of the underlying factors in the interactive production of prejudice and discrimination, Duckitt (1992) posited a four-level model, which included:

- 1.) genetic and evolutionary predispositions; 2.) societal, organizational, and intergroup patterns of contact and norms for intergroup relations – e.g., laws, regulations, and norms of segregation or unequal access, which maintain the power of dominant groups over subordinate ones; 3.) mechanisms of social influence that operate in group and interpersonal interactions – e.g., influences from the mass media, the educational system, and the structure and functioning of work organizations; and 4.) personal differences in susceptibility to prejudiced attitudes and behaviors, and in acceptance of specific intergroup attitudes (Duckitt, 1992, p. 251).

Prior to Duckitt, Gordon Allport’s (1954) contact hypothesis specified four primary and interdependent conditions under which intergroup interaction should lead to improved intergroup relations including (a) equal status between the groups in the situation, (b) cooperative activity toward common goals, (c) personalized acquaintance “that leads to the perception of common interests and common humanity” (Allport, 1954, p. 281), and (d) support for intergroup contact from authorities or local norms (Oskamp, 2000, p. 7). Intergroup friendships, which allow for personalized understanding of out-group members (Brewer & Miller, 1984; Pettigrew, 1998), are a more recent addition to the optimal conditions for curtailing prejudice (Oskamp, 2000, p. 9). Despite empirical issues pertaining to time-order effects and self-selection bias, Allport’s four conditions have been used to inform conceptualizations of methods to reduce intergroup bias.

According to Stephan and Stephan (2000), the *group-interactive intervention* method, in which non-superficial, individual-level interaction occurs under certain moderating conditions (Wittig & Molina, 2000, p. 297), is seen as particularly well suited for reducing negative stereotyping and intergroup anxiety (Oskamp, 2000, p. 6; Stephan & Stephan, 2000).

Both Duckitt (1992) and Allport's (1954) models allow for positive and negative contact effects and neither proposed that intergroup contact of any sort invariably leads to less bigoted notions of out-group members (Allport, 1954; Duckitt, 1992). Social psychologists thus emphasize the need to focus on levels 3 (mechanisms of social influence, e.g., mass media) and 4 (personal differences in susceptibility to prejudice) in formulating social science interventions intended to reduce prejudice (Oskamp, 2000, p. 3).

In direct contact effects research, reduction of intergroup prejudice is assumed to occur due to increased interaction between majority (in-group) and minority (out-group) group members within certain interactive conditions (Allport, 1954). Mediated contact effects theory is based on specific aspects of direct contact effects, such as typicality (Hewstone & Brown, 1986), indirect contact effects (Wright, Aron, McLaughlin-Volpe, & Ropp, 1997), and media contact effects (Schiappa, Gregg, & Hewes, 2005). In addition, mediated intergroup contact synthesizes these aspects in the parasocial contact hypothesis (Schiappa et al., 2005), which posits that "contact with the (mediated) out-group member results in increased knowledge about the out-group, and a feeling of increased trust or respect for the out-group" (Ortiz & Harwood, 2007, p. 617). The mental processes through which attitude change occurs have been conceptualized in both

cultivation and mediated contact effects literature. These processes are illustrated using concepts presented in social cognition theory, such as heuristic processing and construct accessibility (Shrum, 1995, 1996; Shrum & O'Guinn, 1993) and social cognitive theory, such as vicarious learning (Bandura, 2002), abstract modeling (Bandura, 2002), and symbolic interaction (Bandura, 1999).

The connection between the empirical emphasis of the contact effects literature and cultivation theory is further demonstrated in studies of indirect contact effects resulting from media exposure. The majority of studies utilizing the contact hypothesis have focused on direct contact as the catalyst for decreased intergroup enmity. In a meta-analysis of 515 studies sampling over 250,000 subjects, Pettigrew, Tropp, Wagner, and Christ (2011) found that overall intergroup contact reduced prejudice (mean r equal to -.21). The researchers also found that while Allport's criteria for optimal intergroup interactions were helpful, these conditions were not necessary to diminish prejudice (Pettigrew et al., 2011, p. 275). Empirical support for indirect contact effects was found in Paluck's (2009) study of radio programming, which was implemented by repeatedly exposing communities in Rwanda to storylines about two fictional groups. However, the impact of radio content in Paluck (2009) was limited to pro-social norms and did not effectively alter personal beliefs and/or attitudes (Hodson, Choma, & Costello, 2009) and were not shown to be related to policy reasoning.

Early twentieth-century studies of direct contact effects focused on White/Black interactions. In this tumultuous social environment characterized by rapidly changing race relations, social psychologists found that Blacks and Whites who were close friends refrained from violence and helped interracial contacts during the 1943 Detroit race riots

(Lee & Humphrey, 1968). Studies of White/Black interaction during desegregation of the Merchant Marine Corps in 1948 (Brophy, 1946), policemen in Philadelphia (Kephart, 1957), students at Dartmouth College and Harvard University (Allport & Kramer, 1946), housewives residing in either segregated or desegregated housing projects in Newark, NJ and New York City, NY (Deutsch & Collins, 1951), members of interracial athletics teams (Brown, Brown, Jackson, Sellers, & Manuel, 2003), and collective action and social policy support among White and Black students in South Africa (Cakal, Hewstone, Schwär, & Heath, 2011) have also found that more positive attitudes toward Blacks among White participants are associated with greater intergroup contact. More overt forms of racial prejudice studied in previous decades may overshadow more covert contemporary formulations, but this shift in attitudinal comportment does not limit the implications of intergroup contact findings and/or reduce the importance of sustained interaction for reducing conflict and increasing positive out-group perceptions among majority group members.

Later studies found that contact effects were not limited to racial minorities, but could apply to other stigmatized groups, such as gays and lesbians, the disabled, and the mentally ill (Pettigrew et al., 2011). The wider applicability of contact effects has been interpreted as evidence of the “mere exposure” (Zajonc, 1968) effect, the most basic process necessary for prejudice reduction (Bornstein, 1989; Harmon-Jones & Allen, 2001; Lee, 2001; Zajonc, 1968), as well as the long-term impact of exposure on increased liking of related, yet previously unknown out-group members (Rhodes, Halberstadt, & Brajkovich, 2001). Although there is some disagreement regarding whether contact effects generalize beyond experimental settings, which are usually unreflective of actual

intergroup interaction in the real world, meta-analysis has found that contact effects typically generalize to the entire out-group involved (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006, 2011) if the level of group categorization is effectively perceived among participants (Brown & Hewstone, 2005).

Hewstone and Brown (1986) argued that perceived typicality or representativeness in intergroup interactions allows for generalization from a specific encounter to other unrelated and more general attitudes. Group membership typicality is necessary for generalization because the likelihood that an out-group contact is treated as atypical increases if an out-group member is perceived as exceptional or otherwise unrepresentative of his or her group (Hewstone & Brown, 1986). Several studies have found evidence in support of the effects of group typicality across a variety of contexts (Voci & Hewstone, 2003; Harwood, Hewstone, Paolini, & Voci, 2005). However, typicality may also allow for the possibility that individuals can develop and maintain close associations and friendships with racial out-group members, while simultaneously maintaining racist notions of racial identity. Thus, the extent to which an individual perceives close interracial contacts as exemplary or non-representative of their respective racial group neither necessitates reconsideration nor disconfirmation of preconceived stereotypical notions of race and/or proper interracial relations.

Direct contact effects have even been found to generalize to greater trust, more differentiated perceptions of the target out-group, new contact situations, and uninvolved out-groups due to deprovincialization (Pettigrew, 1997, 2009; Pettigrew et al., 2011). Exposure to positive media exemplars and positive mediated intergroup interactions has been found to positively influence attitudes toward out-groups (Bodenhausen, Schwarz,

Bless, and Wänke, 1995; Covert & Dixon, 2008; Joyce & Harwood, 2012; Mastro & Tukachinsky, 2011; Ortiz & Harwood, 2007; Power, Murphy, & Coover, 1996). In addition, indirect contact effects from knowledge of in-group members with out-group friends have been found to diminish intergroup prejudice (Paolini, Hewstone, Cairns, & Voci, 2004; Pettigrew, Wagner, Christ, & Stellmacher, 2007; Wright, Aron, & Brody, 2008; Wright et al., 1997). Indirect effects, although weaker and more susceptible to change (Turner, Hewstone, Voci, Paolini, & Christ, 2007), relative to direct contact effects, potentially operate by increasing the normative acceptability of out-group contact (Pettigrew et al., 2011).

Experimental studies of mediated indirect contact effects have been informed by social cognitive theory (SCT). Joyce and Harwood (2012) and Ortiz and Harwood (2007) incorporated SCT in their examinations of the extent to which exposure to positive depictions of intergroup contact (U.S. citizen and border patrol officer/undocumented immigrant, gay/straight and White/Black, respectively) was associated with more positive intergroup attitudes, lower levels of intergroup anxiety (Ortiz & Harwood, 2007, pp. 617-618), generalization from individual out-group member to entire out-group (Joyce & Harwood, 2012, p. 5), and generalization from depicted out-group to other out-groups (Joyce & Harwood, 2012, p. 5). SCT posits that vicarious experience can be gleaned from indirect interaction and observation of models in media representations (Bandura, 2002). Both research teams accounted for a variety of moderating variables such as viewer identification,⁵ stimulus generalization,⁶ and group typicality⁷ (Ortiz & Harwood, 2007)

⁵ Within SCT and mediated intergroup contact effects, identification is defined as the degree of perceived similarity between a particular viewer and the media model involved in fictional intergroup interactions (Bandura, 1977; Eyal & Rubin, 2003).

as well as in-group identification, out-group liking, and generalization (Joyce & Harwood, 2012).

Both studies yielded mixed results. Joyce and Harwood (2012) found support for the positive effect of positive portrayals, but found no difference between negative and neutral control portrayals (pp. 7-8). The authors identified extensive news coverage of immigration related topics and the passing of Arizona's controversial SB1070 legislation, also known as the "Papers Please" law, which allows police officers to detain anyone suspected to be an undocumented immigrant (p. 12). The authors further posited that this media exposure may have created a floor effect in which the study's negative experimental condition was comparatively evaluated as no more negative than actual news reports (p. 12).⁸

Likewise, Ortiz and Harwood (2007) found partial support for their hypotheses regarding associations between homophobic attitudes and exposure to gay/straight interactions (pp. 621-624). Identification with the heterosexual media model involved in interactions between gay and straight media exemplars was found to be associated with decreased social distance and decreased intergroup anxiety among straight in-group viewers (p. 624). However, the beneficial effect of identification with media models was not as influential for White respondents exposed to White/Black interracial interactions (p. 624).

⁶ Stimulus generalization is defined as the perceived degree of similarity between fictional and real situations, which may increase and/or decrease the influence of previous learned experience (Bandura, 1986).

⁷ Group typicality is defined as the degree to which an individual out-group member is perceived as representative of the entire out-group (Hewstone & Brown, 1986).

⁸ Joyce and Harwood (2012) also noted that their study did not account for viewer attributions of negativity or positivity (either to the U.S. border patrol officer or the undocumented immigrant) in fictional interactions (p. 12).

In-group identification decreased positive out-group attitudes when the simulated interaction was negative, but had less significant effects when interactions were positive (Joyce & Harwood, 2012, p. 12). This was interpreted as potential evidence that negative mediated interactions depicting conflict (Coover, 2001) may lead viewers to rely more heavily on in-group information, seek out negative out-group information, and/or emphasize the salience of out-group differences (Paolini, Harwood, & Rubin, 2010) in order to process the observed interaction (Joyce & Harwood, 2012, p. 12). Out-group member likeability was found to mediate positive portrayals and positive attitudes (Joyce & Harwood, 2012, p. 12), but not generalization from individual to general out-group (Joyce & Harwood, 2012, p. 13). These findings reinforced previous research regarding the importance of intergroup friendships for increasing positive attitudes toward out-group members (Davies, Tropp, Aron, Pettigrew, & Wright, 2011). According to Joyce and Harwood (2012),

it seems probable that “parasocial” friendships formed with outgroup characters in intergroup narratives operate similarly, arguing for the importance of long term exposure to positive outgroup exemplars in television programs. (p. 13)

Positive attitudes were also found to generalize to other conceptually related out-groups (e.g., political refugees, p. 14), but were insignificant for opinions regarding less pertinent groups (e.g., the elderly, p. 14). Although the authors interpreted this as potential support for secondary cognitive transfer effects, in which an individual progressively transfers emotions closer to, rather than out from, a core out-group target of prejudice (Joyce & Harwood, 2012, p. 14; Harwood, Paolini, Joyce, Rubin, & Arroyo,

2011), it is also possible that this response pattern arose due to priming and social desirability effects (Nederhof, 1985).

Research on intergroup contact effects has several characteristic empirical issues. These studies may be particularly vulnerable to self-selection, in which pre-existing tolerance may predispose individuals to more inclusive social relations. Causal direction issues, regarding whether contact reduces prejudice or whether reduced prejudice leads to increased contact (Pettigrew et al., 2011), were another empirical weakness. The issue of causal direction was emphasized in recent longitudinal research (Binder, Zagefka, Brown, Funke, Kessler, Mummendey, Maquil, Demoulin, Leyens, 2009; Sidanius, Levin, Van Laar, & Sears, 2008), which found that both causal paths operated with approximately equal strength. In addition, there has been significant criticism of the field's inattention to contact effects that may primarily affect minority groups, such as perceptions of group relative deprivation (Matthews & Prothro, 1966; Pettigrew, 1964; Searles & Williams, 1962; Smith & Pettigrew, 2011; Walker & Smith, 2001), increased awareness of systemic discrimination (Poore, Gagne, Barlow, Taylor, & Wright, 2002), and decreased sympathy for majority group members (Durrheim & Dixon, 2010).

Ortiz and Harwood (2007) examined group contact effects in interracial contexts (in contrast to the majority of group contact studies), but several complications remain for drawing conclusions from their findings. Most importantly, the extent to which pre-existing behavioral decorum reduces anxiety in interracial interactions is relatively underexplored and uncertain. Furthermore, the presumption of intergroup anxiety may be somewhat contingent upon individual level perceptions of threat, but contact theory does not specify whether anxiety would occur, be reduced, or transform into ambivalence, in

the absence of perceived threat. Anxiety produced by face-to-face interaction with out-group members may also be moderated by relative proximity of in-group and/or out-group status. The assumption of fixed unilateral positions between individuals based on any of the various social categorizations (e.g., race, sex, class, sexual orientation) is problematic in estimations of contact effects. If anything is to be gleaned from intersectionality scholars, it is that individuals inhabit multiple social locations, as opposed to singular and unvarying nominal identities, each of which exert compounding and/or conflicting influence on one's lived experience (Collins, 1990, 2000).

Contact theorists view behavioral enforcement of social hierarchies as dynamic, multi-faceted, and interactive productions. According to Hamilton and Troler (1986):

Any particular form of stereotyping or prejudice, such as racism, is in all likelihood multiply determined by cognitive, motivational, and social learning processes....Therefore, any attempt to understand such phenomena as a product of one process alone is probably misguided. (Hamilton & Troler, 1986, p. 153)

Much like cultivation scholars, contact theorists specifically identify mass media cultural productions as a potential factor in perpetuating intergroup prejudice. In addition, social psychologists view mass media as a normative social influence on intergroup relations (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955), which functions as part of broader group and interpersonal processes (Oskamp, 2000, p. 5) to produce greater social cohesion and pre-dominance of certain customary standards for behavior (Schacter, Gilbert, & Wegner, 2010), such as personality traits dictated by American individualism.

The primary implication of intergroup contact theory for cultivation analysis lies in its characterization of mass media as a normative social influence (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955) and a mechanism of social control which may interact with, moderate, and/or

mediate (Duckitt, 1992) intergroup and interpersonal interactions. Thus, television has the potential to disseminate mass-produced group-interactive interventions (Stephan & Stephan, 2000) depicting fictional characters within the optimal conditions specified by contact theorists (Allport, 1954). These depictions could act as a vicarious source for individualized understandings of out-group members (Brewer & Miller, 1984) when direct contact is neither feasible nor available. Therefore, the dearth of positive, fictional, interracial interactions could be seen as potentially undermining the assumed beneficial effects provided by vicarious contact via television exposure. However, stereotypical depictions of minority group members or the under-representation of interracial contact should not be interpreted as deliberate exploitation of the detrimental capabilities of mass media. The use of stereotypical presentations is not due to any conscious decision to enforce pernicious portrayals, but economic market constraints, demands (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999, pp. 15-19), and conventions that encourage formulaic and familiar content within U.S. media systems.

Most pertinent to the thesis at hand is the extent to which contact effects both inform and influence attitudes toward out-group members, intergroup prejudice, and intergroup interaction. Thus, if television simultaneously enculturates viewers with dichotomous stereotypical depictions within vicarious experiences of intergroup contact, then opinions about race-conscious social policy could be seen as a result of the processes within which this ideological frame is deciphered, assessed, and applied.

E. Cultivating Tolerance for Intergroup Inequality

According to Shanahan and Morgan (1999), cultivation functions by “inform[ing] the meaning of what we think, say and do” (p. 22). As a means of social control, television “build[s] consensus (if not agreement) on positions through shared terms of discourse and assumptions about priorities and values...so as to benefit social elites” (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999, p. 15). Thus, if idealized American values such as individualism, meritocratic rewards, and egalitarianism are the assumed, shared beneficial “terms” for success in American society, television may cultivate consonant attitudes by decreasing attitudinal and behavioral openness to interventionist policies aiming to reduce racial inequality. Even the potential resistance provided by the concept of egalitarianism supports opposition to race-targeted social policy because its argument against the use of individual and/or group-based preferential treatment in the distribution of social rewards eschews historical and contemporary contexts of intergroup inequality based on racial identity. Such attitudes would likely be inherently resistant to social change if the “common symbolic environment” (Gerbner & Gross, 1976, pp. 173-174) of television is consistently characterized by negative depictions of minority groups, especially Blacks, in violation of key tenets espousing self-sufficiency and personal responsibility.

It is precisely the relationship between social control, television, and the perpetuation of various social inequalities that is of critical interest in cultivation analysis. As stated by Shanahan and Morgan (1999), the “real concern” of cultivation analysis is with:

whether television helps maintain a social power hierarchy marked by an unequal distribution of resources, opportunities and security, differentiated according to gender, race, age and other key markers of ‘difference.’ (p. 57)

Although Gerbner et al. (1978) did not solely implicate television as the source of inequality in the developmental stages of cultivation theory (p. 194) or claim that television uniformly impacts heterogeneous social groups (p. 206), they did acknowledge that television contributes to the maintenance of an “unequal social power hierarchy” (Gerbner, Gross, Jackson-Beeck, Jeffries-Fox, & Signorielli, 1978, p. 194). Thus, when considered within a Gramscian framework as an element of a larger system of hegemony (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999, p. 40), television exists as the “central cultural arm” (Gerbner & Gross, 1976, p. 175) of social control and management of mass publics.⁹

Of particular interest to the perception of television as an element of social control is the phenomenon of mainstreaming. Mainstreaming was initially defined as the ideological gravitation of heavy television viewers toward “conservative currents” and “traditional values on social issues” (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1982, p. 145). The phenomenon was further defined as the “ideological space where the views and opinions most consonant with the needs and interests of social elites are privileged and cultivated” (Shanahan & Jones, 1999). According to Shanahan and Morgan (1999), mainstreaming involves a “particular interaction in which cultivation is stronger for some subgroups, weaker or absent for other groups, *and* in which heavy viewers’ responses are

⁹ Antonio Gramsci’s work discusses social formation as the result of hegemonic relations of force “designed to operate at the lower levels of historical concreteness” and temporal specificity within a particular nation state (Hall, 1986, p. 7). In this view, the state functions as an “educative and formative” “point of condensation” (Hall, 1986, p. 18) where social hegemony is exercised through various decentralized means of constructing and disseminating specific ideological formations.

closer than those of light viewers” (p. 141, emphasis in original). The authors further posit that, regardless of whether mainstreaming results in more liberal and/or conservative attitudes, its effects should be strongest for those whose opinions are furthest from the “social center of gravity” (p. 142), or “the ‘center’ point [which] is determined by cultural reality...an elite-defined ‘center of gravity’ representing what the culture sees as ‘common sense’” (p. 143). The “center” point of the television mainstream regarding intergroup inequalities should be examined to determine what “common sense” notions are being espoused, as well as the extent to which conservative orientations toward minority integration are being cultivated.

Cultivation of attitudes and behaviors that reinforce the social position of elites (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999, p. 40) may be further facilitated by elite ownership of production and distribution (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999, pp. 57, 210-13). Furthermore, the potential advent of VCRs and cable television (and likewise, DVRs, the Internet and new media) is somewhat negated by the lack of significant change in viewing behavior (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999, p. 205), diversity of channels viewed (Dobrow, 1990), television content (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999, p. 205), as well as the level of consolidation of media ownership among larger networks and corporations (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999, pp. 211-213). Those in power control the production and distribution of stories that “reflect, express, and reproduce – i.e., cultivate – specific patterns of power in material ways” (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999, p. 57). Thus, it seems logical to assume that television images are more likely to cultivate orientations away from, rather than in favor of, closing the socioeconomic gap between Whites and Blacks among White viewers.

If television images are assumed to be illustrative of the perspective of media producers, then it is possible to interpret the dominant ideology promoted within this content based on television demographics and substantive content. Using this interpretative approach allows for informed deductions regarding potential undertones of an ideology promoting American idealism and stereotypical perceptions of Blacks disseminated within television imagery. This is not meant to imply collective conspiratorial intent. However, if television images are interpreted as the pictorial vestiges of their producer's ideological standpoint, then an analysis of the potential messages contained within these images must also account for the possible institutional presence of a Eurocentric, heteropatriarchal, and White racial supremacist discourse preserving the privileges of heteronormative, middle class, White men in American society (Leonardo, 2004).

Cultivation theorists view television as one of the primary means of enculturation, socialization (Hepburn, 1998), and vicarious intergroup contact (Dovidio, Eller, & Hewstone, 2011; Fujioka, 1999) in American society. These aspects give the content of mass media storytelling the potential to beneficially impact shared attitudes toward minority groups and intergroup interactions, especially among majority group members. In addition, television socializes viewers by informing them about how to conduct themselves, in order to maintain membership within distinct social groups, by cultivating "shared terms of discourse and behavior" (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999, p. 39).

Similarly, television informs viewers about how to conduct themselves in interactions with out-group members by cultivating "shared terms...for public interaction" (Gerbner, 1969, p. 139). That television "tells most of the stories to most of

the people, most of the time” (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999, p. 13) means that the content, context, and implications of dominant texts require close examination in order to better understand the potential ramifications for intergroup interaction in the real world. The present thesis intends to assess the extent to which television exposure impacts attitudes characterized by key tenets of egalitarian American values. Cultivation effects on affirmative action policy opinions among non-Hispanic Caucasian (White) respondents will be examined using the National Opinion Research Center’s (NORC) cross-sectional General Social Survey (GSS) collected between 2004 and 2012.

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEWS

A. Cultivating Race Consciousness

**1. The Two-Faced Nature of the Numbers Game: TV Demographics and
Stereotypical Presentations of Black Racial Identity**

Cultivation scholars emphasize preliminary examinations of television content prior to making inferences and/or predictions regarding the effects of television exposure (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999, p. 23). When possible, extensive quantitative and qualitative accounts of who is portrayed doing what, in what ways, at what time and place, to whom, and for what reasons are conducted to determine television's representational topography. Depictions of minorities and racial stereotypes have consistently been examined in message systems analysis (Gerbner & Signorielli, 1979; Mastro & Greenberg, 2000; Signorielli, 2009; Weigel, Loomis, & Soja, 1980), but the focus on numerical prevalence leads to a relative lack of depth and socio-historical contextualization of these images. In order to understand the importance of specific representations of non-Whites within a hegemonic social and cultural system, the study of the content of television's messages should incorporate contributions provided by cultural and critical studies. Interpreting television images from this interdisciplinary perspective fleshes out the statistical findings of message systems analysis and allows for more informed hypotheses regarding the impact of TV viewing on attitudes toward perceptions of racial minority groups.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, Americans over the age of 15 spent on average 2.8 hours per day watching television during 2012 (U.S. Dept. of Labor, 2013a; average calculated from yearlong survey of monthly self-reported time spent on activity on pre-assigned day of interest, U.S. Dept. of Labor, 2013b). The portion of time dedicated to television viewing made up over half of all self-reported leisure hours (5.1 total hours per day on average, U.S. Dept. of Labor, 2013a). Although a Nielsen report (2013b) on media usage placed the amount of time spent with television closer to 4 hours per day (4 hours, 24 minutes in 2012; 4 hours, 18 minutes in 2013, Nielsen, 2013b, p. 9), it is clear that Americans continue to spend a significant amount of time in the “common symbolic environment” (Gerbner & Gross, 1976, pp. 173-174) of television.

Concerns regarding the presence and presentation of minority identity on television have persisted throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. In the late 1970s, the United States Commission on Civil Rights (1977) conducted content analyses of television drama programming between 1969 and 1974 to examine the demographic prevalence of female and minority television characters as well as the fictional presentation of these groups’ economic and occupational statuses. The Commission reported that television depictions of minorities were infrequent (10.9% minority characters compared to 89.1% White characters, p. 28) and often stereotypical in terms of economic status and job type. More than half (61.5%, p. 33) of poor television characters were non-Whites and the majority of this group included non-White males (53.8% male and 7.7% female, p. 33). Of the 1.1% of all characters depicted as impoverished during the 6-year sample, 7.4% were non-White males and 5% were non-White females were portrayed in this way (p. 33). Only 0.6% of poor television characters were White males

and no White female characters were portrayed as impoverished (p. 33). Female characters, especially non-White females, were also more frequently depicted as having no identifiable occupation (57% of White women and 53.4% of non-White women could not be identified in an occupational role, p. 31), whereas the majority of White and non-White male characters were identifiably employed (69% of White men and 60% of non-White men, p. 31).

Although White and non-White female characters were equally represented in managerial and professional occupations (19.2% White females and 19.1% non-White females, p. 35), non-White females were more prevalent in clerical and service work roles (23.7% of non-White females compared to 19% of White females, p. 35). Both White and non-White male characters made up the majority of law enforcement and military personnel, laborers, and craftsmen and were relatively equally represented in these occupations (p. 35). Men were equally absent as clerical workers regardless of race (1.4% of White males and 1.2% of non-White males were portrayed in clerical work, p. 35), although non-White men were more prevalent as service workers (8.9%, p. 35) relative to White men (6.0%, p. 35). White men outnumbered non-White men at the managerial and professional level by nearly 10 percent (32.3% White men and 22.6% non-White men, p. 35). In conclusion, the report explicitly implicated the potentially detrimental ramifications of the subtle segregation of fictional economic and occupational roles on general perceptions of the subordinate position of minorities and women in the real world as confirmation of a naturalized social hierarchy (pp. 46-47).

In a 1978 *Time* magazine article, editorial writer, Morrow, complained of the bittersweet advantage of increased visibility of Black characters due to more prominent

majority Black cast programming coupled with continued depictions in superficial and racially stereotyped roles (Morrow, 1978). Message systems analyses regarding the demographic diversity of television have variously claimed that representation of Black characters has increased (Greenberg & Collette, 1997), decreased (Seggar, Hafen, & Hannonen-Gladden, 1981; Signorielli, 2009), and/or been at parity with population shares (Glascock, 2001; Greenberg, Simmons, Hogan, & Atkins, 1980; Harwood & Anderson, 2002; Mastro & Greenberg, 2000). In recent decades, the proportion of Black characters on television has increased to relative parity with demographic shares of Blacks in the U.S. population, whereas other minority groups (Asian Americans, Latinos and Hispanics) continue to be infrequently depicted (Baptista-Fernandez & Greenberg, 1980; Glascock, 2001; Greenberg, 1980; Harwood & Anderson, 2002; Mastro & Greenberg, 2000). In contrast to these studies, Hunt (2002) found that Blacks were over-represented relative to their share of the US population (see also Hunt & Ryder, 2002). Reports of minority over-representation, however, are rare and this trend of representative parity for Black characters has emerged after several decades of underrepresentation. Furthermore, variation in the number of Black characters over time may evince more nuanced patterns regulating and limiting the range of depictions for Blacks on television.

For example, Signorielli (2009) found a significant trend of decreasing proportions of Black characters in network prime time programming broadcast between the fall of 2000 and the fall of 2008. The researcher attributed this decline to the reduced number of situation comedies aired at the time, but overall found that Blacks were at parity with their population shares (p. 327). This trend occurred alongside a consistent increase in the percentage of White characters, no year-to-year linear difference in the

percentage of Hispanic and Latino characters, and no year-to-year linear trends for the percentage of Asian characters (Signorielli, 2009, pp. 327, 329). Signorielli (2009) also found that while Whites and Blacks were at parity, Hispanics, Latinos, and Asians were under-represented, relative to demographic shares (p. 327). Signorielli's (2009) account of the racial diversity of television would seem to indicate the greater likelihood, at least numerically speaking, of depictions of intergroup contact between White and Black characters. However, coethnic casting and limitations on genre diversification for minority actors has often resulted in Blacks appearing more frequently among predominantly Black casts and/or in situation comedies (Greenberg, Mastro, & Brand, 2002; Signorielli, 2009).

2. Stereotypes, Socioeconomic Status, and Attitudes toward Blacks On- and Off-Screen

Historically, Blacks have been depicted as less educated (Greenberg & Brand, 1994), low-achievers (Bramlett-Solomon & Farwell, 1996; Reid, 1979; Seggar & Wheeler, 1973) in subservient occupational positions such as maids, cooks, or postal workers (Baptista-Fernandez & Greenberg, 1980; Warren, 1988; Seggar & Wheeler, 1973) or without a recognizable profession (Baptista-Fernandez & Greenberg, 1980). Scholars have also noted the virtual disappearance of the Black working class and proliferation of the Black middle class in entertainment programming, which places minority characters on equal socioeconomic footing as White characters (Armstrong, Neuendorf, & Brentar, 1992; Dates & Stroman, 2001; Entman & Rojecki, 2000; Jhally & Lewis, 1992). Similarly, early representations of Blacks were overwhelmingly negative

and often depicted Black characters as some combination of “inferior, stupid, comical, immoral, and dishonest” (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1977; Monk-Turner, Heiserman, Johnson, Cotton, & Jackson, 2010), “disrespectful, violent, greedy, ignorant, and power-driven” (Dates, 1980), “menacing, untidy, rebellious, buffoonish, sexual, hopeless, untrained, uneducated, and noisy” (Cosby, 1994). These negative depictions continue to persist in television imagery, but there has also been a dichotomization of Black characters as either “comfortable and successful” (Busselle & Crandall, 2002, p. 265), upstanding members of the middle class or dangerous criminals (Dates & Stroman, 2001; Entman & Rojecki, 2000; Gilens, 1996a, 1996b, 1999).

In a replication of Mastro and Greenberg’s (2000) systemic content analysis of ethnic minority and majority characters on prime-time television during 1996, Monk-Turner and colleagues (2010) analyzed week-long samples of prime-time programming from ABC, NBC, CBS, and FOX during early March 2007 (p. 104). Major and minor characters were included and were evaluated based on race, age, gender, network, income level, and role prominence (p. 104). Overall, Mastro and Greenberg (2000) found that African American characters were more frequently perceived as lazier and less respected among fellow characters relative to White and/or Latino characters (p. 700). Black characters also received the lowest rating ($M = 3.5$, p. 698) for intelligence relative to White ($M = 3.7$, p. 698) and Latino ($M = 3.8$, p. 698) characters, but no significant statistical difference was found by race for coder evaluations of character intellect. However, the latter result is likely due to the small sample of Latino characters ($n = 43$, p. 698) included in Mastro and Greenberg’s study. Monk-Turner et al. (2010) found that the majority of their sample was comprised of White characters (74%, p. 105) while Black

characters were the most represented minority group (16%, compared to 5% Latino, less than 2% Asian American, and less than 3% Other racial minorities, p. 105). However, Monk-Turner and colleagues found no significant differences by race on any of the six measures of appearance, conversational style, and/or personal attributes (such as aggression and laziness), but did find significant differences by race for content coder perceptions of character intelligence.

Although more than half (52%, Monk-Turner et al., 2010, p. 107) of individual Black characters were coded as more intelligent, compared to 43% of White characters (p. 107), a greater proportion of Blacks were perceived as less intelligent (15%, p. 107) relative to Whites (less than 4%, p. 107). Black characters were more often depicted as immoral and despicable, relative to White characters (9% for Blacks on both attributes and 2 and 3% for Whites, respectively, p. 108). Thus, television content may lead to consistent devaluation of Blacks' social capital (Brondolo, Libretti, Rivera, & Walsemann, 2012), reinforce racial prejudice toward Blacks, and increase the likelihood of negative out-group evaluations of Blacks among White viewers. Furthermore, the findings of Monk-Turner et al. (2010) somewhat unsettle evidence offered by Mastro and Greenberg (2000) for the existence of counter-stereotypical minority images that may beneficially impact majority group perceptions of minorities.

Fictional interracial interactions have been characterized by persistent intergroup tension and competition for power and resources. During the late 1970s, interracial interaction on television was consistently portrayed as amicable, although infrequent and disconnected. Based on programming samples from each of the three major networks during the spring of 1977 and 1978, Weigel, Loomis, and Soja (1980) found that Blacks

constituted less than 2 percent of characters appearing in interracial interaction. Furthermore, these interactions were qualitatively evaluated as “cooperative but relatively formalized” (p. 884), “less multifaceted” (p. 884) with “less shared decision making” (p. 884). These interactions were predominantly portrayed in “job-related situational contexts” (Weigel, Loomis, & Soja, 1980, p. 884), which may increase interpretations of intergroup conflict and competition.

Weigel, Loomis, and Soja (1980) distinguished between “cross-racial appearance time,” where Blacks and Whites were merely on the same screen, and “cross-racial interaction time,” which involved active engagement in verbal and/or clear non-verbal communication (p. 886). Most notably, cross-racial interaction occurred during only 2 percent of human appearance time in total programming (1.5% during drama programming, 3.6% during comedy programming, and 1.7% during product commercials, Weigel et al., 1980, p. 888), relative to White-White interaction. Although Weigel, Loomis, and Soja (1980) measured the quantitative frequency and qualitative aspects of cross-racial interactions, the inclusion of commercials is questionable given the truncated and product-driven nature of television advertisements, which may predispose these images to even more stereotypical depictions of minorities.

In their replication of Weigel, Loomis and Soja (1980), Weigel, Kim, and Frost (1995) found that the presence of black characters substantially increased between 1978 and 1989 and the frequency of cross-racial interactions more than tripled by 1989 (Weigel, Kim, & Frost, 1995). Unfortunately, the researchers’ assessment of the qualitative aspects of White/Black interactions in 1989 revealed that these relationships were still portrayed as cooperative but affectively detached, especially when this fictional

contact occurred in settings outside the workplace (Weigel et al., 1995). Likewise, perceptions of intergroup tension, which may reduce support for affirmative action (AA) policy, could be implicitly reinforced by the decrease in Black characters overall (Signorielli, 2009) which simultaneously occurred with an increase in Black characters in supervisory and/or dominant occupational positions relative to White characters (Entman & Rojecki, 2000). These statistical findings provide preliminary evidence as to the impact of fictional depictions of racial minorities on majority group orientations toward racial out-groups in general and race-conscious social policy in particular.

3. The Impact of Media Images on Perceived Realism and Person Perception

Evidence in support of the perceived realism of the fictional socioeconomic standing (Armstrong et al., 1992), negative personality characteristics (Ford, 1997; Fujioka, 1999; Punyanunt-Carter, 2008), inaccuracy of positive stereotypes and depictions of Blacks in “low-achieving roles” (Punyanunt-Carter, 2008, p. 241) and the real-world effect of these images has been found. The information provided by these images and their impact on implicit bias (Craemer, 2010; Northup, 2010), person perception (Ford, 1997), social reality judgment (Busselle, 2001), and affective treatment of out-group members (Rada, 2000) have also been identified as determinants of potential perceptions derived from intergroup interaction. The general empirical conclusion is that television exposure dichotomizes and distorts viewer perceptions of intergroup relations. Thus, entertainment viewing leads to judgments of greater minority success (Armstrong et al., 1992) and more equal social standing between Whites and non-Whites (Dates & Stroman, 2001; Jhally & Lewis, 1992), whereas news viewing results in perceptions of

greater socioeconomic disparity between Whites and Blacks (Gandy & Baron, 1998) and characterizations of Blacks as lazy, less economically successful (Gilliam & Iyengar, 1998), and individually responsible for their own failures (Iyengar, 1990; see Gandy & Baron, 1998 for identification of societal factors for minority failure).

Based on previous content analyses (Gilens, 1996a; Greenberg & Brand, 1994; Jhally & Lewis, 1992; Entman & Rojecki, 2000; Dates & Stroman, 2001), Busselle and Crandall (2002) argued that TV presents two predominant images of Blacks – comfortable and successful or unemployed and criminal. The researchers argued that this dichotomous depiction is compounded by “modern” (Busselle & Crandall, 2002, p. 266; McConahay, 1986) or “aversive racism” (Appiah, 2002, p. 790; Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986) to impact perceptions of group status, as well as potential explanations for socioeconomic differences between Whites and Blacks and the relative lack of success among Blacks.

Modern racism identifies egalitarianism and individualism as “two core elements in America’s collective value system” (Busselle & Crandall, 2002, p. 266) and general conceptualization of an ideal American social structure that simultaneously encompass contemporary forms of “anti-Black sentiment” (Busselle & Crandall, 2002, p. 266). Similar to “symbolic racism” (Kinder & Sears, 1981; McConahay & Hough, 1976) and “colorblind racism” (Bonilla-Silva, 2010a, 2014) theories, modern racism posits that the majority of White Americans would disagree with overtly racist statements, such as Blacks are inherently inferior and/or less intelligent than Whites (McConahay, 1986). Whites’ opposition to race-conscious policy is couched within seemingly non-racial allegations of individualized failure and minimization and/or outright dismissal of the

continued salience of racial discrimination. Furthermore, Busselle and Crandall (2002) argued that underlying beliefs in individual culpability and racial harmony are buttressed by the socioeconomic dichotomization of Blacks on TV (p. 266).

Among Busselle and Crandall's (2002) findings were positive correlations between: (a) total TV exposure and estimates of Blacks' education and income levels (p. 278), (b) news viewing and perceptions that Blacks' relative lack of socioeconomic success stems from lack of motivation (p. 276), (c) sitcom viewing and perceptions that Blacks are better educated, and of less educational attainment differences between Whites and Blacks (p. 277), and (d) drama viewing and perceptions of higher levels of education of White characters and a greater difference in the education levels of Blacks and Whites and perceptions that racial inequality was caused by discrimination and/or lack of motivation (p. 277). News viewing and perceived lack of job opportunities were negatively correlated (p. 276) and total viewing was not related to any explanatory measure for relative lack of socioeconomic success (p. 278).

High-achieving Blacks on TV may stand out more to both Black and White viewers. Theories of evaluative similarity judgments, such as identification and distinctiveness theories, assume that perceived similarity and/or dissimilarity between viewers and observed models is crucial to message efficacy (Appiah, 2002, pp. 777, 778). Studies utilizing undergraduate student populations have found that survey participants reported perceiving occupational roles and negative personality characteristics of Blacks on TV as real, "true-to-life," and/or accurate, but did not similarly view low-achieving roles and positive Black stereotypes as realistic (Punyanunt-Carter, 2008). An experimental design revealed that Black male students had better recall of occupational

TV models (fictional lawyer, doctor, and business student) when the characters were portrayed by Black, but not White, actors (Appiah, 2002). Likewise, Black and White male viewers' perceptions of occupational TV models were positively affected by the race of Black, but not White, characters (Appiah, 2002). Although Appiah (2002) did not address the potential impact of limited variation in occupational prestige and gender of models, model typicality and exemplar effects for *both* White and Black respondents, and/or the potential impact of racial/ethnic identification, his findings potentially contribute evidence to arguments regarding the heightened attention given to Blacks in high-status social positions.

The theorized heuristic cognitive mechanisms (Bradley, 2007; Busselle, 2001; Busselle & Shrum, 2003; Chaiken, Liberman, & Eagly, 1989; Mares, 1996; Schroeder, 2005; Shrum, 1995, 1996, 2001, 2004, 2007a; Shrum & O'Guinn, 1993; Shrum, Wyer, & O'Guinn, 1998) utilized by heavy viewers could potentially impact perceptions of Blacks due to "the repeated instantiation of some stereotypes by their [television] exemplars" (Hawkins, Pingree, & Adler, 1987, p. 557). According to this area of research, repeated exposure to specific images makes those images more readily available to an individual's cognitive evaluations of social situations and other social actors (Bargh, Chaiken, Govender, & Pratto, 1992; Brezina & Winder, 2003; Collins & Loftus, 1975; Dates, 1980; Druckman, 2002, 2004; Ford, 1997; Price & Tewksbury, 1997).

Ford (1997) tested the hypothesis that stereotypical TV portrayals of Blacks increase the likelihood that whites will make negative social perception judgments of a Black, but not White, target person. The researcher found that guilt ratings for Black subjects were higher after exposure to a stereotypical, comedic, Black character portrayal

and a vignette detailing the assault of a fictional college student by his roommate. The heightened perception of Black subjects' guilt relative to that of White target subjects after exposure to a stereotypical Black character portrayal (pp. 270-271) may indicate cognitive heuristic processing in person perception. Thus, if dichotomous negative images of Blacks are portrayed more often than balanced positive ones, the most readily available mental picture of Blacks may be somewhat more negative and predispose heavy viewers to individuated explanations for persistent socioeconomic racial inequality.¹⁰

B. Cultivating Attitudes toward Affirmative Action

1. Media Effects and Social Policy Reasoning

a. Semantic frames and discourse in the affirmative action debate

Arriola and Cole (2001) examined the connection between semantic discourse and political frames used to impart meaning to the term “affirmative action” and attitudes toward out-group members and White racial identity (p. 2462). The researchers primarily drew on Gamson and Modigliani’s (1987) delineation of the major issue frames and packages used in discussions of race-targeted policy. According to Gamson and Modigliani (1987), an “issue frame” provides “a central organizing idea of story line” (p. 143) in order to provide meaning to and connect a series of events (p. 143). In addition to frames, “packages” (Gamson & Modigliani, 1987, p. 143) composed of systematically organized “metaphors, catch phrases, and other condensing symbols” (p. 143) are used in

¹⁰ Of course, the impact of cultivation on the cognitive mechanisms of audience members is mediated and moderated by a variety of individual-level factors, including intergroup contact, social position, ideological orientation and perception of television images, etc.

contestation of social policy. These packages and their associated catch phrases, such as “reverse discrimination” and “no preferential treatment” (Gamson & Modigliani, 1987), are further empowered by sponsorship from political and activist organizations dictating the use of these semantic devices in the shared discourse of laymen and political elites (Arriola & Cole, 2001, p. 2463).

Gamson and Modigliani (1987) identified three primary issue frames and packages used in discussions of race-targeted policy. The first, “remedial action,” is closest to the original definition of affirmative action policy as reparative measures intended to rectify past discrimination (Gamson & Modigliani, 1987). The second, “delicate balance,” is the moderate perspective advocating equality for all racial groups without sacrificing individual rights and/or unintentionally subjecting any group to racial discrimination (Gamson & Modigliani, 1987). The third, “no preferential treatment” (NPT), is comprised of four sub-packages claiming that affirmative action (a) gives some groups unearned and undeserving advantage, (b) is unethical and causes reverse discrimination for groups who do not benefit from such programs, (c) causes stigmatization of affirmative action beneficiaries, and (d) should use non-racial characteristics, such as socioeconomic class, to “divide and conquer” and determine legitimate need for assistance (Gamson & Modigliani, 1987). Furthermore, based on content analyses of media depictions of affirmative action between 1969 and 1984, Gamson and Modigliani (1987) found that remedial action was more frequently used in early years, but was mostly replaced by the NPT frame in later years. The researchers also found that the delicate balance package peaked in use during the late 1970s, but was relatively uncommon in later years (Gamson & Modigliani, 1987).

Using Gamson and Modigliani's (1987) typology, Arriola and Cole (2001) analyzed the impact of modern racism (p. 2465; McConahay, 1986), social dominance orientation or the creation of group cohesion via shared ideologies which benefit a social actor's in-group (p. 2466; see also Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994), situational comfort interacting in predominantly Black settings (p. 2466; see also Cole & Arriola, 1999), and White racial identity attitudes (pp. 2466-2467; see also Helms, 1993; Helms & Carter, 1993) on packages employed to describe affirmative action. The results for their study were based on a two-part questionnaire which elicited open-ended responses from 176 self-identified White college students at a large, urban, private university (p. 2468) regarding opinions on (a) key concerns in the affirmative action debate, (b) descriptive examples and opinions of affirmative action programs and reasoning for such opinions, (c) the effect of race-targeted policies on individuals, schools, and workplaces, and (d) whether affirmative action should be maintained, expanded, or abolished and why (p. 2469).

After content coding responses for respondent use of affirmative action packages, Arriola and Cole (2001) found that the NPT frame was used most often, followed by the delicate balance and remedial action packages (p. 2469). Undeserving advantage and reverse discrimination were the two most frequently used NPT sub-packages, while detrimental to beneficiaries and divide and conquer were less common (p. 2469). Arriola and Cole's (2001) findings further corroborated prior findings of heightened opposition when race-conscious policy was negatively framed (Crosby, Golden, & Hinkle, 1998; Fine, 1992). The majority (40%, p. 2471) of their respondents described programs according to the newer NPT definition, whereas only 15% characterized affirmative

action as social policy focused on equality of opportunity (p. 2471). More than a third (38%, p. 2471) of respondents either claimed that they did not know of a particular affirmative action program and/or described “a program that [was] in no way an example” (p. 2471) of affirmative action. This particular finding was in line with prior findings of ambiguous conceptualizations of specific, legally defined, affirmative action procedures (Crosby & Cordova, 1996; Crosby et al., 1998; Winkelman & Crosby, 1994). Despite their relative lack of knowledge, 59% of respondents advocated abolishing affirmative action (24% proposed maintenance and 18% advocated for expansion of affirmative action, p. 2473).

Those who supported dismantling affirmative action programs (Arriola & Cole, 2001, p. 2474) and those who used the newer definition of affirmative action as “quotas and set-asides” (pp. 2474, 2477) were also more likely to use the NPT frame. Likewise, those who opposed affirmative action were also more likely to hold negative views of racial out-groups (p. 2479). Although elevated scores on measures of racism and situational discomfort with Blacks were associated with opposition, use of the NPT frame was unrelated to measures of out-group attitudes and racial identity development (p. 2475; see also Crosby, Ferdman, & Wingate, 2001, for a review of studies connecting affective orientation of Blacks to affirmative action opinions). The researchers interpreted this seemingly contradictory finding as possible evidence of connotative distortion introduced by the NPT frame (p. 2477), a more nuanced set of racial attitudes among those who applied this package (p. 2479), and the conflicting influence of perceived self-interest, in-group interest, failure to acknowledge the persistence of racial discrimination (Bobo & Kluegel, 1993; Kinder & Sanders, 1990, 1996), and belief in dominant

ideologies of egalitarianism and meritocratic rewards (pp. 2479, 2480). Arriola and Cole (2001) also found that opposition to affirmative action and the tendency to use the NPT package were slightly higher among men (p. 2473).

b. Media frames and discourse in the affirmative action debate

The majority of studies examining media effects on policy reasoning have prioritized either perceptions of prototypicality (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006), media type (non-information or information-oriented, Pan & Kosicki, 1996), cognitive and/or affective heuristic assessments of media images based on perceived out-group stereotypicality (Gilens, 1996b; McLeod, Kosicki, & Pan, 1991; Pan & Kosicki, 1993; Sniderman, Brody, & Tetlock, 1991; Sniderman, Piazza, & Tetlock, 1991; Tan, Fujioka, & Tan, 2000), intergroup prejudice (Ramasubramanian, 2010), and/or causal attributions for out-group failure (Ramasubramanian, 2011) as predictors of favorable attitudes toward affirmative action. Yet, few have examined the discourse of American idealism and/or its manifestation within the ideological framework of “modern” (McConahay, 1986; Rada, 2000), “symbolic” (Henry & Sears, 2002) “color-blind,” (Bonilla-Silva, 2003a, 2010a, 2014), “aversive” (Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986), or “new” (McConahay & Hough, 1976) racism. More specifically, television images promoting the underlying narratives of American idealism, such as meritocratic rewards for hard work, egalitarianism and individualism (Katz et al., 1986), could potentially function as corroborating explanatory examples (Entman, 1994; Entman & Rojecki, 2000; Gilens, 1999) favoring adherence to the ideology of modern racism and opposition to affirmative action.

Pan and Kosicki (1996) reconstructed Whites' policy reasoning process using causal models that accounted for ideological orientations, affect toward Blacks, evaluations and causal attributions of situations involving racial inequality. The researchers analyzed the National Election Study (NES) 1990 Post-Election Survey data to examine the relationship between news media exposure and the use of ideology and/or affect in opinion formation (Pan & Kosicki, 1996, p. 147). According to Pan and Kosicki (1996), greater exposure to information-oriented media, such as news content, enhanced reliance on ideology (p. 147). These findings supported previous research in regards to the impact of news coverage on the activation and application of associated racial and ethnic stereotypes in political evaluations (Domke, McCoy, & Torres, 1999). Although Pan and Kosicki (1996) could not definitively state that greater news media consumption also increased causal attributions, the authors concluded that news content may factor into comparative considerations of ideology, affect, causal attribution, and social reality judgments in Whites' racial policy reasoning processes (p. 174).

Tan, Fujioka, and Tan (2000) conducted another foundational study on media effects, opinion formation, and race-based policy reasoning. In their study of opinion formation on affirmative action among White college students at a public university in the Northwestern U.S. Tan et al. (2000) expanded on Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock's (1991) dual affective and cognitive heuristic models. According to Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock (1991), affective models presumably lead to increased support for racial equality as a general principle and increased agreement with government programs intended to reduce racial inequality due to an individual's positive feelings toward a minority out-group (Sniderman, Brody, & Tetlock, 1991). Whereas affective models are

conceptualized as a less complex decision-making process (Tan et al., 2000, p. 362), support of racial equality in theory and government action in practice within cognitive models is predicated on liberal political ideology (Tan et al., 2000, p. 362).

Although it has been previously assumed that ideology is the derivative of a more complex reasoning process conducted prior to consideration of a particular issue, Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock (1991) distinctly identified ideology as an intermediary stage in the process of policy reasoning. In their cognitive models, political ideology functioned as an indirect determinant of support for government action aimed at increasing intergroup equality via support for the general principle of racial equity. Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock (1991) also assumed that education level overwhelmingly determined which heuristic model an individual was most likely to use. Less educated, “unsophisticated” (Tan et al., 2000, p. 363) individuals with limited information were assumed to rely more on affective models, whereas more educated, “sophisticated” (Tan et al., 2000, p. 363) individuals purportedly utilized cognitive reasoning processes. However, this assumption was interpreted as somewhat untenable due to its highly reductive and divisive nature (Gilens, 1996b). Despite empirical support in opposition to this dichotomous assumption (Gilens, 1996b; Sniderman, Piazza, & Tetlock, 1991), the affective and cognitive heuristic models proposed by Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock (1991) provide two primary avenues for the potential influence of television on decision-making and opinion formation regarding race-based social policy.

Tan et al. (2000) proposed an affective model of policy reasoning that included television exposure as a primary variable in a heuristic causal chain (p. 362) in order to account for the absence of mass media influence in models proposed by Sniderman,

Piazza, and Tetlock (1991). The researchers argued that heuristic models more clearly elucidated political opinion formation when requisite information is unavailable due to the models' simplification of "decision rules based on generalized orientations, such as affect towards an individual or group, or political ideology" (Tan et al., 2000, p. 362). In addition, the primary empirical goal was to estimate a structural equation model (Wald test and Lagrange multiple test for goodness of fit, p. 369) that accounted for affect of subjective, recalled, qualitative evaluations of television portrayals of Blacks within which the assumed direction of causality was from television images to stereotypical evaluations to policy opinions (p. 366).

A voluntary self-administered questionnaire was distributed to undergraduate students during a general education public speaking course open to all majors as fulfillment for the university's communication proficiency requirement (Tan et al., 2000, p. 365). Only those students who racially self-identified as "White" ($n = 166$; 43% male, 57% female; mean age equal to 19.6 years; p. 365) were included in the analysis presumably due to paltry numbers of non-White minority students in the sample. The specific proportion of the original sample made up by minority students was not specified, but the authors did state that, "the racial minority undergraduate population in the university was about nine percent" (p. 365). Although convenience samples such as this one complicate generalization of findings and conclusions to the general U.S. population, the researchers claimed that this sample "allow[ed them] to test for goodness of fit of [their] hypothesized structural model" (p. 367).

In addition to limitations on generalizability imposed by sample demographics, Tan and colleagues (2000) opted for a qualitative measure of television viewing rather

than a quantitative measure of exposure, which may have introduced validity issues for this variable. Due to their interest in “what [their] viewers remembered about television portrayals” (Tan et al., 2000, p. 366), the authors measured television exposure based on “frequencies (absolute counts) of perceived positive (POS) and negative (NEG) portrayals of African Americans” (p. 365) instead of general frequency of viewing. This approach resulted in four frequency measures (total, positive, negative, and neutral descriptors/depictions; p. 366) derived from an open-ended question that instructed respondents to think of, list, and then affectively rate (positive, negative, neutral) portrayals of African Americans in recently viewed television movies and programs (mean number of attributes equal to 2.87 with mean positive equal to 0.72, mean negative equal to 1.79, and mean neutral equal to 0.36; p. 366).

The methodological intention of using this measure, which was adapted from a free response method, was to “evoke more schematic and automatic cognitive processing than checklist methodologies” (p. 366; see also Devine & Baker, 1991; Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Niemann, Jennings, Rozelle, Baxter, & Sullivan, 1994). Tan et al. (2000) measured frequency of television viewing per week ($M = 9.96$ hours, p. 367), but did not use this measure in the estimated structural models. However, the additional inclusion of a general television viewing measure in structural equation models would have been preferable in order to triangulate the qualitative exposure variable and compare the Betas resulting from the use of either measure.

Several other measures may have potentially been problematic for estimations of structural equation models. Unlike later replications that used a comparative score to evaluate in-group favoritism among White respondents (Goldman, 2012; Mastro &

Kopacz, 2006; Ramasubramanian, 2010, 2011), the study's gauge of stereotypes and respondents' feelings toward Blacks involved three factor-analyzed scales based on the seven-point semantic differential measure used in Smith (1991) and Gilens (1996b) for fourteen bipolar stereotype attributes (Tan et al., 2000, p. 366). The study also measured stereotypes of White Americans for comparison (p. 366). The negative traits included "drug dealing, crime, violence and alcohol abuse" (p. 367), as well as "laziness...and preference for welfare" (p. 367). These specific attributes were described by Smith (1991) as "common place and vital images of people in the United States" (p. 3) used by the public as primary descriptors of Blacks. However, this measure could also potentially suffer from validity issues as it may have more accurately measured respondent recall of stereotypes about Blacks rather than affective orientations toward Blacks. In addition to recall and affective evaluations, their qualitative television measure may have also measured the cognitive accessibility of stereotypical television images of Blacks. The ambiguity of the television exposure measure and the lack of a general exposure measure (e.g. total number of hours of television watched per day on the average day) could have implications for conclusions drawn by the researchers.

Likewise, the study's six-item measure of policy opinion clustered into two factors, but only the factor accounting for opinions on university efforts to "recruit and retain" minority students and faculty, government affirmative action policies, and reverse discrimination caused by civil rights campaigns achieved an acceptable level of reliability (Tan et al., 2000, p. 368). Given that respondents generally agreed with the concept of reserving university scholarships for minority students, but seemed somewhat less concerned about comparable funds for White students, this factor may have been a gauge

of opposition to the notion of “preferential treatment” (Arriola & Cole, 2001; Raskin, 1995), rather than underlying perceptions of intergroup threat and/or increased intergroup competition due to diversity-based initiatives.

The resulting SEM constructed by Tan, Fujioka, and Tan (2000) found that paths from perceived negative TV portrayals to stereotypes of Black intelligence, laziness, tolerance, patriotism, trustworthiness, and preference for welfare to affirmative action opinions explained the most variance (p. 369). The researchers concluded “perceptions of negative TV portrayals significantly predicted some negative stereotypes, which in turn significantly predicted opposition to affirmative action policies” (Tan et al., 2000, pp. 369-370). This effect presumably occurred due to the heightened arousal factor associated with and increased remembrance of negative TV content (Lang, 1991; Lang, Dhillon, & Dong, 1995; Lang & Friestad, 1993; Newhagen & Reeves, 1991).

In direct contrast, positive TV portrayal perceptions did not lead to either positive stereotypes or beneficial impacts on orientations toward affirmative action (Tan et al., 2000, p. 370). Tan, Fujioka, and Tan (2000) interpreted support for their affective model of race-coded policy reasoning as grounds to dismiss general exposure variables in favor of streamlined perception of negative TV depiction measures in simplified models (p. 370). However, given the basic proposition of cultivation theory and the empirical limitations of the study itself, it would seem somewhat impractical to altogether eschew cumulative TV viewing measures.

Several replication studies have made important additions to Tan, Fujioka, and Tan’s (2000) original structural equation model. Mastro and Kopacz (2006) offered self-categorization theory (Turner, 1985, 1987) as an explanatory factor in the policy

reasoning chain for race-conscious programs targeting African Americans and Latino Americans (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006, p. 308). Self-categorization theory posits that identification of self, in-group, and out-group members will occur during a dynamic categorization process within which personal identity and social identity (Oakes, 2003, p. 8) are distinguished based on individual- and/or group-level characteristics. Once an individual has been categorized as an in-group member, their idiosyncratic traits are diminished in favor of “collective self-concept, convergent with in-group members and divergent with out-group members” (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006, p. 309; see also Abrams & Hogg, 1990; Turner, 1985, 1987).

Group-based classification leads to the development of descriptive and proscriptive prototypes of category membership or sets of traits perceived as representative of the associated category (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006, p. 309). Group prototypes allow for relative evaluations of self and others; perceptual, behavioral, emotional, and attitudinal adjustment; self-esteem and self-concept maintenance (Hogg & Hains, 1996; Hogg & McGarty, 1990; Hogg & Terry, 2000); and the assumption of depersonalized, prototype-based processes of person perception in which adherence to salient group typicality is more positively received than significant deviance (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006 p. 309; see also Hogg, Cooper-Shaw, & Holzworth, 1993; Hogg & Hains, 1996).

Based on the assumptions of self-categorization theory, Mastro and Kopacz (2006) thus assumed that prototypicality (p. 310) and proximity to in-group norms (p. 318), not perceived valence, of media portrayals will be stronger predictors of out-group evaluations and race-based policy reasoning (p. 310). In addition to Tan et al.’s (2000)

evaluation measures for valence of TV portrayals (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006, p. 312), racial stereotypes (p. 313), and policy opinions, the researchers computed a comparative measure of prototypicality of TV depictions allegedly using the same qualitative characteristics as Tan et al. (intelligent/unintelligent, educated/uneducated, violent/not violent, etc.) by subtracting respondent evaluations of “the ‘typical’ depiction” of Black TV or movie characters (p. 313) from respondent evaluations of White characters.

Mastro and Kopacz (2006) calculated stereotype scales and policy opinion orientations based on Tan et al.’s (2000) original measures (p. 314). The resulting ordinary least squares path analyses (p. 314) and structural models estimated by the researchers were interpreted as supportive of their hypotheses regarding the superior predictive ability of prototypicality measures within policy reasoning models (pp. 316, 317, 318). However, character trait dichotomies regarding patriotism, alcohol abuse, preference for welfare,¹¹ tolerance, and, perhaps most alarmingly, laziness were noticeably absent from Mastro and Kopacz’ (2006) revised models.

Furthermore, Mastro and Kopacz’ (2006) replication did not specify the group attributes and/or attribute evaluations schematically generated by respondents (p. 313) and did not clearly state whether all fourteen original stereotype measures found in Tan et al. (2000) were used (pp. 313-314). Mastro and Kopacz (2006) also failed to include detailed factor analysis output, which complicates any comparative evaluations of within-factor loading, variance explained, and/or commonality estimates, and were seemingly undeterred by the fact that confirmatory factor analysis did not reveal any obvious

¹¹ Assuming that the included measure referred to by Mastro and Kopacz (2006) as “self-supporting” was not in fact a misnomer for the original “preference for welfare” variable used in Tan et al. (2000).

statistical superiority of their comparative prototypicality scores, relative to Tan et al.'s (2000) static unilateral measures (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006, pp. 313-314).

Confirmatory factor analyses for criminality and “mainstream values” (p. 313) measures of Black TV portrayals produced alphas equal to 0.80 and 0.73 (p. 313), whereas the comparable constructed measures derived from Tan et al. (2000) attained alphas equal to 0.77 and 0.74 (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006, p. 314). Only the criminality scale for evaluations of Latino TV stereotypes passed confirmatory factor analysis of internal consistency and parallelism (alpha equal to 0.78, relative to their construction of Tan et al.'s (2000) measure with alpha equal to 0.76, Mastro & Kopacz, 2006, pp. 313, 314). The lack of clarity regarding attributes included in their stereotype scales has implications for the researchers' conclusion that “in-group prototypicality of media characterizations may be more consequential in predicting stereotypic responses than...content valence” (p. 318). And likewise, their conclusion that their “tests of these causal chains reveal that the prototypicality-based model provides a better fit” (p. 318) than Tan et al.'s (2000) valence-based model.

The stereotype factors preceding policy opinions in Mastro and Kopacz' (2006) estimated models differed for interpretations of Black and Latino TV characters. Blacks were evaluated on stereotypes of mainstream values and criminality, whereas Latinos were only evaluated based on the latter factor given the low level of reliability for the former (pp. 313, 314). Similarly, negative affective evaluations of Black TV depictions produced statistically significant pathways to perceived “mainstream values” stereotypes ($\beta = -.17, p < .05, p. 315$) and policy opinions ($\beta = -.29, p < .01, p. 315$), whereas neither

positive nor negative interpretations of Latino TV portrayals preceded stereotype evaluations or policy orientations (p. 317).

Furthermore, SEM pathways from evaluations of the prototypicality of Black TV portrayals in terms of mainstream values produced significant Betas for stereotypes of criminality ($\beta = -.45, p < .01$, p. 316) and mainstream values ($\beta = -.47, p < .01$, p. 316), but only real-world stereotypes within the latter factor impacted policy opinions ($\beta = -.22, p < .05$, p. 316). SEM pathways from prototypicality of fictional Latinos in terms of criminality to stereotypes of Latino criminality produced significant coefficients ($\beta = -.30, p < .01$, p. 317), but the coefficient between criminality stereotypes and policy opinions was noticeably weaker ($\beta = -.17, p < .05$, p. 317).

Regardless of this variation, Mastro and Kopacz (2006) viewed these results as largely consistent with self-categorization theory and supportive of their hypotheses that greater deviation from in-group norms would produce more unfavorable out-group evaluations (p. 318). Furthermore, this generalized interpretation of their expanded models ignores nuanced characteristics of American race relations. That Blacks were dually considered, but Latinos only critiqued based on criminality may indicate that (a) evaluations of criminality are *a priori* an evaluation of attributes violating implicit assumptions of law-abiding citizenship as characteristic of normative White identity, (b) there is an important inter-minority distinction among Whites based on phenotypic features, such as skin color and facial features, and/or (c) Whites consider Latinos a somewhat distinct *ethnic* out-group rather than a completely dissimilar racial out-group.

The distinction between “race” and “ethnicity” hinges on “common sense” associations of ethnic identity with variation based on learned social, linguistic, cultural,

and/or religious factors, whereas racial identity is assumed to indicate general biological and/or genetic dissimilarity that produced separate sub-species of *Homo sapiens* (Allport, 1954, pp. 107, 113-115). Such an interpretation corroborates previous findings that Whites may evaluate fictional Latinos somewhat more positively, or at least less negatively, and perceive them as being less deviant from White in-group norms and traits than fictional Blacks (Ramasubramanian, 2010; Mastro et al., 2007; Mastro & Kopacz, 2006).

If Whites utilize this nuanced interpretation of out-group members, it could have further implications for opposition to affirmative action based on the particular descriptive presentation of beneficiaries as either racial, ethnic, or, presumably, gender minorities. Put more bluntly, White support for diversity initiatives targeting Hispanics (and any other groups perceived as White ethnic groups) may be positively affected if Whites view this minority group as relatively closer to normative in-group identity than other non-White groups. On the other hand, any race-coded topic will potentially become a contentious issue if Whites make no distinction between racial and ethnic minorities.

In her first replication of Tan et al. (2000) and Mastro and Kopacz (2006), Ramasubramanian (2010) proposed a comprehensive, yet parsimonious model to explain media effects on support for affirmative action policies (p. 108). Ramasubramanian (2010) synthesized propositions from social identity theory (p. 104), priming (pp. 106-107), and attribution theory (p. 105; see also Iyengar, 1990). Attribution theory posits that episodic framing leads to individual attribution and thematic framing leads to depersonalized societal and/or globalized attribution (p. 105; see also Iyengar, 1990). She also introduced prejudicial feelings as a mediating variable, refined Mastro and Kopacz'

(2006) global “mainstream values” measure into a more reliable “perceived laziness” measure (p. 107), and verified her specified model for both Latinos and Blacks (pp. 112-113, 114). Ramasubramanian (2010) further hypothesized that the tendency of television narratives to highlight individual factors (such as lack of motivation or problematic morals) as explanations for out-group failure may elicit detrimental intergroup emotions that consequently decrease support for equalizing social policy (p. 106).

Ramasubramanian (2010) gauged affirmative action support based on respondent attitudes toward the utility of affirmative action as a reparative approach to dealing with past discrimination, the fairness of affirmative action policies for Whites, and whether a university should consider an applicant’s race (p. 111). In addition, the author added three items assessing political actions indicative of support for affirmative action, such as voting for a petition to increase government assistance for racial minorities, petitioning in favor of preferential hiring of non-Whites at companies with track records of racial discrimination, and voting for a petition to increase non-White admission in state universities (p. 111). Differential scores were calculated and averaged to measure in-group favoritism based on perceived stereotypes of criminality and laziness of non-Whites on TV (p. 109), stereotypical beliefs of non-White criminality and laziness in the real world (pp. 109-110), and notions of in-group superiority (prejudicial feelings, such as feelings of discomfort, disgust, fear, and anger; pp. 110-111).

Based on a sample of 275 White, upper-level, undergraduate students attending a public university in the Southern U.S. (Ramasubramanian, 2010, p. 108), the researcher found that respondents rated fictional Blacks and Latinos less favorably in terms of perceived criminality and laziness ($M = 4.69$, $SD = 1.01$ for perceived criminality and M

= 4.55, $SD = .97$ for perceived laziness of TV Blacks and $M = 4.45$, $SD = .95$ for perceived criminality and $M = 4.35$, $SD = .95$ for perceived laziness of TV Latinos, pp. 111, 112). Mean scores for stereotypical beliefs of Blacks' lacking work ethic and predilections for crime in the real world were also higher relative to those for Latinos ($M = 5.10$, $SD = 1.05$ for stereotypical beliefs of Black criminality and $M = 4.80$, $SD = 1.08$ for stereotypical beliefs of Black laziness in the real world, relative to $M = 4.66$, $SD = 1.07$ for stereotypical beliefs of Latino criminality and $M = 4.64$, $SD = 1.04$ for stereotypical beliefs of Latino laziness in the real world, pp. 111, 112). Prejudicial feelings toward Blacks were only slightly greater than that expressed for Latinos ($M = 3.51$, $SD = 1.21$ for prejudicial feelings toward Blacks and $M = 3.21$, $SD = 1.20$ for prejudicial feelings toward Latinos, pp. 111, 112).

Only perceptions of criminality and laziness of fictional Blacks were directly and negatively correlated with respondent support for affirmative action ($r = -.17$ and $-.16$, respectively, p. 111). This somewhat unsurprising result could indicate the extent to which affirmative action has been linked with Blacks in the media and society at large. That perceptions of Latinos as unmotivated individuals and/or lawbreakers was not statistically correlated with support for affirmative action further indicates that Whites may be dismissive of the issue's relevance in relation to non-Black minorities and/or that the concept does not activate the same mental associations during considerations of Latinos.

Estimated SEM (maximum likelihood estimation, Ramasubramanian, 2010, p. 112) revealed statistically significant paths from perceived laziness ($\beta = .16$, p. 113) and stereotypical beliefs of laziness of Blacks ($\beta = .36$, p. 113) to stronger prejudicial feelings

and weaker support for affirmative action policies ($\beta = -.23$, pp. 113). The indirect impact of perceived criminality of TV Blacks ($\beta = .25$, p. 113) when filtered through stereotypical beliefs about Black criminality also resulted in a negative coefficient for affirmative action support ($\beta = -.16$, p. 113). Unlike perceptions of Blacks characters' lack of willpower, which indirectly and negatively predicted pro-affirmative action opinions via prejudice (p. 113), a direct pathway was found from perceptions of Black criminality to stereotypical beliefs of Black criminality and affirmative action support (p. 113). The direct path from stereotypical beliefs of Latino criminality ($\beta = -.16$, p. 114) and the indirect path between prejudicial feelings toward Latinos and affirmative action support ($\beta = -.13$, p. 114) were relatively weaker.

According to Ramasubramanian's (2010) findings, perceptions of Black criminality on TV were associated with stronger stereotypical beliefs regarding this trait among Blacks in real life and weaker support for race-conscious policy (p. 113). Interpretations of laziness among fictional Blacks directly increased prejudice and stereotypical beliefs about Black laziness, but only indirectly decreased support for pro-minority policy after passing through prejudicial feelings toward Blacks (p. 113). Thus, it seems that perceptions of criminality may have been more salient than perceptions of laziness among respondents in the study. Likewise, perceptions of these character traits may be related to distinct, although still similar, cognitive heuristic pathways. Perceived laziness may only indirectly impact support for affirmative action due to an additional phase of cognitive processing within which modern racism contextualizes the comparative evaluation of observed out-group and in-group traits (Jacobson, 1985; Nosworthy, Lea, & Lindsay, 1995; Sears, Van Laar, Carrillo, & Kosterman, 1997).

Given that the concept of “laziness” bears relatively little meaning and/or polarizing valence when detached from the meritocratic ideology of American society, greater agreement with the importance of individualist values could serve to contextualize and code perceived lack of will among Blacks in terms of their subordinate socioeconomic status and intergroup position relative to dominant in-group members. Put more simply, the importance of laziness as a negative trait should be somewhat contingent upon agreement with the validity and fairness of a merit-based system for distributing economic and status rewards, such that poverty will characterize those who were unwilling to put in the requisite hard work and further justify the denial of government assistance intending to facilitate upward social mobility.

Unfortunately, Ramasubramanian (2010) did not use a direct measure of TV exposure, but instead an indirect measure of perceptions of TV portrayals similar to that in Tan et al. (2000), which precludes drawing any conclusions regarding structural paths between media consumption, stereotype salience, prejudice, and affirmative action support. This empirical substitution also complicates determining whether variation in the amount of TV exposure created subsequent variation and/or nuance in race-conscious policy support.

Ramasubramanian (2010) seemed to assume that affirmative action policy was viewed as the implementation of “democratic ideals into everyday practice” (p. 103). However, previous studies find evidence of White respondents’ relative lack of information about affirmative action (Arriola & Cole, 2001, p. 2476; Gamson, 1992; Steeh & Krysan, 1996) and inability to offer a definition of affirmative action (Crosby & Cordova, 1996) and/or the objectives of such programs (Crosby et al., 1998; Winkelman

& Crosby, 1994). When Whites do offer definitions, these descriptions are more similar to various Court delineations (515 U.S. 200, Nos. 89-453, 89-700, 1995; 539 U.S. 244, 02-516, 2003; 78 F.3d 932, 5th Cir., 1996; 263 F.3d 1234, 11th Cir. 2001; 438 U.S. 265, 1978; 557 U.S. 557, No. 07-1428, 2009; 443 U.S. 193, No. 78-432, 1979; 490 U.S. 642, No. 87-1387, 1989) and/or mass media distinctions (Gamson & Modigliani, 1987) than former President Lyndon B. Johnson's Executive Order 10925 (Exec. Order 10925, Part III, Subpart A, § 301.1, 1961) or the U.S. Department of Labor's OFCCP (U.S. Dept. of Labor OFCCP, 1965).

In addition to findings based on White-only samples, a structural model estimated in Fujioka (2005) may reveal a slightly different cognitive process for policy reasoning among minorities. Previous research has suggested that the reaction of Black viewers to in-group portrayals is distinct from that of White out-group members due to heightened awareness of an underlying dichotomy of demonization or tokenism (Wood, 2003), depictive disconnections from lived experience (Jhally & Lewis, 1992), and potentially detrimental impacts on out-group public perceptions and expectations of Blacks as a group (Fujioka, 2005, pp. 454-455).

Fujioka (2005) found that stronger support for affirmative action among 202 Black undergraduate students was positively correlated with perceptions of negative TV stereotypes of Blacks, but only after accounting for the intermediary pathway involving respondent perception of negatively impacted public impressions of Blacks (p. 459). SEM path analyses and hierarchical regression analysis also potentially indicated the active discounting of source validity among minority viewers as pathways between perceived negative media portrayals, perceived validity of TV depictions, and support for

affirmative action were not statistically significant (p. 462). Perhaps most relevant to the study at hand is the author's acknowledgement of the potential polarization of American audiences based on racial identity as "minority media images may not only affect our racial environment (by providing information about in-group and out-groups) but also foster intergroup conflict" (p. 462).

In conclusion, alternative explanations offered by causal attribution theory (Ramasubramanian, 2011), social identity theory (Ramasubramanian, 2010), associative cognitive networks and heuristic priming, affective policy reasoning model (Ramasubramanian, 2010; Tan et al., 2000), mediated exemplars (Mutz & Goldman, 2010; Wright et al., 1997; Zillmann & Brosius, 2000), mediated intergroup contact theory (Goldman, 2012), prototypicality (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006) function on the same basic mechanical principle of cultivation – greater exposure leads to stronger perceptions of stereotypical traits of racial identity which leads to stronger intergroup prejudice and weaker support for affirmative action policy. Overall, the aforementioned studies found strong associations between Black TV characters and undesirable individual characteristics such as laziness and criminality based on amount of TV viewing and/or recall of media exemplars of White respondents. The predictive validity of these conceptual associations for trait perception of real world Blacks and support of affirmative action policy was further linked to the strength of stereotypical and negative identity constructions of Black TV characters.

According to the cultivation hypothesis, television exposure should primarily exert an indirect effect on policy standpoints via cognitive associations of fictional Blacks with stereotypical and undesirable traits such as laziness and lack of intelligence. Thus, if

this cognitive affective path accurately maps the progression from viewing to policy opinions, then TV will be a strong predictor of opposition to affirmative action. If the relationship between opposition and TV is more supplementary to prejudiced feelings, intergroup hostility, and/or adherence to the American meritocracy/individualism trope, then one or more of these variables will also be a statistically significant predictor of lack of support for pro-minority programs.

I will expand on previous studies of the relationship between television exposure and support for pro-minority policy (Fujioka, 2005; Goldman, 2012; Mastro & Kopacz, 2006; Pan & Kosicki, 1996; Ramasubramanian, 2010, 2011; Tan et al., 2000; Zhang & Tan, 2011). Furthermore, my study improves prior empirical undertakings in several ways. First, the inclusion of belief in meritocratic values attempts to bridge the empirical gap between studies situated in communication and media effects and those conducted in cognitive science and social psychology. Second, the use of a national probability sample will allow for greater generalizability to the policy reasoning processes of White Americans. Lastly, the use of GSS data spanning twelve years and measures of total amount of viewing will allow examinations of the immediate and longer-term effects of television viewing on affirmative action policy opinions.

C. Empirical Issues in Social Policy Reasoning and Cultivation Analysis

Cultivation studies are necessary for a comprehensive understanding of cultivation effects among majority group members, but traditional approaches to cultivation analysis have been complicated by ideological shifts in intergroup relations. Measuring attitudes through survey responses has been the primary approach to the

operationalization of cultivation effects (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999, p. 24-26). Due to the recent emergence of the new “color-blind” racial ideology (Bonilla-Silva, 1997, 2003a, 2010a; Dalton, 2011; Dyer, 2011; Gans, 1999; McIntyre, 1997; Rothenberg, 2011) or “modern” racism (McConahay, 1986) in American society, studies relying on self-reported, attitudinal measures have increasingly contended with the threat to empirical validity introduced by social desirability bias (Nederhof, 1985) and method of data collection (Shrum, 2007b). The ability to gauge honest opinions toward race and other sensitive social issues, which may be interpreted as evidence of individual bias, is complicated by key tenets of modern racism that discourage overtly racist and/or bigoted attitudes. Thus, cultivation analysis encounters the issue of social desirability effects when using survey-based methods. These effects may impact accurate measurement and estimation of the extent to which television viewing influences perceptions of racial out-group members and support for affirmative action.

However, while modern racism may discourage attitudinal expressions of racial prejudice, the impact of this new ideology on behaviors has yet to be explored. Furthermore, the focus on self-reported attitudes does not allow direct observation of behavioral patterns and/or inconsistencies between attitudes and behavior. Media effects researchers may be able to sidestep these empirical complications by refocusing on behaviors and attitude-behavior consistency in environments less prone to social desirability bias, such as Internet mediated contexts.

Many policy reasoning studies contend with empirical issues such as limited generalizability due to the use of undergraduate student samples, validity of control variables based on proxy measures that may be highly correlated with race, e.g., grade

point average (GPA) as a proxy measure for cognitive processing ability (Busselle & Crandall, 2002, p. 274), and the limited ability to gauge and/or control for social desirability effects. Overall, however, the growing body of research on media exposure and attitudes toward race-conscious social policy (Fujioka, 2005; Goldman, 2012; Mastro & Kopacz, 2006; Ramasubramanian, 2011, 2010; Tan et al., 2000) has found that perceptions of out-group deviation from desirable in-group norms and negative stereotypical out-group traits fostered by television exposure predict statistically significant paths to intergroup prejudice and policy orientation.

Thus, if modern racism has been incorporated into generalized American idealism, then these variables could potentially be equally, if not more, significant predictors of racial prejudice and policy opinions. This argument regarding another potential source of opposition to AA is contingent upon two empirical assumptions. One being that TV news coverage addresses AA more frequently and/or in greater detail than entertainment TV and the other that relevant values, such as individualism and meritocratic rewards, affecting policy opinions are consistently presented across an array of TV genres and content (Mutz & Nir, 2010). Although the longitudinal GSS data available does not allow for a targeted measure of TV news consumption, the present argument maintains cultivation theory's primary assumptions that those who watch more TV will also watch more of each content and genre type.

D. Summary

The overrepresentation of Blacks in association with crime and poverty (Dixon & Linz, 2000; Gilens, 1996a; Romer, Jamieson, & De Coteau, 1998) and the tendency

toward episodic framing in news media may encourage implicit causal attribution of out-group failure to individual shortcomings and explicit minimization of societal explanations espoused in thematic framing such as systemic racial discrimination and prejudice (Gilliam & Iyengar, 1998; Iyengar, 1990; Sotirovic, 2003). Similarly, the virtual extinction of working class Blacks and consistent presentation of well-to-do, middle class Blacks in fictional storylines might further encourage viewers to individualize Black success stories as evidence of the diminished importance of racial discrimination and problematic values among impoverished Blacks. Thus, if people tend to answer survey questions in a probabilistic manner by arriving at a particular thought as a questionnaire prompt ends (Zaller & Feldman, 1992), then the role of cognitive accessibility of media exemplars in the decision making process may be heightened. Furthermore, if these cognitive illustrations exist as dichotomous examples of the benefits of adhering to classic American values, such as hard work, determination, and individual responsibility, then opposition to AA policy might circumvent reliance on socially undesirable reasoning, such as racial prejudice.

Collectively, representational patterns in television entertainment and news may lead viewers to conclude that (a) racism and discrimination are not an issue in the U.S. anymore because (b) opportunities for upward mobility are abundant for those who are (c) individually determined and (d) willing to work hard to achieve the comforts of a middle class existence. Furthermore, this collective fictional re-construction allows viewers to (e) dismiss thematic claims alleging institutionalized racial discrimination and prejudice. This dismissal often (f) denies the necessity of affirmative action programs because (g) there are plenty of Blacks who have “made it” and (h) those who have not

simply are not working hard enough to do the same. Each element within this “color-blind” rhetoric for racial inequality reflects a key component of American idealism. Thus, proponents of (a), (b), and (e) attest to the inherent egalitarianism of American society. Advocates of (c) and (g) offer claims in support of American citizens’ preference and propensity for individualism. Lastly, supporters of (d), (f), and (h) point to the existence of meritocratic rewards for diligent and dedicated efforts.

In conclusion, the present thesis takes respondent agreement with survey prompts gauging beliefs in meritocratic values as a potential predictor of anti-affirmative action opinions perceived as conceptually and cognitively devoid of racial prejudice. For many Whites, the potential increase in racial out-group competition caused by affirmative action may seem disconcertingly close to the implementation of systematic government-backed reverse discrimination. Misleading definitions of affirmative action as “preferential treatment” may further decrease majority group support essential to maintain reparative efforts intended to increase racial equality. Yet, the impact of modern racism and the primary discursive frames of affirmative action have not been fully accounted for in cultivation and media effects studies, even in those examining the “Obama effect” (Goldman, 2012; Ramasubramanian, 2011; Welch & Sigelman, 2011; Zhang & Tan, 2011). The combined effects of such rhetorical and ideological framing should be analyzed to assess the extent to which television exposure reinforces primary narratives and opposition to affirmative action policy. Thus, the examination conducted in this thesis is a valuable addition to previous literature in policy reasoning, media effects and cultivation analysis studies.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

A. Data

My sample included all adult respondents of the General Social Survey in 2004, 2006, 2008, and 2010 (GSS, N=1,267).¹² I selected respondents using listwise deletion for valid responses to the dependent outcome variable. I am particularly interested in the role of belief in meritocratic values and minimization of discrimination in determining attitudes toward preferential race-targeted hiring practices.

A cross-sectional version of the GSS has been regularly collected using a national probability sample of American households since the 1970s. GSS interviews were administered before, during, and after exposure to the 2008 presidential election campaigns. Thus, the GSS may provide relevant data for assessing potential exemplar effects derived from increased exposure to President Barack Obama during his presidential campaign. However, any conclusions drawn regarding exemplar effects would be tentative at best as there is no explicit measure of exposure to campaign coverage included in the dataset.

Two other advantages of the GSS are sample representativeness and extended time periods for data collection. Unlike previous studies, which relied on university student populations, GSS respondents are randomly selected using a national probability sampling method. Similarly, whereas previous studies utilized data from one (Fujioka,

¹² The original sample size was N=14,128 prior to listwise deletion. Summary statistics and *t*-test comparison of sample means indicate that the listwise deleted sample does not significantly differ from the larger sample on measures of interest for this study.

2005; Tan et al., 2000), two (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006; Zhang & Tan, 2011), or three (Goldman, 2012) relatively close collection times, the twelve-year time span of the GSS could be used to examine potential long-term impacts of TV exposure. However, an analysis of this type is beyond the scope of the current thesis.

B. Analytic Variables

1. Dependent Variable

I estimated ordinal logistic regression models to analyze determinants of attitudes toward preferential hiring of blacks. My dependent outcome variable in ordinal logistic regression models is strong opposition to preferential hiring of blacks. This measure was based on the following GSS questionnaire prompt:

Some people say that because of past discrimination, blacks should be given preference in hiring and promotion. Others say that such preference in hiring and promotion of blacks is wrong because it discriminates against whites. What about your opinion – are you for or against preferential hiring and promotion of blacks? (Smith et al., 2013, p. 331)

Responses were measured in two separate steps. The first step asked respondents whether they supported and/or opposed preferential hiring in general and the second asked the degree to which they either supported or opposed such practices. Responses to the second step were measured using a 4-point, forced agree/disagree, Likert-type scale with “Strongly support preferential hiring” equal to 1, “Support preferential hiring” equal to 2, “Oppose preferential hiring” equal to 3, and “Strongly oppose preferential hiring” equal to 4. This measure was left in its original ordinal form for regression analysis.

2. Control Variables

I include measures of political conservatism, educational attainment (highest year of completed schooling), being a non-Hispanic black (versus “whites” and “Others”), and overt racial prejudice as control variables. I also include two measures from a set of GSS questionnaire prompts regarding government spending (“too little,” “about right,” “too much”; excluding “don’t know” responses) on a variety of social issues and programs as control variables for general fiscal conservatism. Specifically, I use opinions of government spending on “improving the conditions of blacks” (Smith et al., 2013, p. 223) to gauge attitudes toward government assistance targeting a specific racial/ethnic group. I use opinions on government spending on welfare and “assistance to the poor” (Smith et al., 2013, p. 230) as a comparative control variable for fiscally conservative attitudes toward government assistance that is relatively less overtly race-targeted than preferential hiring.¹³ I combined responses to these variables from the primary GSS ballot with those in the supplemental GSS ballot versions Y and Z to maximize valid cases.

3. Independent Variables

My independent predictor variables include:

- (1) hours spent watching television per day on the average day;
- (2) agreement that Blacks should “work their way up without special favors;”
- (3) agreement that socioeconomic differences between Whites and Blacks are due to Blacks’ lack of will;
- (4) agreement that socioeconomic differences between Whites and Blacks are *not* due to discrimination against Blacks;

¹³ Although racialized connotations may influence opinions toward spending on “welfare” and “assistance to the poor,” I assume that these implicit cognitive links are less likely to be triggered by the aforementioned terms than by phrases such as “affirmative action” and “improving the conditions of Blacks.”

In addition, I include the following variables analyzed in previous studies of policy reasoning (Fujioka, 2005; Goldman, 2012; Mastro & Kopacz, 2006; Pan & Kosicki, 1996; Ramasubramanian, 2010, 2011; Tan et al., 2000; Zhang & Tan, 2011):

- (5) comparative assessments of (a) the work ethic and (b) intelligence of blacks relative to whites;
- (6) whether respondents favor Whites in comparative assessments of (a) the work ethic and (b) the intelligence of Blacks relative to Whites.

a. Television viewing

Television viewing was measured based on respondent reported number of hours spent watching television per day on the average day (mean equal to 2.93, standard deviation equal to 2.44, N=14,041). For cross-tabulations, I recoded the measure of TV viewing such that respondents who watch no more than one hour of TV per day on the average day were categorized as light TV viewers. Those who watch between 2 and 3 hours of TV per day on the average day were categorized as moderate TV viewers. Those who watch 4 or more hours of TV per day on the average day were categorized as heavy TV viewers. The majority of respondents fall into the moderate TV viewing group (45.3%), followed by respondents in the heavy TV viewing group (29.9%), and the light TV viewing group (24.9%).

b. Belief in meritocratic values

My measure of belief in meritocratic values aims to capture relative attitudinal investment in this key tenet of the discourse of modern racism. Modern racism is a complex ideology and politicized racial discourse within which individualism, meritocratic rewards for an individual's hard work, and egalitarianism function as seemingly non-racial elements justifying racial inequality (McConahay, 1986). The first

includes responses to the GSS prompt asking respondents if Blacks should overcome prejudice without special favors as “Irish, Italians, Jewish and many other minorities” (Smith et al., 2013, p. 332) have done. I reverse-coded responses to the first factor from the original, 5-point, Likert-type scale that ranged from “Agree strongly” to “Disagree strongly” with a mid-point category of “Neither agree nor disagree” such that stronger agreement was equal to a score of 5 and stronger disagreement equal to a score of 1.

c. Overt racial prejudice

I constructed several scale measures of latent concepts. The first of these was the measure of overt racial prejudice. I partially replicated the measure of overt racial prejudice used in Feldman and Huddy (2005) to predict racial prejudice among Whites. A cumulative score for racial prejudice was calculated using three GSS items (Cronbach’s alpha, $\alpha = .78$) examining Whites’ racial attitudes toward close relations with Blacks. These items include responses to prompts asking whether respondents would (a) favor or oppose a close relative marrying a Black person, (b) favor or oppose living in a neighborhood where half of the residents were Black, and (c) support or oppose a homeowner’s right to discriminate based on race in home sales. The former two variables were originally measured using a 5-point Likert-type scale that ranged from “Strongly favor” (equal to 1) to “Strongly oppose” (equal to 5) with a mid-point category of “Neither favor nor oppose” (equal to 3; “don’t know” responses excluded). The last factor was reverse coded from the original three-point Likert-type scale such that responses in support of homeowners’ right to racially discriminate received higher scores than responses in opposition to this right (“neither” and “don’t know” responses were excluded).

d. Minimization of discrimination against Blacks

I include three separate measures of the extent to which respondents minimize the impact of racial discrimination against Blacks. The first two assess whether respondents individualize and/or acknowledge the role of systemic discrimination against Blacks in persistent wealth disparities between Whites and Blacks. These forced agree/disagree questionnaire prompts asked respondents whether they agreed or disagreed that socioeconomic differences between Whites and Blacks were due to (a) discrimination and/or (b) lack of will among Blacks. These items were reverse coded from the original scale such that denial of discrimination and agreement that Blacks lack the individual will to succeed received higher scores than the respective opposing responses.

e. Racial stereotypes and comparative assessments of work ethic and intelligence

Stereotypical beliefs about Blacks' intelligence and work ethic were measured using GSS questionnaire prompts that asked respondents to individually rate Blacks and Whites based on each group's general level of intelligence and work ethic (12 items total, 6 for intelligence and 6 for work ethic). The original responses were measured using a 7-point Likert scale that ranged from "unintelligent" and "hard-working" (equal to 1) to "intelligent" and "lazy" (equal to 7). Work ethic ratings were reverse coded such that higher scores indicated more favorable ratings of the target group. Ratings of in-group intelligence and work ethic were subtracted from ratings of Black traits such that negative scores indicate more favorable in-group ratings, positive scores indicate more favorable out-group ratings, and scores of zero indicate no difference between in-group and out-group ratings. Mainstreaming effects have been found to increase agreement with more politically moderate attitudes that maintain the social hierarchy, even among Blacks

(Matabane, 1988). Thus, I also recoded these factors as two binary variables measuring in-group favoritism and social dominance orientation with assessments of Whites' characteristics as the normative reference group.

C. Sample Descriptives and Regression Model Specification

Table 1 displays sample demographics and response patterns for analytic variables of interest. As we can see in Table 1, 51% heavy TV-viewers strongly oppose preferential hiring of Blacks. However, this proportion is lower than the proportion of moderate and light TV-viewers who also strongly oppose preferential hiring (56.8 and 57%, respectively; see Table 1).

Table 1 also shows that larger proportions of respondents who: (1) rank Whites as more hardworking relative to Blacks, (2) agree that socioeconomic differences between Whites and Blacks are due to Blacks' lack of will, (3) agree that socioeconomic differences between Whites and Blacks are *not* due to discrimination against Blacks, (4) agree that Blacks should not receive special favors to improve their life outcomes, and (5) express more overt racial intolerance strongly oppose preferential hiring.

I estimated two nested ordinal logistic regression models using survey estimation and include a multinomial variable for year of survey. Model 1 includes all control variables and all explanatory variables. Model 2 includes control variables, explanatory variables, and the following relevant interaction terms between TV-viewing and: attitudes toward government spending, in-group favoritism, racial prejudice, belief in meritocratic values, disagreement that socioeconomic differences between Whites and Blacks are due to discrimination, and agreement that socioeconomic differences between Whites and

Blacks are due to Black's lack of will. Model 1 synthesizes findings of previous studies of the effect of TV-viewing on racial policy reasoning. Model 2 assesses the potential interactive effects of TV-viewing on explanatory variables of interest.

D. Findings

Attitude toward preferential hiring of Blacks is most highly correlated with responses to the measure of belief in meritocratic values ($r=0.33$) followed by minimization of discrimination ($r=.27$), attitude toward government spending on welfare and aid to the poor ($r=.22$), overt racial prejudice ($r=.21$), attitude toward government spending on assistance to Blacks ($r=.20$), and political orientation ($r=.17$). The correlations between attitude toward preferential hiring of Blacks and individual attribution ($r=.11$), attitude toward preferential hiring of Blacks and TV-viewing ($r=-.09$), attitude toward preferential hiring of Blacks and assessments of work ethic ($r=-.10$) and intelligence ($r=.07$), and attitude toward preferential hiring of Blacks and in-group favoritism ($r=.07$) are relatively low. Interestingly, although perhaps not surprisingly, belief in meritocratic values is most highly correlated with individual attribution for socioeconomic differences between Whites and Blacks ($r=.35$), in-group favoritism ($r=.27$), minimization of discrimination ($r=.27$), and overt racial prejudice ($r=.26$).

I used a likelihood ratio test to assess the relative goodness-of-fit for Model 1 (excluding all interaction terms) and Model 2 (including all interaction terms). The likelihood ratio test result is statistically significant (LR $\chi^2(7)=17.13$, $\text{Prob}>\chi^2=.0166$; assuming Model 2 is nested in Model 1) and I reject the null hypothesis that the

constraints in the restricted model (Model 1) are true. I thus select Model 2 (including all interaction terms) as my preferred model.

Table 2 displays the results for Model 2 including all interaction terms in the estimation of opinion on race-conscious preferential hiring practices. As we can see in Table 2, TV-viewing is a statistically significant predictor of attitude toward preferential hiring of Blacks net of the effect of demographic controls (race, education level, political orientation, attitudes toward government social welfare programs, overt racial prejudice, survey year), assessments of the work ethic and intelligence of Blacks and Whites, in-group favoritism, minimization of discrimination, individual attribution for socioeconomic differences between Blacks and Whites, belief in meritocratic values, and the interaction terms. Net of the effect of other variables in the model, each one-hour increase in average daily TV-viewing adds .34 ($\beta_{\text{TV-VIEWING}}=.3426$, $z=3.39$, $\text{Prob}>|z|=.001$) to the log odds of expressing less support for preferential hiring of Blacks. This indicates that net of other factors each additional hour of TV-viewing per day on the average day multiplies the odds of strongly opposing preferential hiring of Blacks by a factor of 1.41 ($=\exp(\beta_{\text{TV-VIEWING}}=.3426)$). The individual z -test statistic for this parameter ($z=3.39$, $\text{Prob}>|z|=.001$) indicates that the estimated effect of TV-viewing on attitude toward preferential hiring of Blacks significantly differs from zero net of demographic controls and other explanatory variables in the model.

Agreement with the statement that Blacks should work their way up without “special favors” is also a statistically significant predictor of attitude toward preferential hiring of blacks holding constant demographic controls (race, education level, political orientation, attitudes toward government social welfare programs, overt racial prejudice,

survey year), assessments of the work ethic and intelligence of Blacks and Whites, in-group favoritism, minimization of discrimination, individual attribution for socioeconomic differences between Blacks and Whites, TV-viewing, and the interaction terms. Net of the effect of other variables in the model, agreement that Blacks should receive no “special favors” adds .84 ($\beta_{\text{WORK WAY UP}}=.8393$, $z=7.05$, $\text{Prob}>|z|=.000$) to the log odds of expressing less support for preferential hiring of Blacks. Thus, net of other factors agreement with views favoring meritocratic values multiplies the odds of strongly opposing preferential hiring of Blacks by a factor of 2.31 ($=\exp(\beta_{\text{WORK WAY UP}}=.8393)$). The individual z -test statistic for this parameter ($z=7.05$, $\text{Prob}>|z|=.000$) indicates that the estimated effect of belief in meritocratic values on attitude toward preferential hiring of Blacks significantly differs from zero net of demographic controls and other explanatory variables in the model.

Attitudes minimizing the impact of discrimination are also statistically significant predictors of opinion on preferential hiring net of demographic controls (race, education level, political orientation, attitudes toward government social welfare programs, overt racial prejudice, survey year), assessments of the work ethic and intelligence of Blacks and Whites, in-group favoritism, individual attribution for socioeconomic differences between Blacks and Whites, TV-viewing, belief in meritocratic values, and the interaction terms. Disagreement that socioeconomic differences between Whites and Blacks are due to discrimination against Blacks adds approximately .60 ($\beta_{\text{NO DISCRIMINATION}}=.6004$, $z=3.08$, $\text{Prob}>|z|=.002$) to the log odds of expressing less support for preferential hiring net of other variables in the model. Thus, net of other factors minimization of discrimination multiplies the odds of strongly opposing preferential

hiring of Blacks by a factor of 1.82 ($=\exp(\beta_{\text{NO DISCRIMINATION}}=.6004)$). The individual z -test statistic for this parameter ($z=3.08$, $\text{Prob}>|z|=.002$) indicates that the estimated effect of minimization of discrimination on attitude toward preferential hiring of Blacks significantly differs from zero net of demographic controls and other explanatory variables in the model.

Favoring the White racial in-group in comparative assessments of the work ethic of Blacks and White is approaching, but does not reach statistical significance net of demographic controls and other explanatory variables in the model. The individual z -test statistic for this parameter is not statistically significant ($z=-1.92$, $\text{Prob}>|z|=.055$) and I thus fail to reject the null hypothesis. Net of the effect of other factors in the model, the estimated effect of in-group favoritism toward Whites does not significantly differ from zero.

Comparative assessments of the work ethic of Blacks and White is approaching, but does not reach statistical significance net of demographic controls and other explanatory variables in the model. The individual z -test statistic for this parameter is not statistically significant ($z=-1.90$, $\text{Prob}>|z|=.058$) and I thus fail to reject the null hypothesis. Net of the effect of other factors in the model, the estimated effect of comparative assessments of work ethic does not significantly differ from zero.

Agreement with the statement that socioeconomic differences between Blacks and Whites are due to lack of will among Blacks is not a statistically significant predictor of attitude toward preferential hiring holding constant demographic controls, work ethic and intelligence assessments, in-group favoritism, minimization of discrimination, TV-viewing, belief in meritocratic values, and the interaction terms in the model. The

individual z -test statistic for this parameter is not statistically significant ($z=-1.53$, $\text{Prob}>|z|=.125$) and I thus fail to reject the null hypothesis. Net of the effect of other factors in the model, the estimated effect of individual attribution does not significantly differ from zero.

Comparative assessments of the intelligence of Blacks and Whites is also not a statistically significant predictor of attitude toward preferential hiring of Blacks net of demographic controls and other explanatory variables in the model. The individual z -test statistic for this parameter is not statistically significant ($z=-1.24$, $\text{Prob}>|z|=.214$) and I thus fail to reject the null hypothesis. Net of the effect of other variables in the model, the estimated effect of comparative assessments of intelligence does not significantly differ from zero.

I evaluated the estimated joint effect of explanatory variables identified in previous studies and the explanatory variables of interest in the study at hand using Wald chi-squared tests. For measures of minimization of discrimination, individual attribution, and belief in meritocratic values, the Wald chi-squared test is statistically significant ($W \chi^2(1)=58.95$, $\text{Prob}>\chi^2=.0000$). Thus, I reject the null hypothesis that the joint effect of these three variables equals zero net of other factors in the model. This result indicates that the joint effect of minimization of discrimination, individual attribution, and belief in meritocratic values on attitude toward preferential hiring of Blacks significantly differs from zero, holding constant other predictors.

For measures of comparative assessments of the work ethic and intelligence of Blacks and Whites and in-group favoritism, the Wald chi-squared test is not statistically significant ($W \chi^2(3)=5.12$, $\text{Prob}>\chi^2=.1629$). I therefore fail to reject the null hypothesis

that the joint effect of these three variables equals zero net of other factors in the model. This result indicates that net of other predictors the joint effect of comparative assessments of the work ethic and intelligence of Blacks and Whites and in-group favoritism on attitude toward preferential hiring of Blacks does not significantly differ from zero, holding constant other predictors.

The relationship between statistically significant predictor variables and attitude toward race-conscious employment policy is perhaps best displayed graphically. Figure 1 shows the predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential hiring of Blacks by belief in meritocratic values for light (one or fewer hours of TV-viewing per day on the average day), moderate (between 2 and 3 hours of TV-viewing per day on the average day), and heavy TV-viewers (4 or more hours of TV-viewing per day on the average day). As we can see in Figure 1, the predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential hiring of Blacks increases by roughly $.57 (= .71 - .14)$, or 80.3% for light TV-viewers as agreement with the belief in meritocratic value measure increases and net of the effect of other predictors in the model. Thus, the predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential hiring for light TV-viewers who strongly agree that Blacks should work their way up without “special favors” is $.08 (= .71 - .65)$, or 8.5%, above the predicted probability for all TV-viewers with strong belief in meritocratic values all other factors being held constant.

In comparison, net of other factors, the predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential hiring of Blacks increases by approximately $.37 (= .55 - .18)$, or 67.2%, for heavy TV-viewers as agreement with the belief in meritocratic value measure increases. Thus, the predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential hiring for heavy TV-

viewers who strongly agree that Blacks should work their way up without “special favors” is .16 (= .71-.55), or 22.5%, the predicted probability for all TV-viewers with strong belief in meritocratic values all other factors being held constant. These patterns may provide potential evidence that the mainstreaming effects of TV-viewing is somewhat moderated by belief in meritocratic values.

Figure 2 displays the predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential employment practices based on race by belief in meritocratic value and race of respondent (non-Hispanic Blacks versus Others). As we can see in Figure 2, the predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential hiring increases by roughly .40 (= .49-.09), or 81.6%, as belief in meritocratic value increases for non-Hispanic Blacks who are light TV-viewers net of other factors. This increase is relatively more than the .58 (= .73-.15), or 79.5%, increase as belief in meritocratic value increases among light TV-viewing respondents who did not racially identify as non-Hispanic Black.

For heavy TV-viewers, the predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential hiring increases by roughly .14 (= .27-.13), or 51.9%, as belief in meritocratic value increases for non-Hispanic Blacks who are light TV-viewers net of other factors. In comparison, the predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential hiring of Blacks increases by .32 (= .62-.30), or 51.6%, as belief in meritocratic value increases among heavy TV-viewers who did not racially identify as non-Hispanic Black.

Figure 3 displays the predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential employment practices based on race by belief in meritocratic value and educational attainment (high school or less versus one year of college or more). As we can see in Figure 3, the predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential hiring increases by

approximately .60 (= .74-.14), or 81.1%, as belief in meritocratic value increases among light TV-viewing respondents with one year of college or more net of other factors. Again, this increase is slightly more than the .55 (= .68-.13), or 80.9%, increase as belief in meritocratic value increases among light TV-viewing respondents with a high school education or less.

For heavy TV-viewers, the predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential hiring increases by roughly .42 (= .63-.21), or 66.7%, as belief in meritocratic value increases among college-educated heavy TV-viewers net of other factors. In comparison, the predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential hiring of Blacks increases by about .39 (= .51-.12), or 76.5%, as belief in meritocratic value increases among heavy TV-viewers with no more than a high school education.

I also graphed the relationship between TV-viewing, belief in meritocratic values, and overt racial prejudice (based on score on overt racial prejudice measure at or below mean and score on overt racial prejudice measure above mean). Figure 4 displays the predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential hiring of Blacks by belief in meritocratic value and TV-viewing by score on the prejudice measure. We can see in Figure 4 that the predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential hiring increases by approximately .50 (= .62-.12), or 80.6%, as belief in meritocratic value increases among light TV-viewing respondents whose racial prejudice score is at or below the sample mean net of other factors. For heavy TV-viewers whose overt racial prejudice score is at or below the sample mean, the predicted probability of strongly opposing race-based hiring practices increases by roughly .28 (= .47-.19), or 59.6%, as belief in meritocratic value increases holding constant other factors.

We can also see in Figure 4 that the predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential hiring increases by approximately .58 ($=.74-.16$), or 78.4%, as belief in meritocratic value increases among light TV-viewers whose racial prejudice score is above the sample mean, holding constant other factors. This is a relatively larger increase in comparison to that of the .43 ($=.60-.17$), or 71.7%, increase in the predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential hiring as belief in meritocratic value increases among heavy TV-viewers whose racial prejudice score is above the sample mean all other factors held constant.

Finally, Figure 5 displays the predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential hiring of Blacks by belief in meritocratic value and TV-viewing by minimization of discrimination. As we can see in Figure 5, the predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential hiring increases by approximately .46 ($=.58-.12$), or 79.3%, as belief in meritocratic value increases among light TV-viewing respondents who did not minimize discrimination, holding constant other factors. For heavy TV-viewers who did not minimize discrimination, the predicted probability of strongly opposing race-based hiring practices increases by roughly .26 ($=.41-.15$), or 63.4%, as belief in meritocratic value increases net of other factors.

Again, we can see in Figure 5 that the predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential hiring increases by approximately .57 ($=.75-.18$), or 76%, as belief in meritocratic value increases among light TV-viewers who minimized the impact of racial discrimination, net of other factors. In comparison, this is a relatively larger increase than the increase of .38 ($=.63-.25$), or 60.3%, in the predicted probability of strongly opposing

preferential hiring as belief in meritocratic value increases among heavy TV-viewers who minimized the impact of racial discrimination all other factors being held constant.

In sum, it seems that stronger agreement with the statement that Blacks should work their way up without “special favors” strengthens the mainstreaming effect of TV-viewing. This effect is particularly evident among non-Hispanic Blacks, more educated respondents, and those who expressed less overt racial prejudice. Respondents in these categories are more likely to hold attitudes toward the hypothetical preferential hiring example which fall outside of generally conservative opposition toward such practices. However, the effect of strong belief in meritocratic value seems to reinforce opinions minimizing the impact of racial discrimination on the life outcomes of Blacks.

E. Discussion

Overall, the findings of this study lend strong support to expectations derived from abstract liberalism as a component of the new colorblind racism. Most notably, the coefficients for minimization of discrimination and agreement that Blacks should not receive “special favors” predict increases in the log odds of expressing less support for preferential hiring net of the effect of demographic controls and other predictors in the model. In addition, TV-viewing also predicts an increase in the log odds of expressing less support for preferential hiring of Blacks, holding constant demographic controls and other predictor variables in the model.

Abstract liberalism entails stronger agreement with principles of individualism, egalitarianism, and meritocratic rewards for hard work. In the context of colorblind racism, abstract liberalism is invoked in sentiments that structural racial discrimination

neither exists nor unduly influences the life outcomes of minorities. Secondly, this discourse maintains that every individual has an equal chance of socioeconomic success. Lastly, abstract liberalism in the context of colorblind racism contends that only the most motivated individuals exert enough effort to merit societal rewards. Thus, strong opposition toward preferential hiring of blacks is more heavily influenced by attitudes that align with the abstract liberalism clause of colorblind racism in the estimated model than racial stereotypes.

In addition, the effect of TV-viewing on strong opposition toward preferential hiring of Blacks provides evidence that this exposure provides potentially weak reinforcement of belief in meritocratic rewards. The interaction between TV-viewing and belief in meritocratic values is statistically significant in Model 2 ($\beta_{\text{TV-VIEWING}*\text{WORK WAY UP}}=-.0668$, $z=-3.19$, $\text{Prob}>|z|=.001$), but predicts a decrease of .07 in the log odds of expressing less support for preferential hiring of Blacks, holding constant demographic controls and other predictor variables in the model. However, the effect of this interaction is relatively small compared to that of the additive effect of belief in meritocratic values ($\beta_{\text{WORK WAY UP}}=.6345$, $z=7.68$, $\text{Prob}>|z|=.000$).

In contrast to cultivation theory and abstract liberalism, my findings do not support those of previous studies of race-targeted policy reasoning. I did not find support for Sniderman et al. (1991a) and Pan and Kosicki's (1996) assumption that ideological orientations function as an intermediary stage in policy reasoning processes. In my model, political self-identification, agreement that government spends too much on welfare and aid to the poor, and agreement that government spends too much on assistance targeted toward Blacks are not statistically significant predictors of attitude

toward preferential hiring of Blacks, holding constant control variables and other explanatory variables in the model.

I do not find support for the proposed policy reasoning mechanisms identified by Mastro and Kopacz (2006). Mastro and Kopacz (2006) contend that perceived prototypicality of Blacks (p. 310) and perceived proximity of Blacks to in-group White behavioral norms (p. 318) are significant determinants of opposition to affirmative action policy. In my model, in-group favoritism is not a statistically significant predictor of attitude toward preferential hiring of Blacks net of the effect of other predictors in the model

I do not find evidence in support of factors identified by Tan, Fujioka, and Tan (2000) in their policy reasoning models. Tan et al.'s (2000) policy reasoning models constructed pathways from perceived negative TV portrayals of Blacks and stereotypical perceptions of the intelligence and work ethic of Blacks to opposition of affirmative action (pp. 369-370). However, net of other factors comparative assessments of work ethic or intelligence of Whites and Blacks did not reach statistical significance in the estimated model. Thus, after accounting for attitudes aligning with tenets of abstract liberalism, less favorable assessments of Blacks' work ethic and intelligence are not statistically significant predictors of attitude toward preferential hiring of Blacks.

My findings do not support those of Ramasubramanian (2010) at least where individual attribution is concerned. In my model, agreement with the statement that blacks' lack of will is the cause of their lack of socioeconomic success is not a statistically significant predictor of attitude toward preferential hiring of Blacks, holding constant controls and other predictor variables. The interaction between TV-viewing and

individual attribution was also not statistically significant. Thus, I did not find support for Ramasubramanian's hypothesis that episodic framing in TV content leads to individualized explanations for out-group failure and decreased support for reparative social policy (2010, p. 106).

The statistically significant coefficient for minimization of discrimination offers some support of depersonalization of societal and global attributions when other variables are held constant ($\beta_{\text{NO DISCRIMINATION}}=.6004$, $z=3.08$, $\text{Prob}>|z|=.002$). However, net of other predictors, the interaction between minimization of discrimination and TV-viewing is not a statistically significant predictor of attitude toward preferential hiring of Blacks. I therefore cannot conclude that thematic framing effects in TV content are significant determinants of policy reasoning attitudes toward race-based employment practices (Iyengar, 1990, p. 105).

My findings thus lend strongest support to arguments regarding the impact of abstract liberalism and colorblind racism on policy reasoning. Specifically, justification of opposition toward preferential hiring of Blacks may depend more on attitudinal minimization of discrimination and opposition to "special favors" for specific racial groups. This could indicate that "preferential hiring" and "special favors" activate the same cognitive frame of affirmative action wherein special consideration is granted due to race and not individual merit. Likewise, this framing could also activate opposition based on the perceived threat to in-group resources and status posed by preferential treatment. I used comparative assessments of work ethic and intelligence between Whites and Blacks and measures of favoritism of Whites in an attempt to account for in-group bias and counteract the effects of cognitive "no preferential treatment" frames potentially

triggered by the question wording itself (Arriola & Cole, 2001; Gamson & Modigliani, 1987).

It is unclear how much the description of the hypothetical affirmative action practice as “preferential hiring” influenced opposition among GSS respondents. It is possible that this description triggered cognitive links to the “no preferential treatment” and “no special favors” policy frames and then triggered opposition rather than opposition based on the reference to race and/or racial preference. It is also possible that the “preferential treatment” phrase triggered general opposition to special consideration based on race instead of objective merit. Future research should focus on the role of the “no preferential treatment” frame, the “no special favors” frame, and the impact of tenets of abstract liberalism in determining support for affirmative action programs.

1. Principled Opposition, Racial Resentment, or Preference for Non-preferential Treatment?

Social judgments mingle with cognition and affect (Damasio, 1994) and serve to contextualize out-group perceptions in the maintenance of the status quo (Tetlock, 2002). Furthermore, judgments determined via social intuition involve automatic and controlled cognitive processes (Shiffrin & Schneider, 1977) rather than a straightforward deliberative process (Haidt, 2001). Information presented by the media could contribute to cognitive attributions and associations between social actors, specific characteristics, and life outcomes (Price & Tewksbury, 1997; see also Bargh et al., 1992; Collins & Loftus, 1975; Druckman, 2002, 2004). The rhetorical structure (Goffman, 1974), linguistics (Pan & Kosicki, 1993; Simon & Jerit, 2007; Whorf, 1956) and use of framing

(Entman, 1993) as the “central organizing idea or storyline that provides meaning” (Gamson & Modigliani, 1987, p. 143) are all contextual cues that allow viewers to make inferences and mental links between a particular person, their group classification and identity (be it racial or otherwise), and the underlying reasons for that person’s social prospects.

According to scholars of American race relations, modern racism (McConahay, 1986), “new racism” (Bobo, Kluegel, & Smith, 1997; Bonilla-Silva, 2003b), “color-blind racial ideology” or “color-blind racism” (Bonilla-Silva, 2010a, p. 25), and “symbolic racism” (Bobo et al., 1997; Henry & Sears, 2002; Kinder & Sanders, 1996; McConahay & Hough, 1976) are variations of “a new powerful ideology [that] has emerged to defend the contemporary racial order” (Bonilla-Silva, 2010a, p. 25). This particular racial ideology was crystallized during the late 1960s in the post-Civil Rights social atmosphere to form the new American racial structure (Bonilla-Silva, 2010a, p. 16; Omi & Winant, 1994). According to Bonilla-Silva (2010a):

Because the social practices and mechanisms to reproduce racial privilege acquired a new, subtle, and apparently nonracial character, new rationalizations emerged to justify the new racial order. (p. 16)

Whereas prior to the Civil Rights movement, prejudiced perspectives were overtly expressed and enforced (e.g., biological claims of Blacks’ innate inferiority and subhuman status, Jim Crow social doctrines, segregationist legislation, etc.), contemporary opinions regarding racial difference are less likely to raise politically correct eyebrows (Bonilla-Silva, 2010a, p. 25). Yet, despite post-Civil Rights claims of post-racialism and racial equality, individuals of White, European/Caucasian descent accrue personal, social, economic, and cultural benefits, while individuals of non-White

(African American/Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian/Asian American, American Indian/Native American, etc.) descent encounter a multitude of obstacles due to their respective racial categorization.

These reformulated versions of social racism convert previously overt systemic prejudice and discrimination into its more subtle and persistent contemporary forms. One such form is adherence to non-racial values, such as the importance of individualism, meritocracy, and egalitarianism, as justification for opposition to any consideration of race for the distribution of social rewards. The triumvirate values of abstract liberalism offer an ideologically safeguarded position of “de-racialized” opposition from which to invoke responses to race-targeted policy. Responses to the GSS prompt regarding a sine qua non, bootstrap-tugging, individualist mentality among Blacks appear to be reliable predictors of affirmative action opposition and succinct bulwarks of the prevailing racial status quo.

Furthermore, this rhetoric provides ideological support for opposition to race-conscious policy. It does not however require acknowledgement of institutionalized discrimination, White privilege, and/or persistent racial inequality because it presumes that the idealized American social system functions on merit and fairness. Thus, the measure of individual merit used in this analysis effectively disclosed the discursive protocols of modern racism and color-blind racial ideology. This measure achieves this because it reflects the illusion of an egalitarian social meritocracy wherein no single factor, race included, has any undue influence in determining individual success.

F. Concluding Remarks

1. Empirical Limitations

Several specific limitations of the present thesis study should be noted. First, the phrase “preferential hiring” used in the questionnaire prompt may have cognitively primed respondents toward the “no preferential treatment” package (Gamson & Modigliani, 1987) in their interpretations of the necessity of race-targeted hiring practices. The negatively coded terminology outlined by this particular package may have also predisposed respondents to increased opposition directed at the concept of special considerations and/or preferential treatment rather than legally defined affirmative action policy itself.

Second, this study cannot generalize beyond the sample at hand to estimate the impact of television exposure on the racial attitudes of non-Whites. Although a sample of minority respondents was available in the GSS dataset, examinations of media effects and social reasoning processes of non-Whites would benefit from a larger sample of respondents. Furthermore, the inclusion of Hispanics and Asian Americans as additional racial/ethnic out-groups would allow for more comprehensive examinations of moderator and mediator variable effects, as well as whether anti-minority dispositions among Whites are equally employed for all racial and ethnic out-groups or specifically directed at Blacks.

Lastly, the ability of the preferred model to estimate significant effects is contingent upon the sensitivity of included measures. Feldman and Huddy (2005) used a similar measure of racial resentment in their examination of “resentment-as-ideology”

(Feldman & Huddy, 2005, pp. 171, 176-178) and “resentment-as-prejudice” (Feldman & Huddy, 2005, pp. 171, 173-176) in White opposition to AA programs. Although the ideological function of resentment among conservatives was not found (Feldman & Huddy, 2005, p. 180), the impact of agreement with measures of egalitarianism and individualism were found to significantly predict racial resentment among both conservatives and liberals (Feldman & Huddy, 2005, p. 180).

Racial resentment was also heavily influenced by overt racial prejudice, strongly associated with racially prejudiced attitudes, and predictive of opposition to AA policy among liberals (Feldman & Huddy, 2005, p. 180). In their study, resentment seems to serve an ideological function for conservatives as racial attitudes, but were only weakly related to AA opposition and the other political belief measures (Feldman & Huddy, 2005, p. 180). The authors interpreted this as the result of using measures not sensitive enough to accurately gauge the “ideological nature of resentment” (Feldman & Huddy, 2005, p. 180) and/or that resentment and ideology are related to each other, but not to values of individualism or egalitarianism (Feldman & Huddy, 2005, p. 180).

2. The “Obama” Effect: Promising Social Shift or Premature Self-Satisfaction?

Media exemplar effects studies have primarily found that exposure to counter-stereotypical Black characters results in mostly positive short-term change in general out-group beliefs. Exemplar effects influence perceptions of: attribution for out-group failure (Ramasubramanian, 2011), racial prejudice toward Blacks (Goldman, 2012), perceptions of Black intelligence and work ethic (Welch & Sigelman, 2011), positive stereotype change in regards to negative stereotypes of Blacks as violent, loud, aggressive, and

impulsive (Zhang & Tan, 2011), and support for race-conscious social policy (Ramasubramanian, 2011). My findings present a different, somewhat more nuanced, account.

Many White Americans interpreted the election of President Barack Obama in 2008 as evidence of America's new lens on the importance of race in society. Likewise, coverage of Obama's election campaign provided sustained media exposure to a counter-stereotypical Black male character, regardless of whether viewers cognitively sub-typed him (Richards & Hewstone, 2001; Dasgupta & Greenwald, 2001; Richeson & Trawalter, 2005) as atypical and/or disagreed with his political standpoints (Goldman, 2012; Welch & Sigelman, 2011). Even exposure to Obama's name was found to reduce implicit racial prejudice among Whites (Columb & Plant, 2011).

After his election in 2008, political pundits and media outlets alike (Cobb, 2011; Frank & McPhail, 2005; Hoerl, 2012; Payne, 2010; Squires & Jackson, 2010; Walsh, 2009) hailed President Obama as a beacon of interracial harmony and the telltale knell of America's besmirched past of prejudice and discrimination. Romanticized interpretations of Obama's election were quickly identified by social scientists as a politically hyperbolic (Gavrilos, 2010) discourse of relational de-racialization (Rowe, 2010) and a reformulation of the script of American exceptionalism (Petre, 2010). Furthermore, thematic narratives of selective amnesia and collective racial transcendence to color-blind enlightenment were noted in content analyses of mainstream print and broadcast news media (Hoerl, 2012). Yet, for many, arguments that racism had been reformulated into a contemporary form of persistent and systematized racial discrimination may have seemed

untenable given the proportion of support Obama garnered among both Whites and minorities in 2008.

Recent studies have investigated the potentially beneficial effect of the election (and re-election) of America's first biracial African American president on attitudes toward racial issues and policy orientations. The majority of these studies found exposure to media coverage of Obama's 2008 presidential election campaign to be correlated with more positive attitudes toward Blacks in general (Goldman, 2012; Ramasubramanian, 2011; Welch & Sigelman, 2011; Zhang & Tan, 2011). Although such studies contend with self-selection and social desirability effects, wherein more negative assessments of Blacks would not comport well with the reality of America's first biracial Black President, caution should be taken before declaring a premature resolution of America's race problem.

Denial of the existence and import of institutionalized racism serves the dual function of buttressing recent proclamations of a "post-racial" and "color-blind" America while simultaneously safeguarding from inspection racially based life outcomes, White racial privilege, and the unilateral domination of Whites in nearly every aspect of social life. These proclamations are undergirded by the theme of meritocracy in dominant American ideology, which may have further encouraged the legal and constitutional dismantling of affirmative action programs at the state level. According to the logic of color-blind racial ideology, the election of President Obama clearly indicated America's arrival at post-racial nirvana and any social policy explicitly considering race in determinations of education or employment benefits is both antiquated and unfair to non-minorities, especially Whites.

The most recent study to echo claims of an incipient color-blind America due to the charismatic prophesy of Obama is Goldman's (2012) thorough analysis of change in White racial prejudice during the course of the 2008 election campaign. Goldman's primary finding, that of a general decrease in comparative prejudice or in-group favoritism among Whites (2012, pp. 670, 672), somewhat confirms the expectations of exemplar effects theory. However, short-term improvements in ratings of Blacks' work ethic, intelligence, and trustworthiness (Goldman, 2012, p. 671) do not objectively prove that White racial attitudes are completely ameliorated.

The inundation of TV with Obama-related content would lead to general mainstreaming effects among various population sub-groups, especially political conservatives, Republicans, and McCain supporters (Goldman, 2012, p. 675). It is thus difficult to completely assess the magnitude of these shifts as Goldman's index of White racial prejudice was not connected to any measures that might imply contradictory attitudinal homeostasis such as opinions on AA policy. The election of a White/Black biracial President is a considerable step toward better race relations in American society. However, Obama's election does not, in and of itself, prove that Americans or the American social system have moved into an enlightened post-racial era.

According to Bonilla-Silva (2010a), Obama's success as a presidential candidate was partially predicated on a campaign largely devoid of race and/or racial issues (pp. 219-222). Bonilla-Silva interpreted Obama's colorless campaign tactic as "a *strategic* move towards racelessness...a post-racial persona and political stance" (p. 219). Even when Obama directly addressed the topic in his "race speech" delivered in March 2008, the effect was to placate the concerns among the White electorate about Obama's racial

views (Bonilla-Silva, 2010a, p. 221; Bonilla-Silva, 2010b). Similarly, Obama's reference to his biracial heritage could be interpreted as an attempt to mollify White voters' misgivings regarding his potential racial allegiances. Presumably, because he is both Black and White, he is equally concerned with issues pertaining to both groups.¹⁴

I would further contend that the heralding of Obama as a beacon of racial reconciliation is flawed because it is based on the assumption that, despite his occupation, Obama was or is somehow fundamentally different from his political predecessors. Whether this assumption was based on face-value (pun intended) deviation from the usual line-up of political candidates or substantive variation in Obama's policy and administrative governance agenda is beyond the scope of this Master's thesis (for a more detailed discussion, see Bonilla-Silva, 2010a, 2010b, 2014).

Of the four primary stylistic frames identified by Bonilla-Silva (2010a),¹⁵ abstract liberalism (Bonilla-Silva, 2010a, pp. 28, 30-36) was used in the majority of invocations of colorblind racial ideology (Bonilla-Silva, 2010a, p. 26) among college-aged (Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000, p. 13) and older working class (Bonilla-Silva, 1998, p. 12) groups of White respondents. These frames collectively functioned as discursive strategies and allowed White respondents to make statements, which would otherwise be interpreted as blatantly racist, appear "reasonable" and/or "moral" (Bonilla-Silva, 2010a, p. 28). Thus, the potential utility of abstract liberalism as a discursive frame of modern racism may be

¹⁴ This equality of concern based on biology may have provided relatively less reassurance to Asian American and Latino voters.

¹⁵ The remaining three frames identified by Bonilla-Silva (2010a) are naturalization of inequality (pp. 29, 37-39), cultural racism (pp. 29-30, 39-43), and minimization of racism (pp. 30-31, 43-47).

reinforced by consistent exposure to stereotypical images of Blacks in the media as unmotivated, lazy, violent law-breakers.

Furthermore, the historic election of America's first biracial African American president in 2008 may have negatively affected Whites' opinions of race-conscious government policy. Opposition toward AA policy may have increased rather than diminished due to the mediating role of belief in meritocratic values on cognitive subtyping of Obama as unrepresentative of typical Black Americans. This logic would contend that Obama, however exceptional he may be, theoretically had access to the same opportunities as all African Americans. This logic would further contend that Obama simply worked harder than other Blacks and ended up in the Oval Office as a result of his individual merit.

Although Bonilla-Silva raised important points regarding the stylistic deployment of modern racism or color-blind racial ideology, his argument is problematic because it gives relatively little attention to the tendency of responses to follow a *group categorization* theme. This theme could possibly lead to the dismissal of evidence to the contrary, e.g. the exceptional Black, "my Black friend," and President Obama. Group categorization could lead to potential neutralization of non-confirmatory examples due to *perceived typicality*, wherein special cases become personalized instances of exceptional circumstances. If these underlying mechanisms function in concert with tenets of modern racism, then countering the primary claims of color-blind racial ideology will be increasingly difficult as every minority individual will be incorporated into a cognitive frame buttressing White supremacy. This critique does not undermine Bonilla-Silva's findings nor does it reduce President Obama's election to mere foofaraw, but it does

introduce an additional layer of complexity to our understanding of the cognitive processes and perceptive structures of color-blind racial ideology and modern racism in racial policy reasoning processes.

3. A Brief Note on the Legal Status of *Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin*

On 16 July 2014, a three-judge panel for the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals reviewed its previous ruling in *Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin* (No. 09-50822, 5th Cir., 2010a, 2010b) as mandated by the Supreme Court (570 U.S. 11-345, 2013). A 2-1 ruling upheld the use of race as part of a holistic assessment process in undergraduate admissions decisions at UT-Austin (No. 09-50822, 5th Cir., 2014). The court stated that “to deny UT Austin its limited use of race in its search for holistic diversity would hobble the richness of the educational experience in contradiction of the plain teachings of *Bakke* and *Grutter*” (No. 09-50822, 5th Cir., 2014 at 40). In the majority opinion of the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, Judge Patrick Higginbotham also wrote,

It is settled that instruments of state may pursue facially neutral policies calculated to promote equality of opportunity among students to whom the public schools of Texas assign quite different starting places in the annual race for seats in its flagship university...It is equally settled that universities may use race as part of a holistic admissions program where it cannot otherwise achieve diversity. (No. 09-50822, 5th Cir., 2014 at 41)

Echoing Judge Higginbotham’s statement, Sherrilyn A. Ifill, president and director-counsel of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples (NAACP) Legal Defense and Educational Fund, said

Universities are incubators for America's future leadership and for civic engagement...This decision should stand as a declaration of the ongoing

importance and legality of affirmative action efforts that holistically evaluate applicants for admission in higher education. (Crockett, 2014)

The lower court's decision is promising, but general majority group sentiment could still threaten the continuation of AA programs, especially if these attitudes result in support for regressive, voter-initiated, anti-affirmative action ballot measures and state constitutional amendments. Likewise, in April of this year, the Supreme Court ruled that affirmative action bans in states such as California and Michigan were not in violation of the U.S. Constitution and thus did not overturn these state-level decisions (570 U.S. 11-345, 2013). This lopsided decree may unfortunately further embolden states to undertake anti-AA initiatives in order to nullify the federally maintained program.

Two avenues in the fight to protect AA initiatives may be necessary if the goal of these programs is to increase diversity and intergroup equality at all levels of society. Firstly, a concerted effort is required to re-educate the general public regarding the technical definition of affirmative action, the specific reasoning behind these policies, and what these programs actually intend to accomplish. As previously noted, many Americans cannot define or identify an AA program that adheres to the guidelines delineated in President Johnson's Exec. Order 10925 (1961; Arriola & Cole, 2001, p. 2471; Crosby & Cordova, 1996; Crosby et al., 1998; Winkelman & Crosby, 1994). Finally, a dedicated legal and legislative endeavor is necessary to protect and maintain these programs nationwide in order to increase diversity and equal opportunity in education and employment decisions.

APPENDIX
TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1. Sample descriptives and percent strongly opposed to preferential hiring of Blacks, General Social Survey (GSS) 2004-2012 U.S. adults (N=3,105)

TABLE 1.
PERCENTAGE STRONGLY OPPOSED TO PREFERENTIAL HIRING OF BLACKS, GENERAL SOCIAL SURVEY (GSS) 2004-2012 U.S. ADULTS (N=3,105)

<i>Control variable:</i>	Strongly Opposed (%)	Percentage Base ^a
<i>Sex:</i>		
Male	55.4	1,419
Female	50.0	1,686
<i>Total:</i>	52.5	3,105
<i>Age (in years):</i>		
35 or younger	48.2	928
36-53	54.6	1,098
54 or older	53.9	1,072
<i>Total:</i>	52.5	3,098
<i>Non-Hispanic Black^b:</i>		
Yes	29.4	419
No	56.3	2,664
<i>Total:</i>	52.6	3,083
<i>Non-Hispanic White^c:</i>		
Yes	59.7	2,205
No	33.3	742
<i>Total:</i>	53.0	2,947
<i>Highest year of completed schooling:</i>		
High school or less	51.2	1,310
One year college or more	53.5	1,791
<i>Total:</i>	52.5	3,101
<i>Think of self as liberal, moderate, or conservative:</i>		
Liberal	40.8	826
Moderate	51.0	1,161
Conservative	64.0	1,035
<i>Total:</i>	52.7	3,022
<i>Government spends too much on improving conditions of Blacks:</i>		
Agree	73.7	217
Disagree	48.2	1,185
<i>Total:</i>	52.1	1,402

Table 1 continued...

Government spends too much on welfare/poor:		
Agree	65.8	623
Disagree	43.6	878
Total:	52.8	1,501
<i>Predictor variable:</i>		
Hours spent watching TV per day on average day:		
Light	55.6	858
Moderate	53.6	1,371
Heavy	47.7	871
Total:	52.5	3,100
Blacks should overcome prejudice without special favors:		
Agree	61.0	2,222
Neither agree nor disagree	38.8	410
Disagree	23.7	469
Total:	52.4	3,101
Ranks Whites as more hardworking relative to Blacks:		
Yes	57.8	705
No	49.0	924
Total:	52.5	3,105
Ranks Whites as more intelligent relative to Blacks:		
Yes	55.0	815
No	51.6	2,290
Total:	52.5	3,105
SES differences between Whites and Blacks due to discrimination:		
Disagree	62.1	1,887
Agree	37.6	1,109
Total:	53.0	2,996
SES differences between Whites and Blacks due to lack of will:		
Agree	59.1	1,466
Disagree	46.2	1,537
Total:	52.5	3,003
Overt racial intolerance score:		
7 or higher	57.0	2,054
Equal to 6 (mean)	46.0	385
5 or lower	42.2	666
Total:	52.5	3,105
Total	52.5	3,105

^a Unweighted frequencies.

^b Non-Hispanic Blacks versus non-Blacks. Non-Blacks includes "Whites" and "Others."

^c Non-Hispanic Whites versus non-Whites. Non-Whites includes "Blacks" and "Others."

Table 2. Ordinal logistic regression determinants of attitude toward preferential hiring of Blacks, General Social Survey (GSS) 2004-2012 U.S. adults (N=1,267)

TABLE 2.
EFFECT PARAMETERS FOR ORDERED LOGIT REGRESSION MODEL 1 AND MODEL 2
ESTIMATING LOG ODDS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD PREFERENTIAL HIRING OF BLACKS,
GENERAL SOCIAL SURVEY (GSS) 2004-2012 U.S. ADULTS (N=1267)

Variable:	Model 1				Model 2			
	<i>b</i>	<i>se</i>	<i>Z</i>	<i>Prob>z</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>se</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>Prob>z</i>
Years of completed schooling	0.060	0.021	2.85	0.004	0.065	0.021	3.04	0.002
Non-Hispanic Black ^a	-0.742	0.173	-4.29	0.000	-0.831	0.176	-4.73	0.000
Self-identifies as: ^b								
<i>Politically moderate</i>	-0.004	0.139	-0.03	0.979	0.004	0.140	0.03	0.977
<i>Politically conservative</i>	0.282	0.150	1.88	0.060	0.264	0.151	1.74	0.081
Government spends too much on:								
<i>Welfare/aid to poor</i>	0.427	0.125	3.42	0.001	0.379	0.208	1.82	0.069
<i>Assistance to Blacks</i>	0.536	0.190	2.83	0.005	0.211	0.316	0.67	0.505
Survey year: ^c								
2004	0.396	0.200	1.98	0.047	0.351	0.201	1.75	0.081
2006	0.385	0.170	2.26	0.024	0.357	0.171	2.08	0.037
2008	-0.010	0.184	-0.05	0.958	-0.031	0.186	-0.16	0.869
2010	0.244	0.184	1.32	0.186	0.248	0.186	1.33	0.184
Overt racial prejudice ^d	0.060	0.033	1.84	0.066	0.112	0.050	2.23	0.026
TV-viewing ^e	-0.003	0.024	-0.11	0.911	0.343	0.101	3.39	0.001
Comparative assessments of:								
<i>Work ethic</i>	-0.104	0.056	-1.85	0.064	-0.107	0.056	-1.90	0.058
<i>Intelligence</i>	-0.083	0.068	-1.22	0.223	-0.086	0.069	-1.24	0.214
Favors White in-group in comparative assessments	-0.321	0.131	-2.46	0.014	-0.319	0.166	-1.92	0.055
Minimization of discrimination ^f	0.586	0.122	4.78	0.000	0.600	0.195	3.08	0.002
Individual attribution ^g	-0.128	0.133	-0.96	0.335	-0.318	0.207	-1.53	0.125
No "special favors" ^h	0.438	0.055	7.96	0.000	0.634	0.083	7.68	0.000
Interaction terms between TV-viewing and:								
<i>Favors White in-group in comparative assessments</i>					0.000	0.034	0.01	0.993
<i>Overt racial prejudice</i>					-0.017	0.013	-1.34	0.181
<i>No "special favors"</i>					-0.067	0.021	-3.19	0.001
<i>Minimization of discrimination</i>					-0.011	0.052	-0.22	0.829
<i>Individual attribution</i>					0.056	0.051	1.08	0.278
<i>Too much gov. spending on welfare/aid to poor</i>					0.014	0.059	0.23	0.816
<i>Too much gov. spending on assistance to Blacks</i>					0.117	0.092	1.28	0.201

Table 2
continued...

<i>Tau:</i>	Model 1		Model 2	
/cut1	1.257	0.475	2.280	0.555
/cut2	2.080	0.476	3.111	0.556
/cut3	3.542	0.483	4.587	0.565
Log likelihood	-1324.19		-1315.63	
LR chi2	300.59		317.73	
<i>df</i>	18		25	
Prob>chi2	0.000		0.000	
Pseudo R2	0.10		0.11	

^a Non-Hispanic Blacks versus non-Hispanic Whites, non-Hispanics of Other racial backgrounds, and Hispanics of all racial backgrounds.

^b Relative to those who self-identify as politically liberal.

^c Relative to GSS survey year 1994; GSS survey years 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002, and 2012 omitted due to collinearity.

^d Overt racial prejudice measure based on opposition to a family member marrying a Black person, opposition to living in a neighborhood where half of neighbors are Black, and agreement that homeowners have right to racially discriminate in sale of home.

^e TV-viewing measure based on GSS respondent self-report of hours spent watching TV per day on the average day.

^f Minimization of discrimination measure based on disagreement with statement that socioeconomic differences between Whites and Blacks are due to racial discrimination against Blacks.

^g Individual attribution measure based on agreement with statement that socioeconomic differences between Whites and Blacks are due to lack of will among Blacks.

^h No "special favors" measure based on agreement with statement that Blacks should overcome prejudice and work their way up in American society without "special favors."

Figure 1. Predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential hiring of Blacks by TV-viewing and belief in meritocratic values, General Social Survey (GSS) 2004-2010 U.S. adults (N=1,267)

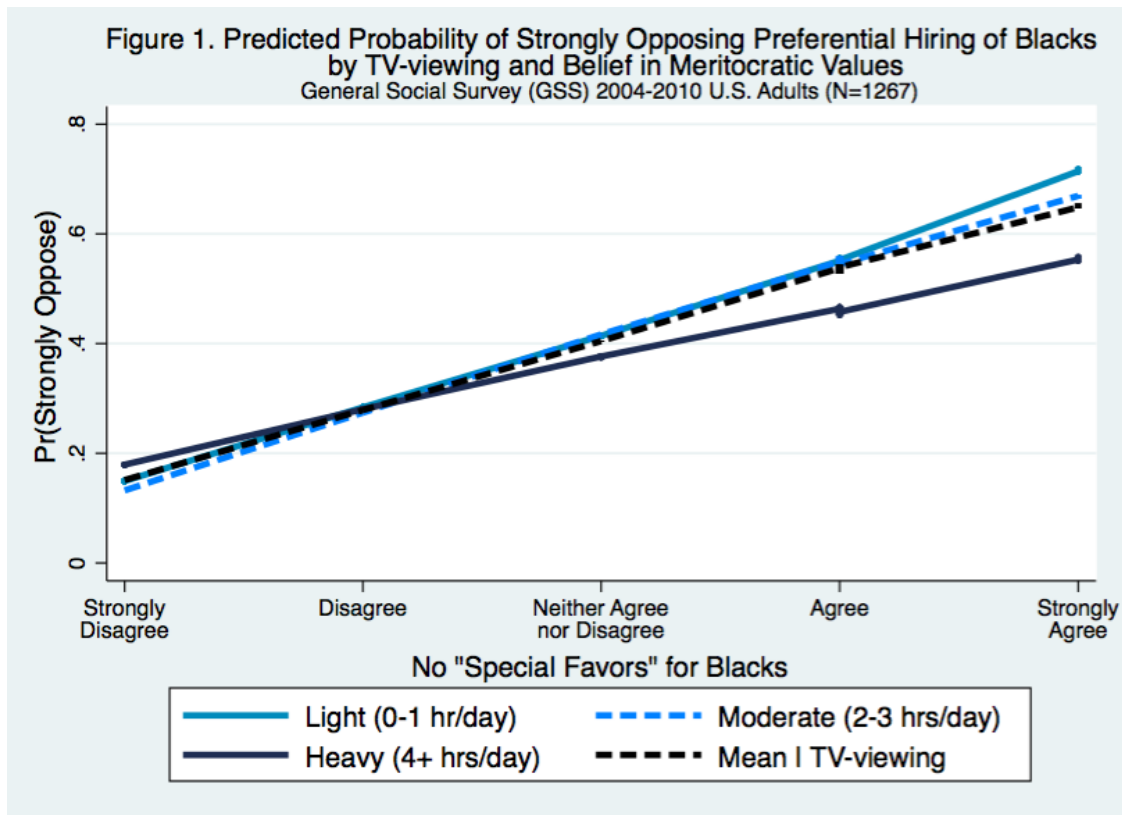


Figure 2. Predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential hiring of Blacks by TV-viewing and belief in meritocratic values for non-Hispanic Blacks versus Others, General Social Survey (GSS) 2004-2010 U.S. adults (N=1,267)

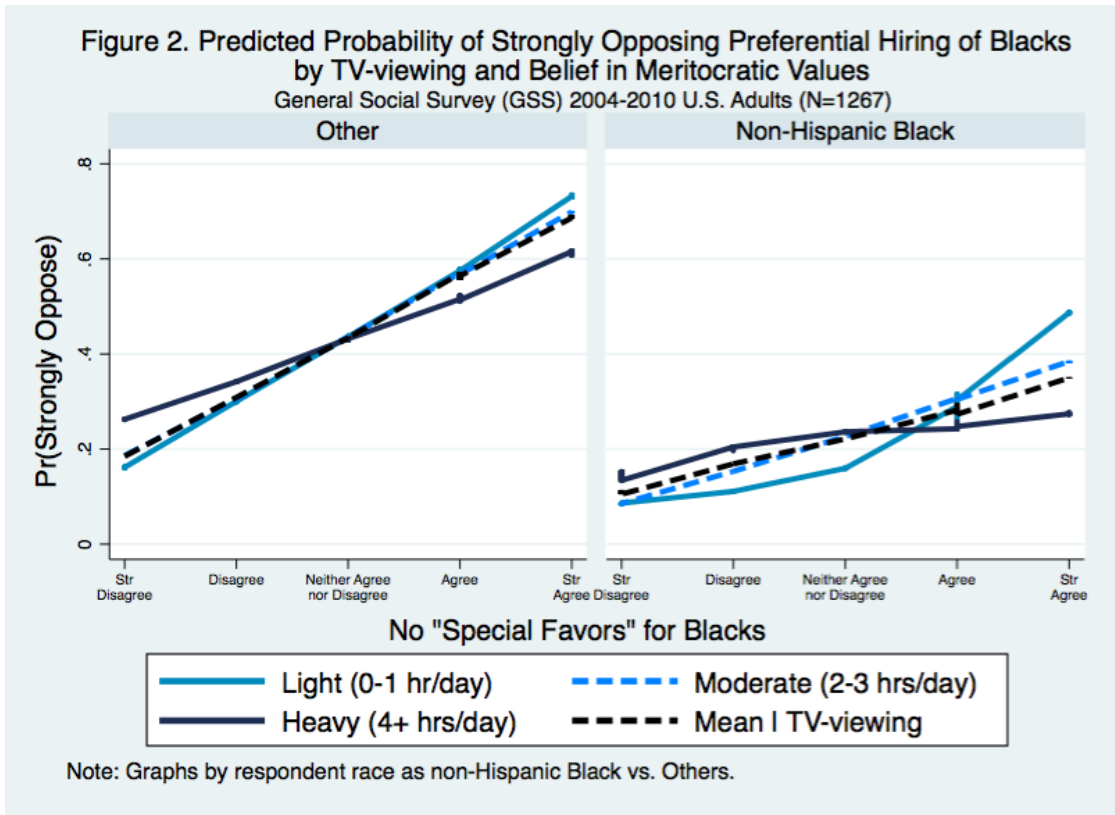


Figure 3. Predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential hiring of Blacks by TV-viewing and belief in meritocratic values for respondents with educational attainment of high school or less and educational attainment of one year of college or more, General Social Survey (GSS) 2004-2010 U.S. adults (N=1,267)

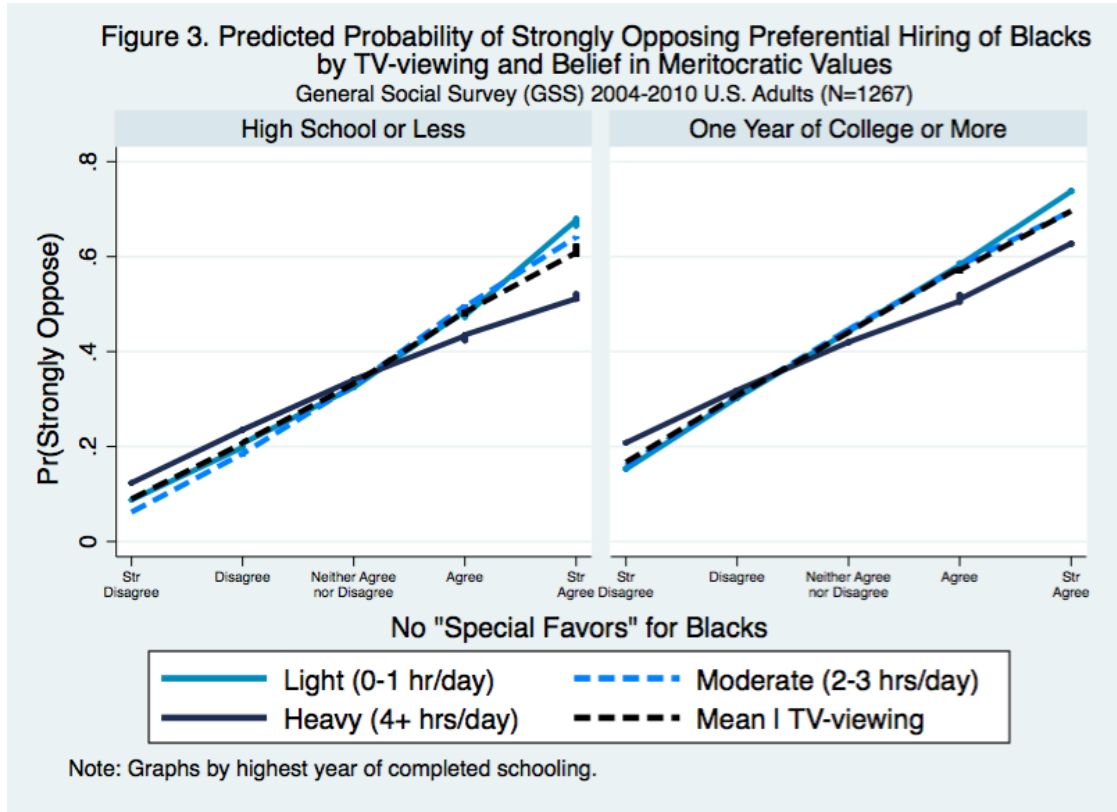


Figure 4. Predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential hiring of Blacks by TV-viewing and belief in meritocratic values for respondents with overt racial prejudice scores at or below mean and overt racial prejudice scores above mean, General Social Survey (GSS) 2004-2010 U.S. adults (N=1,267)

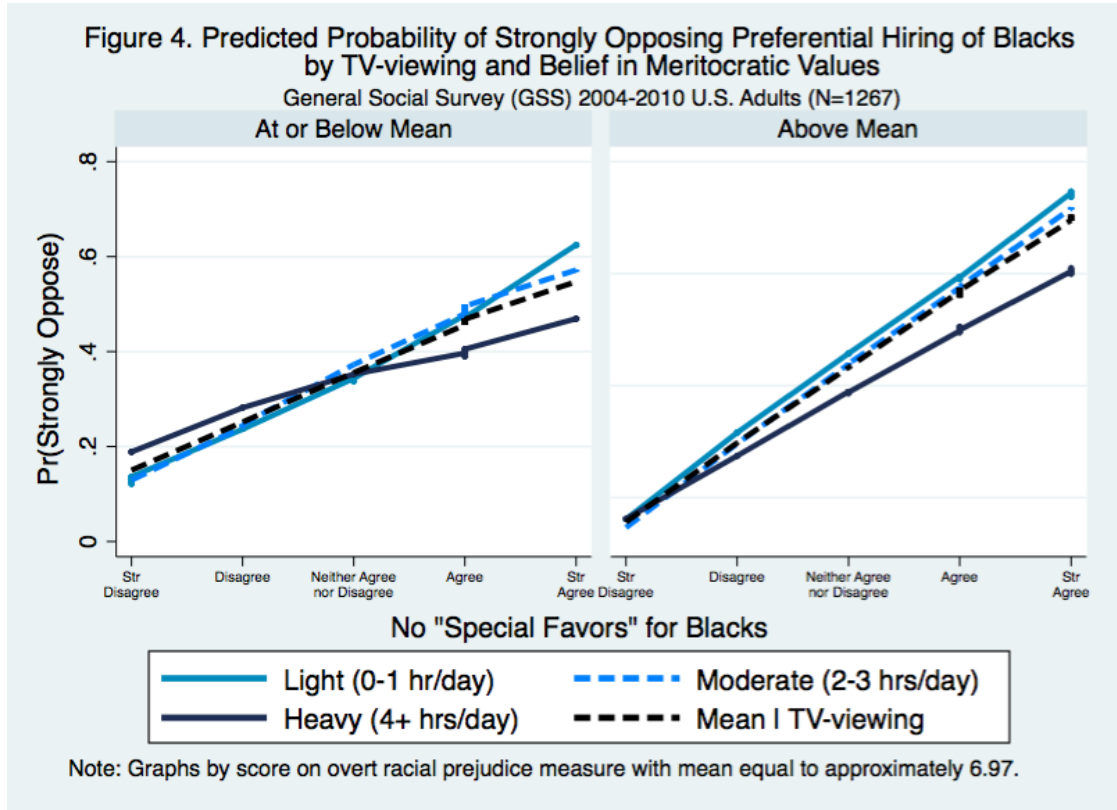
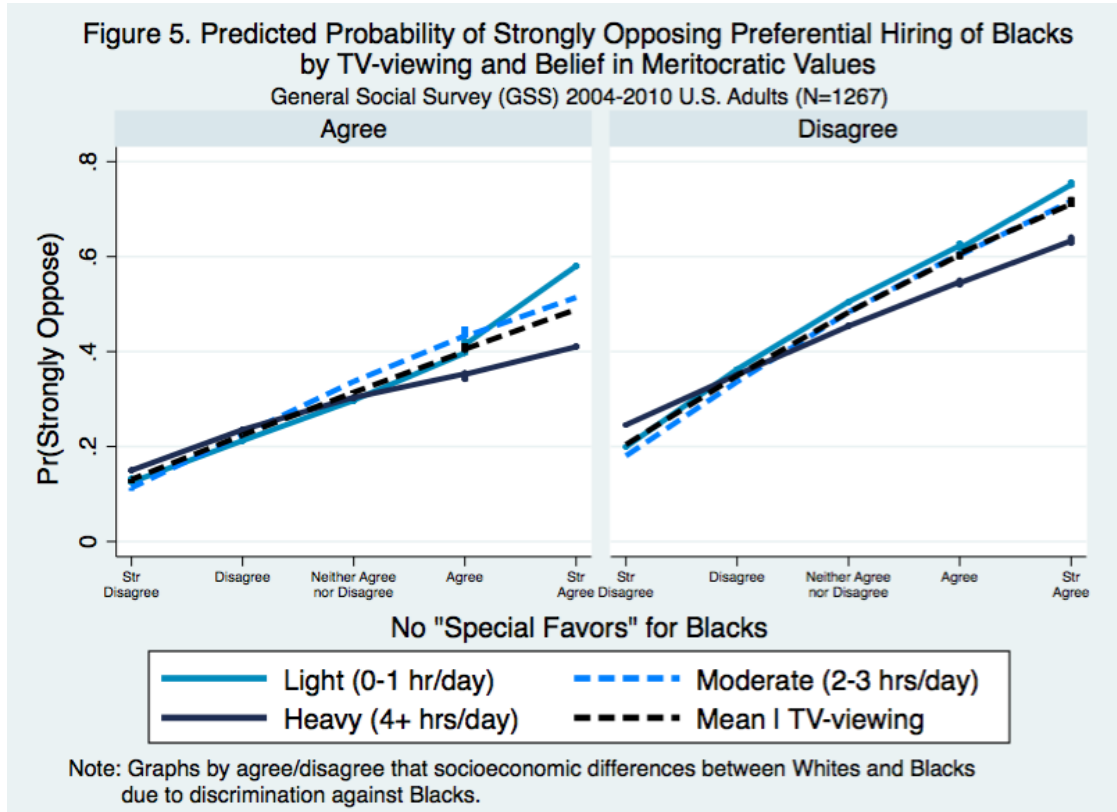


Figure 5. Predicted probability of strongly opposing preferential hiring of Blacks by TV-viewing and belief in meritocratic values for respondents who agree that socioeconomic differences between Whites and Blacks are due to discrimination against Blacks and respondents who disagree that socioeconomic differences between Whites and Blacks are due to discrimination against Blacks, General Social Survey (GSS) 2004-2010 U.S. adults (N=1,267)



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