Legacies of American Slavery in the South: An Analysis of White Racial Resentment Towards African Americans

Rebecca Raveena Feldherr

Follow this and additional works at: https://creativematter.skidmore.edu/socio_stu_stu_schol

Recommended Citation


This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Sociology at Creative Matter. It has been accepted for inclusion in Sociology Senior Seminar Papers by an authorized administrator of Creative Matter. For more information, please contact mpaulmen@skidmore.edu.
Legacies of American Slavery in the South:

An Analysis of White Racial Resentment Towards African Americans*

Rebecca Raveena Feldherr

Skidmore College

Word Count = 12,512

* Please direct all correspondence to Rebecca Raveena Feldherr at 815 N. Broadway, Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866 or via e-mail at rfeldher@skidmore.edu. The author would like to extend acknowledgements and sincere appreciation to Professor Catherine Berheide, Professor Andrew Lindner and her Senior Seminar colleagues.
ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore whether the historical institution of slavery in the United States is manifested in contemporary white racial resentment towards African Americans through engaging institutional replication, racial threat, and intergroup contact theories. Present differences in the residential integration of blacks and whites at the county-level is hypothesized to be a mediating factor in the relation between the presence of slavery in 1860 and attitudinal measures of current white racial resentment. This study analyzes three distinct sources of data: the proportion of slaves in 1860 counties is derived from the U.S. Census Bureau, black-white dissimilarity indices are calculated from the 2017 five-year American Community Survey estimates, and racial resentment along with the demographic variables of this study are derived from the 2018 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (n = 10,880). The population of inquiry is narrowed so as only to involve data on the antebellum and postbellum South. While the present findings do not reveal a statistically significant association between slave legacy and white racial resentment, and black-white integration is nonsignificant, this study shows that conservative political ideology is a potent determinant of white racial resentment across all statistical analyses, consistent with insights of prior research. Holding constant all other variables, education, religious affiliation variables, and age impact white racial resentment. These results illuminate the grip of political ideology in the current era on attitudes related to race and provide fruitful foundation for further research.
Legacies of American Slavery in the South:
An Analysis of White Racial Resentment Towards African Americans

In 1860, the year directly prior to the American Civil War, the slave population throughout the South comprised 32 percent of this geographic region’s aggregated population. Although by 1865 slavery had been proscribed, its legacy persisted through subsequently established practices, namely chain gangs, and systems of social segregation (i.e. Black Codes and later, Jim Crow laws). These policies worked to maintain the oppressed and subservient position of African Americans during the century following the abolition of slavery—the legacy and evident extensions of which still endure to this day.

At its foundation, this study endeavors to explore the relationship between the historical institution of slavery in the United States and present attitudes surrounding the position and circumstance of African Americans within contemporary society. As the prevalence of chattel slavery in the North had dissipated by 1860, the counties in this line of inquiry have been selected to only include those in the antebellum and postbellum South. Existing scholarship, too, provides supplemental rationale for the exclusion of the North in this analysis, alerting the reader to the difference in regional effects of slavery on the individual (Acharya, Blackwell, and Sen 2018).

The inveterate extensions of racial animus in the United States must not only be scrutinized at the macro institutional level, but likewise at the level of the agent. For this reason, among others, this study is propelled by the desire to ascertain whether whites currently residing in counties that encompassed relatively sizable slave populations in 1860, report attitudes reflective of high racial resentment towards African Americans (as compared to those who live in counties that had minimal slave presence in their past). An index is created to operationalize the racial resentment of white individuals populating these counties at present, the results of which are then employed
in an analysis of the lasting effects of slavery within and across Southern counties. Further, this study integrates dissimilarity indices to consider whether increased exposure between blacks and whites in certain counties acts as a mitigating factor reducing the effects of slavery on levels of current reported racial resentment.

The institutional replication theory asserts that a country’s unique history informs the macro and micro functioning of its contemporary society, bearing on both institutional structures and intricacies of interpersonal interaction. Thus systems of the past, whether or not formally dismantled, are relevant to present studies of durable inequality. This study applies the aforementioned theoretical framework in positing the lineage of racial tensions within the United States to be embedded in the historical institution of slavery.

Intergroup contact theory, credited to Gordon Allport, is another premise upon which the proposed analysis rests. In antebellum South, although there were gradations in the types of encounters, equal status interaction between whites and blacks was not realized. In particular cases, the child of a slave positioned in a role of domestic servitude might bond with the child of a slave master, however relations of this genre were ephemeral as socialization into the hierarchical structure of society was conventionally assured. This separatism undoubtedly contributed to the preservation of racially discriminatory doctrines and did not allow for the interracial interaction which could have sooner rendered possible, in history, the emergence of a perception of blacks founded in humanity and similarity rather than misperceived difference. To explore the intricacies of present-day race relations, this theory is employed via the use of dissimilarity indices to gauge the impact of intergroup contact on racial resentment towards African Americans.

The integration of racial threat theory is also core to this analysis. Specifically, its application is used to forward understandings of the relationship between past discriminatory
SLAVERY AND WHITE RACIAL RESENTMENT

practices, working to the detriment of African Americans, and present attitudes. This theory posits that increased outgroup presence is identified as an emerging threat to the interests of ingroup populations as a result of a perceived variation in power dynamics, thus resulting in negative ingroup sentiment towards a given outgroup. As past literature suggests, this perceived threat has corollary effects which can be seen, for instance, within voter support of policies which principally and adversely affect African American populations. I extend these past findings to reason that perceived threat rooted in the Reconstruction Era (which marked a shift in the positioning of blacks—Black Codes acting as one rejection of this shift) has impacted on present white racial resentment. This rationale is founded in the supposition that counties with high slave legacy would have been most impacted by the abolition of this institution, leading heightened racial threat in the late 18th century to demonstrate in heightened racial resentment today. The infliction of social control, in this case towards the subsistence of racial hierarchy between blacks and whites, is core facet of threat theory. Applying this to the time period following the emancipation of slaves: an attempt to maintain the white social control that existed prior to the abolition of chattel slavery is evidenced by the immediate criminalization of African Americans—the exploitation of blacks finding new outlet within practices such as convict leasing.

The present analytic approach diverges from that of certain group threat literature in that, as aforementioned, this study does not hypothesize greater integration between blacks and whites in counties today to elevate resentment (as a result of perceived threat and ensuing ingroup hostility). Rather, it conjectures, adhering to principles of contact theory, that integration between races will engender an environment of less white racial resentment towards blacks and will allow for better relations between races to emerge. In summation, this study rests threat theory in the post-Civil War Era and contact theory in contemporary times.
SLAVERY AND WHITE RACIAL RESENTMENT

It is evident that considerable social and political reform at all levels of society is necessary to address the pressing factors that not only maintain but propel racial inequality today. Although in the past decade progressive activist platforms and movements have gained traction, with the current presidency the existence and pervasiveness of harmful and racist and xenophobic mentalities have become indisputable (Bobo 2017; Perea 2018). For this and other reasons, inquiry into the source of certain attitudinal positions as potential historical extensions is especially important and revealing work. Thus, the findings of this study have practical implications in that they might be applied to better inform policy approach to inequality and feed into a larger body of scholarship foregrounding the role of history, race and perception in the perpetuation of certain societal ills.

Through recognizing the factors that condition the evolution of individual perception, this sociological approach to issues of institutional injustice seeks to illuminate certain social contours that have enabled their persistence. Returning to the initial research inquiry reviewed above, this study explores the following conjectures: (1) white individuals in counties with prominent legacies of slavery in 1860 will exhibit higher racial resentment towards African Americans than white individuals in counties with notably low levels of slavery in that year; and (2) white racial resentment in locales with less segregation between racial groups today will be lower than in locales with greater segregation between racial groups. Specifically, I hypothesize that the higher the proportion of slaves in a given 1860 county, the higher the racial resentment of white individuals presently residing within that county. Accounting for the distributions of whites and blacks within counties, this study also hypothesizes a mediating effect: that the higher a given county presently scores on the dissimilarity index, the higher the racial resentment of white individuals presently residing within that county. To be a mediator, the dissimilarity index would
have to lower the effect of the 1860 proportion of slaves at the county-level on white racial resentment. Refined attention to relevant theory further frames the rationale of this study’s method and conceptual approach.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

_Institutional Replication Theory_

Within studies of contemporary social and political institutions, inquiry into the distinct history of a locale is principal in revealing the interconnectedness of the past and the present. Advancing the argument for diachronic consideration, the institutional replication theory posits that historical institutions (whether or not formally dismantled) are manifested in present societal systems and can prove highly influential in the maintenance of durable inequality (Bateman and Teele 2019; Beeman, Glasberg, and Casey 2010; Crowe 2012; Crowe 2014; Mears, Warren, and Arnio 2019; Quillian 1996; Ruef and Fletcher 2003; Stevenson 2014; Vandiver, Giacopassi, and Lofquist 2006; Walker-DeVose et al. 2019; Walters 2012). Thus, to divorce social structures from their origins is to discount the authority of the past on the present, which can be detrimental to a comprehensive acknowledgement of the complexities within contemporary societies and their orchestration.

Enduring anti-black sentiment is not solely perceptible within evinced attitudes and ideology, but also within legislation and institutionalized practices today (Acharya et al. 2018; Feldman and Huddy 2005). The corporeal implications of racist sentiment, for example, are evident within the criminal justice system, extending from the practice of convict leasing and chain gangs to mass incarceration and exploitation of prison populations in the 21st century—all of which have been equated to forms of enslavement in absence of the weighted nomenclature of slavery (Alexander 2010; Browne 2007; Lopez 2010). It is critical that researchers, policy makers
and the general populace are erudite to the ways that public psychology and historical affairs have intertwined, via voter inclination and micro-interactions, to the disadvantage of African Americans today (Knuckey and Kim 2015).

The theory of racial resentment forwarded by Maxwell and Schulte (2018) couples socialization of the individual to the intergenerational transmission of racial resentment, pointing to another nuance within the institutional replication theory. Maxwell and Schulte (2018) contend that the deep-seated white denial and refutation of the African American struggle for equality, instilled in the agent at a young age through the conflation of negative feelings toward African Americans and conservative, nonracial moral values, is source to the perpetuation of discriminatory ideology. Founded in the field of historical sociology, this study’s approach towards its inquiry requires cogitation into the socialization processes that forward the subsistence of racial resentment to this day. The chief tenet of this theory offers strong connection to the present study as ideological threads passed down through generations and institutions are broadly explored (Acharya et al. 2018; Jennings and Niemi 1968; Jennings, Stoker, and Bowers 2009).

To effectually address the deeply troubling racial realities of contemporary society, research on institutional and ideological dimensions of society as historical inheritances aim to provide empirical data in support of informed policy and civic awareness. The institutional replication theory is situated as the foundation for the present study as it provides further rationale, theoretical—and by extension—practical, for the positioning of slavery (a marked phenomenon that embodies the lineage of racial tension in the United States) as a determinant of white racial resentment in Southern counties today. The activist dimension of this and similar studies are vital to the reform potential of this expanding body of literature.
Racial Threat Theory

There are several competing perspectives surrounding the genre of impact (i.e. adverse or constructive) that increased exposure between groups might elicit—racial threat theory submitting one. This theory contends that increased outgroup or minority presence will be received as an unfolding threat to the ingroup due to transformations in demographic composition, thereby worsening relations between the ingroup and the outgroup.

The operative and causal association between white racial animosity directed towards blacks and white perception of black threat (both patent within discriminatory socio-institutional practices, reported ideologies, and codified policies) is explored in reciprocal terms—i.e. threat fosters antipathy and vice versa. Such analyses argue the link between perceived threat and projected hostility and articulate the importance of studying these links to encourage the substantive understanding of their interactive effects and to produce change (Baumer, Messner, and Rosenfeld 2003; Dixon and Rosenbaum 2004; Jacobs, Carmichael, and Kents 2005; Jacobs and Tope 2007; Mears et al. 2019).

Predominantly, this study applies racial threat theory to the years subsequent to the Civil War, beginning in the Reconstruction era, as a stark shift in the African American situation (and, an emerging potential for hierarchical rearrangement as a result of emancipation) fostered in whites a heightened sensation of threat due to the juxtaposition of black positionality a few years prior. Political endeavors such as the implementation of Black Codes intended to reestablish the “antebellum status quo” through curtailing the rights—social, economic and political—afforded to newly freed African Americans surfaced in direct response to this perceived threat to white ascendancy (Acharya et al. 2018; Brown University 2006; Roscigno and Bruce 1995; Tolnay and Beck 1995; Walters 2012).
SLAVERY AND WHITE RACIAL RESENTMENT

Altogether, the integration of this theory fortifies the infrastructure of this study’s hypothesis founded in the linkage of slave legacy and white racial resentment. Moreover, the premise of this hypothesis not only lies within the forecast that individuals in counties of high slave legacy will report greater racial resentment today due to their immediate confrontation with these racist hierarchies in ante- and postbellum eras, but because counties reliant on slavery would have been impacted more by its abolition (economically and otherwise) than those with less dependence on this institution.

*Intergroup Contact Theory*

The intergroup contact theory offers another lens through which to regard and study the implications of narrowed proximity between groups in its assertion that this heightened exposure facilitates conflict resolution and diminished prejudice from which improved intergroup relations can evolve. The canons of this theory thereby have an expansive reach in their application—germane to conversations focused on residential segregation and the racial divisions in the United States’ education system, to those focused on individually embraced attitudes. Studies centering the psychological imprints of interracial exposure and that which impede their leveling over time are indispensable as, particularly during a child’s formative years, racially heterogenous interactions permit novel relationships and understandings of dissimilar identities, which might otherwise remain unrealized (Dhont and Hiel 2012; Maxwell and Schulte 2018; Sinclair et al. 2005).

Although the study at present integrates the intergroup contact theory into analysis of contemporary race relations, Cook et al. (2018) employ points of this theory in their discernment of a practical effect of segregation across the white/black binary via attention to racial dispersion within 1880 Southern counties, just following Reconstruction. Their research reveals the lynching
of blacks to have been perpetrated at a higher frequency in counties with less exposure between races, suggesting the profound impact that racial separation has had on white animus towards blacks in the past. These findings escort us to the exploration of the authority racial integration might have on the riddance of individual animus rooted in prejudicial ignorance.

It is important to recognize the context in which this theory is employed, too, as its hypothesis surrounding intergroup interaction is temporally-dependent— in that, improved relations develop over time rather than instantaneously. To present a clarifying example related to the study at hand: exposure between blacks and whites (void of ‘slave’ and ‘slave owner’ labels) during and post Reconstruction induced relations imbued with amplified hostility towards blacks, who were the target of violence and hateful ideology. Although this reality is indisputable, it was the integration of races and the emergence of Civil Rights movements in the 1940s that fundamentally allowed for the alleviation of white prejudice against blacks. By the same token, greater racial equality over time was in large part due to the pronunciation of progressive mentalities and laws towards the equal treatment of races (Acharya et al. 2018; Kinder and Mendelberg 1995). It must be noted that this alleviation of white prejudice is largely in reference the presentation of overt prejudice and necessitates thought to the indisputable preservation of furtive prejudice interlaced within dominant social institutions. Intensely problematic structures withstanding, the Civil Rights movements together with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 enabled unprecedented black enfranchisement and advanced further progressive action in the decades to follow (Acharya et al. 2018).

As this framework shows, it is distinctly important that the intergroup contact theory not only be employed in the contemplation of contemporary race relations but also in the
contemplation of those in the future, as the valuable function of intergroup exposure might become apparent in longitudinal studies conducted in the ensuing decades.

Theoretical Critique

Critique directed towards the integration of theory within this piece might largely be founded in the diverging perspectives of racial threat and intergroup contact theories—specifically, criticism of the former will be found in the latter and vice versa. Contact theorists might argue the validity of this study’s application of threat theory, accenting the benefits of intergroup interaction and rejecting the assertion that increased integration within predominantly white spaces during the Reconstruction Era fostered lasting prejudice to the detriment of blacks. Conversely, threat theorists might find fault in this study’s use of contact theory and the hypothesis that reduced segregation between blacks and whites will improve relations across racial lines, as they would contend that perceived threat would intensify and that prejudice of the ingroup would be more fastened as a result.

Furthermore, as I relate the substance of racial threat theory chiefly to past circumstance in which there was great rigidity and less allowance for progressive thought, I am alert to the criticism this might receive given the political climate during which this study is conducted. That is to say, as the Trump Era has foregrounded prejudiced mentalities persistent (and their prominence) in certain sectors of society, a reader of this study might arraign my theoretical reasoning with focus to the newfound ‘validation’ of racist attitudes realized under this political administration. Advancing this logic, threat theorists might argue the necessity of relating threat theory to both past and present circumstances as Trump’s doctrine would ipso facto promote increased resentment in counties with more intergroup exposure.
Summation

The formerly delineated theories centering institutional replication, racial threat, and intergroup contact hypotheses are individually and collectively employed towards the formulation of this study’s inquiry and logistical rationale. The latter two theories, acknowledging the function and nature of the socio-political conditions at a given time, are applied to distinct epochs in North American history—namely (and respectively) to the years directly following the de jure emancipation of African Americans from a system of enslavement and to modern-day times.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The present study endeavors to explore whether the historical institution of slavery manifests itself in contemporary white racial resentment towards African Americans. This section provides an overview of past research employed to inform and refine the approach of the study at hand with attention to three distinct themes related to: the impact of history on the present, the reception of outgroup presence as a threat to the ingroup, and the role of intergroup contact in improving relations across racial lines.

Historical Impacts on the Present

Studies have examined the prevailing implications of historical enmity towards African Americans, variously operationalized, via attention to racist sentiment as it might appear in bureaucratic practice and white decisions (Acharya, Blackwell and Sen 2016; Bafumi and Herron 2009; Bobo and Kluegel. 1993; Enos 2016; Feldman and Huddy 2005; Greenwald et al. 2009; Jacobs et al. 2005; Kinder and Mendelberg 1995; King, Messner, and Baller 2009; Meer and Nayak 2015; Perea 2018; Reece and O’Connell 2016; Taylor and Mateyka 2011). Jacobs et al. (2005) analyze lynching data to quantify historical animus in their study on the implementation of capital punishment today. Their research finds that the historical residue of violence directed towards
blacks, postbellum, and present perceived racial threat is positively related to increased jurisdictional death penalty sentences. Expressly that: places with high levels of both past vigilantism (in the form of lynching) and present African American presence have greater proclivity to rely on death penalty sentences.

Further insight into contemporary inequalities as products of structures in the South and the legacy of slavery therein, has also been unveiled within other domains— the education system being one. Specifically, the manifestation of slavery in present disproportionalities between public-private school enrollment of blacks and whites has been one revealing focus of study. In their research, Reece and O’Connell (2016) find that white enrollment in public schools is notably lower within counties of greater slave legacy, illuminating the varied arenas in which past racial separation can be seen to have adverse effects today. Accented by the conclusions of Jacobs et al. (2005) and Reece and O’Connell (2016), the disparities visible within the criminal justice and education systems are instructive of that which must be amended in society as well as the deeper societal ailments in which these issues are rooted.

Literature also indicates the impact of racial tensions pervasive throughout U.S. history on individual mentality, and the critical implications of this (Jacobs et al. 2005; Mears et al. 2019; Price et al. 2008). To submit one example, Mears et al. (2019) find that heightened black criminal threat was perceived by individuals residing in Southern counties (as compared to those who did not reside in the South) in which the practice of lynching had been of greater prevalence. This finding provides support for the statistically positive relationship between racially motivated practices of the past and present attitudes that my study hypothesizes. Additional concretized explanation for the extensions of the past into the present is imparted through the finding that parental racial resentment is positively associated to child racial resentment (Maxwell and Schulte
2018; Sinclair et al. 2005). This asserts the power and influence of socialization on the individual. The acknowledgement within Maxwell and Schulte (2018) that children are found to embrace lower levels of racial resentment (although, relatively still quite high) than their parents, however, denotes a certain degree of progressive movement forward and prompts inquiry into what has allowed for this intergenerational dilution of racial resentment. Along this vein, the current study considers increased exposure between blacks and whites since Reconstruction, allowing for postbellum perception of racial threat to be offset by novel interaction, as a potential source to this attitudinal change.

The findings of the above-mentioned studies display the reverberations of history within a contemporary context. All-inclusive, this literature argues the importance of situating past institutions as focal points of study, regardless of the progress (or lack thereof) that has been realized since their erection, to better understand the institutions that dictate the operations of society today. The present research endeavor recognizes and forwards this argument within its theoretical and methodological approach and is thus imbued with substantive political and social implication of great import to society at large.

*Increased Out-Group Presence Is Received As a Threat to the In-Group*

Existing literature inquire into the injurious function of increased exposure between individuals of divergent racial groups, specifically between individuals possessing ingroup and outgroup statuses—i.e. in the case of this study, white and black, respectively (Billingham and Hunt 2016; Corzine et al. 1983; Craig and Richeson 2014; Reece and O’Connell 2016; Jacobs and Tope 2007; Jacobs et al. 2005; Pettigrew, Tropp, and Christ 2011; Quillian 1996; Works 1961). A large subdivision of this past research evaluates the impact diversification and perceived threat of an outgroup can have practically in the realm of policy (Corzine et al. 1983; Jacobs and Tope 2007;
Jacobs et al. 2005). Tracing an effect of outgroup presence on progressive policy, the results of Jacobs and Tope (2007) show that diminished support for liberal legislation occurs following the expansion of minority populations, suggesting the emergence of conservative ideologies as a result of racial heterogeneity. Furthermore, as of 2007 (the year in which their study was conducted), the inverse relationship between African American presence and votes for liberal measures in the House of Representatives was not observed to be diminishing. With a similar pursuit in mind, Enos (2016) found that white voter participation was higher in places with greater minority presence and that conservative voting was of greater prevalence in these regions as well. The practical implication apparent through the absence in support for liberal policy and white voting inclinations signifies the function of perceived black threat in white voting behaviors. Additionally, the interaction between postbellum lynching and black jurisdictional presence noted in the previous subsection (which was found to, when compounded, affect the prevalence of death sentences) emphasizes the relationship between past and present circumstance in the production of contemporary sanctioned violence—practiced largely to the adverse effect of blacks (Jacobs et al. 2005).

Perceived racial threat, evident through ingroup election to opt out of spaces with increased outgroup presence, is similarly reflective of the separatist mentalities and hierarchies of the past (Fairlie and Resch 2002). The finding that black students are more likely than white students to attend public schools as black concentration enlarges (such that the association is increasingly marked at higher levels of black concentration) offers further empirical evidence of the historical fibres of our past that afflict our present (Billingham and Hunt 2016; Reece and O’Connell 2016). This reality is particularly concerning given the role of parental socialization in a child’s formation of their own racial understandings. If children of an ingroup are not exposed to comparable
SLAVERY AND WHITE RACIAL RESENTMENT

members of an outgroup, they will not be equipped with much information (aside from that they might hear, of disputable verity) to construct their view of the world and the groups contained therein, instilling parental socialization with amplified dominion and ability (Sinclair et al. 2005; Dhont and Van Hiel 2012; Maxwell and Schulte 2018). In discussions of inequality and inequity across societal substrata, these studies exhibit the need to center the intricacies of past and present racial interaction towards an inclusive appreciation of that which molds our society today.

*Intergroup Contact Ameliorates Race Relations*

As previously mentioned, the supposition that exposure between groups of differing identities works to improve relations is highly pertinent to present-day race relations. Relational amelioration is theorized to evolve through dismantling stereotypes and preconceived notions, which might be achieved by or accompany exposure between groups. This germ of thought is particularly poignant given this country’s history of racial segregation and the role this had in maintaining biases and structures founded in the separation of peoples (Acharya et al. 2018; Seitles 1998). Through the conjecture that heightened knowledge, awareness and acceptance of other groups will emerge as a result of group integration over time, the present study formulates the hypothesis that intergroup contact will reduce the impact of slave legacy on contemporary white racial resentment.

Recognized research records the distinction between interactions of quality versus interactions of quantity in studying the effects of intergroup contact on the individual (Dixon 2006; Johnston and Glasford 2018). Dixon (2006) finds that when blacks and whites form close relationships with one another, stereotypes are disconfirmed, whites feel less threatened and subsequently, express less prejudice. A revealing caveat, however, emerged: whereas simply knowing members of Hispanic and Asian populations was sufficed in reducing white prejudice
SLAVERY AND WHITE RACIAL RESENTMENT

towards these groups, in order for positive affects to materialize towards blacks, whites had to both know and have an intimate relationship with a member of this racial group. These results accent the need to reveal that which has precipitated and agitated white prejudice towards blacks (as compared to other racial minorities) to such a degree that it white prejudice is of greater fixity when geared towards blacks. The study at hand explores the institution of slavery as a source to this fixity. Similar to the findings of Dixon (2006), intergroup contact marked by quantity was observed to have minimal effect on an ingroup’s intention and commitment to aiding an individual of a racial outgroup; whereas this was not accurate to intergroup contact marked by quality, which resulted in greater ingroup helping intention and commitment through instilled empathy (Johnston and Glasford 2018). Evidently, these studies highlight the involved and variegated nature of relations between blacks and whites, exhibiting how relationship closeness can impact on white actions and mentalities.

Exterior to focus on this quality/quantity paradigm of closeness, researchers have endeavored to expose the comprehensive function of intergroup contact in reducing white anti-black sentiment (Kinder and Mendelberg 1995; Robinson 1980; Sigelman and Welch 1993; Works 1961). The conclusions of these studies foreground the ability of social and residential interaction between groups to temper harmful preconceptions.

Situating the Present Study

This study investigates the indelible impact of this country’s discriminatory past and the manner in which attitudinal filaments, sewn in the past, manifest in contemporary society. This study’s interest also lies in its investigation into how county segregation might mediate the grip of the past on the present.
SLAVERY AND WHITE RACIAL RESENTMENT

As reviewed above, past literature integrates the racial history of the United States—some directly utilizing slave counts to operationalize this, others employing lynching or other data, to study its impact on present conditions of African Americans realized through reported ideology and voter support for certain policies (e.g. death sentences). Embedded within this literature, the current study offers important contributions. Centrally, in adopting a quasi-historical approach, this study seeks to illuminate the manner in which the past racist institution of slavery is evoked in a contemporary context, which is distinctly important due to the political climate under the Trump administration. Furthermore, few research initiatives have sought to connect slave legacy to present attitudes of resentment. This is an important study to engage due to the defined practical implication of considering the interaction between historical institutions and individual mentalities. The present study endeavors to procure a more holistic understanding of societal functioning towards an end of substantive reform.

METHODS

To measure the prevalence of slavery in a given county—i.e. slave legacy (the key independent variable), this study employs the data assembled by O’Connell (2012) which maps the boundaries of 1860 counties onto contemporary county boundaries and indicates slave proportion (relative to total county population) by modern county. The slave proportion and 1860 county boundaries are derived from the 1860 Census data; further information on how the data were collected can be found in O’Connell’s article. Measures of county-level segregation have also been involved via use of the dissimilarity index, the data for which has been procured from 2017 five-year American Community Survey (ACS) estimates; further information on how the data were collected can be found on the United States Census Bureau website: https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/methodology.html. The unit of analysis for both of
the above-mentioned sources is the county; however, as indicated below, the unit of analysis of this study is the individual.

A composite scale intended to capture individual racial resentment towards African Americans, this study’s dependent variable, has been produced using five distinct variables from the 2018 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) (Schaffner, Ansolabehere, and Luks 2019). Conducted by YouGov over the Internet, CCES incorporates a nationally representative sample of 60,000 surveyed adults (interviewed in two waves: for pre-election data in October 2018 and for post-election data in November 2018) using matched random sampling and situates the individual as its unit of analysis. For the purposes of this study, however, the sample is limited to 10,880 respondents who have indicated “white” as their identified racial category and are residents of Southern states, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau (See Appendix A). Although these two categorical criteria were most influential in reducing the immensity of this study’s population, excluding missing data on each of the variables also had a notable impact. As responses to the CCES are opt-in from the YouGov panel, response rate is not calculatable for this data source. For further information on how the data were collected consult the pages of the CCES 2018 Guide which can be downloaded on the Harvard Dataverse website: https://cces.gov.harvard.edu.

The variables within the scale measuring racial resentment prompted respondents to score the following statements on a Likert scale (1 = strongly agree, 2 = somewhat agree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = somewhat disagree, 5 = strongly disagree): “Irish, Italians, Jewish and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors” (r); “Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class,” “Over the past few years, blacks have gotten less than they deserve,” “It’s really a matter of some people not trying hard
SLAVERY AND WHITE RACIAL RESENTMENT

enough, if blacks would only try harder they could be just as well off as whites” (r), and “White people in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin.” Two of the five questions (marked by an r in parentheticals above) within this scale are coded such that disagreeing would indicate a lack of racial resentment and thus were reverse coded prior to their inclusion in this scale. The Cronbach's alpha for this scale, .925, indicates high levels of reliability.

Additionally, a series of variables were introduced as controls to account for the authority of certain demographic factors which might bear on individual reported racial resentment: year of birth (from 1923 to 2000), which has been recoded to age; residence permanence (measured by the number of years the respondent has resided in their current locale); political ideology (1 = very liberal, 2 = liberal, 3 = moderate, 4 = conservative, 5 = very conservative, 6= not sure), which has been relabeled conservatism in correspondence to its scaling from very liberal to very conservative; educational attainment (1 = no HS, 2 = HS grad, 3 = some college, 4 = 2 year college, 5 = 4 year college, 6 = post-gra); religious affiliation (1 = Protestant, 2 = Roman Catholic, 3 = Mormon, 4 = Eastern or Greek Orthodox, 5 = Jewish, 6 = Muslim, 7 = Buddhist, 8 = Hindu, 9 = Atheist, 10 = Agnostic, 11 = Nothing in particular, 12 = Something else), from which I produced two dummy variables— Protestant, and Roman Catholic/Eastern or Greek Orthodox (the two religions within the latter dummied category have been paired as they are more closely allied in faith tradition and liturgical styles); and family income (1 = less than $10,000 to 16 = $500,000 or more). For statistical analyses, the income variable listed has been recoded from an ordinal level variable to an approximate interval level one by replacing each income category with its midpoint value (See Appendix B). Each of the control variables enumerated above are supposed to affect individual racial resentment, and thus are incorporated to better discern the relationship between
this study’s independent and dependent variables (Acharya et al. 2018; Feldman and Huddy 2005; Quillian 1996; Taylor and Mateyka 2011).

FINDINGS

Univariate Results

Table 1 presents the means and standard deviations of the variables within this study. Figures 1 and 2 present the distributions of the main independent and dependent variables of this study.

Slave legacy. Presented in Table 1, proportion slaves in 1860 has a mean of 25 with a standard deviation of 17.2, indicating on average slave populations comprised 25 percent of antebellum southern county populations with 17 percent variance in either direction. As Figure 1 displays, the highest percentage of counties (13 percent) fall within the 15 percent to 20 percent slave proportion range.

[Insert Table 1 about here]

[Insert Figure 1 about here]

Racial resentment. For this study’s dependent variable, Table 1 records a mean of 3.28, representing “neither agree nor disagree” on the racial resentment index. Thus, in the context of this study, the mean for this variable is situated approximately at the midpoint of this scale and indicates a very marginal leaning in the direction of the high end of the scale. Figure 2 indicates the most substantial percentage of respondents (10 percent) to have reported the highest score (a five) on the Racial Resentment Index, which is reflective of the appreciable anti-black sentiment that exists.

[Insert Figure 2 about here]
SLAVERY AND WHITE RACIAL RESENTMENT

Figure 3 presents the distribution of this study’s hypothesized mediating variable; Figures 4 through 9 present the distributions for the control variables of this study.

*Dissimilarity index.* Noted in Table 1, this index’s mean of 43 indicates that on average 43 percent of either whites or blacks would have to move for these two racial groups to be evenly dispersed within the given county. Figure 3 approximates a normal distribution; the highest percentage of counties (19 percent) fall within the 45 percent to 50 percent range—evidencing that 45 to 50 percent of either race would have to relocate in order to accomplish even county dispersion of blacks and whites.

[Insert Figure 3 about here]

*Age.* Table 1 reveals that on average respondents are 53 years of age with a standard deviation of 17 years. Figure 4 presents two peaks: one culminating at 29 years of age (2.2 percent of respondents), the other at 60 years of age (2.8 percent of respondents).

[Insert Figure 4 about here]

*Educational attainment.* Figure 5 indicates bimodality: the highest percent of respondents (26 percent) having acquired their GED followed by 24.5 percent of respondents having completed a four-year college degree.

[Insert Figure 5 about here]

*Family income.* Table 1 displays the widespread distribution of respondents’ family income, indicating the average income to be $72,926.47 with a standard deviation of $62,607.915. In addition to presenting family income by incremental dollar range, Figure 6 depicts the muted bimodality of this variable: 11 percent falling within the $30,000 to $39,000 category and 10 percent falling within the $80,000 to $99,000 category.

[Insert Figure 6 about here]
Residence permanence. The data listed in Table 1 indicates on average respondents have resided in their current city of residence for 17 years. As visible through the standard deviation of 15.7 and the right skew of Figure 7, there is notable variation on this variable.

[Insert Figure 7 about here]

Political ideology. As presented in Figure 8, 27 percent of respondents indicate they are on the liberal end of the spectrum whereas 44 percent indicate they are on the conservative end of the spectrum; 29 percent indicate being moderate in terms of their ideological inclinations. The mean available within Table 1 indicates that on average respondents fall within the moderate to conservative categories.

[Insert Figure 8 about here]

Religious affiliation. Figure 9 displays the categorical distribution of respondent religion—protestant being the most prominent and 32 percent higher than the second largest category (being, “nothing in particular” with a percentage of 16).

Protestant and Roman Catholicism/Eastern or Greek Orthodox. As Table 1 presents, Protestants comprise 47 percent of the respondent population whereas Roman Catholics/Greek Orthodox comprise 15 percent of the respondent population.

[Insert Figure 9 about here]

Bivariate Results

Table 2 provides the correlation coefficients produced during bivariate statistical analyses of the relationships among the independent, dependent and control variables of this study; statistical significance is noted at $p < .001$.

[Insert Table 2 about here]
The results of Table 2 reveal no statistical significance between the proportion of slaves in 1860 (IV) and contemporary white racial resentment (DV). Ten other correlations similarly do not exhibit statistical significance.

*Slave legacy.* As shown in Table 2, proportion slave in 1860 reaches statistical significance in correlation with four other variables within this study. There is a weak, negative relationship between proportion slave in 1860 and the dissimilarity index ($r = -.252$). This finding presents that the higher the proportion of slaves in a given 1860 county, the less segregation in the county today. There is a very weak, positive relationship between proportion slave in 1860 and education ($r = .043$), between proportion slave in 1860 and being conservative ($r = .038$), and between proportion slave in 1860 and being Protestant ($r = .033$). Substantively, this means that the higher the proportion of slaves in a given 1860 county: the higher the educational attainment of an individual contemporarily residing within that county, the more conservative an individual contemporarily residing within that county, and the more likely an individual residing in that county today is Protestant in religion.

*Racial resentment.* Correlations between racial resentment and all other variables in this matrix, proportion slave in 1860 exempt, are statistically significant. There is a moderate to strong, positive relationship between conservatism and racial resentment ($r = .676$), which is indicative of the past assessment that individuals who are conservative foster higher levels of racial resentment towards African Americans. There is a weak, positive relationship between age and racial resentment ($r = .203$) and between being Protestant and racial resentment ($r = .237$). These findings show that the older an individual is, the more racial resentment an individual expresses and that individuals who are Protestant report higher levels of racial resentment towards African Americans. There is a very weak, negative relationship between the dissimilarity index and racial
resentment \((r = -.071)\) and between family income and racial resentment \((r = -.074)\). This indicates that individuals who reside in counties with more segregation foster less racial resentment towards African Americans and that individuals who report a higher family income foster less racial resentment as well. There is a very weak, positive relationship between residence permanence and racial resentment \((r = .119)\) and between being Catholic or Orthodox and racial resentment \((r = .066)\). This implies that the longer an individual has lived in their place of residence, the more racial resentment an individual reports, and that individuals who are Catholic or Orthodox report higher levels of racial resentment towards African Americans. It is discerned that although both in the same direction, the correlation between racial resentment and the two religious affiliation categories are of varying strengths.

**Dissimilarity index.** Five relationships involving the dissimilarity index are statistically significant and very weak in strength, as Table 2 displays. There is a positive association between the dissimilarity index and residence permanence \((r = .044)\), between education and the dissimilarity index \((r = .043)\), and between family income and the dissimilarity index \((r = .035)\). These coefficients indicate that the higher the segregation in a county, the more years individuals will reside within their place of residence, that the higher the educational attainment of an individual, the more segregation there is their county of residence, and that the higher an individual’s family income, the more segregation there is in the county in which they live. There is a negative relationship between conservatism and the dissimilarity index \((r = -.076)\) and between being Protestant and the dissimilarity index \((r = -.069)\). These results indicate that the more conservative an individual is, the less segregated the county in which they reside and that if an individual is Protestant there, too, will be less segregation in the county in which they reside.
Age. Each of the correlations along the age row indicate statistical significance. There is a weak to moderate, positive association between age and residence permanence \((r = .311)\), which expresses that the older an individual is, the longer they will have resided in their present locale. There is a weak, positive relationship between age and conservatism \((r = .210)\), indicating that as age increases so too does the individual’s level of conservatism. There is a very weak, positive relationship between age and Protestant \((r = .137)\), between age and being Roman Catholic or Orthodox \((r = .074)\) and between age and family income \((r = .034)\). These figures show that the older an individual is the more likely they are to be Protestant, or Roman Catholic or Orthodox and the higher the family income of the individual. There exists a very weak, negative relationship between age and education \((r = -.075)\), indicating that the older the individual the lower their educational attainment.

Residence permanence. Three of the five variables in the row marked by residence permanence are statistically significant and very weak in their correlations with the number of years a respondent has lived in their current locale. There is a positive relationship between conservatism and residence permanence \((r = .104)\), and between being Protestant and residence permanence \((r = .103)\). This signifies that the longer an individual has resided in a given area, the more conservative they are and the more likely they are to be Protestant. There is a negative relationship, however, between education and residence permanence \((r = -.107)\), indicating that the greater an individual’s educational attainment, the fewer years they have resided in the same locale.

Educational attainment. Akin to age, each of the relationships involving education appear statistically significant. There is a weak to moderate, positive relationship between education and family income \((r = .362)\), presenting that the higher an individual’s educational attainment, the
higher their family income. There is a very weak, negative association between education and conservatism ($r = -.156$) and between education and being Protestant ($r = -.037$). These results reveal that the higher an individual’s educational attainment, the less likely they are to be conservative and Protestant. There is a very weak, positive relationship between educational attainment and being Roman Catholic or Orthodox ($r = .034$), showing that an individual who acquired more years of education is more likely to be Catholic or Orthodox.

*Political ideology.* Both religious affiliation dummy variables are shown to be statistically significant and positive in correlation to conservatism. There is a weak to moderate association between conservatism and being Protestant ($r = .338$) and a very weak relationship between conservatism and being Roman Catholic or Orthodox ($r = .036$). These numerics indicate that the more conservative an individual is, the more likely they are to be Protestant or Roman Catholic or Orthodox. Evidently, conservativism is a stronger predictor of an individual of adherence to the former religious category compared to the strength of its association to the latter.

*Religious affiliation.* Both of the categorically distinguished religion variables offer statistical significance in correlation with another control variable. There is a moderate, negative association between being Protestant and being Roman Catholic or Orthodox ($r = -.400$), presenting that an individual who is Protestant is less likely to be Roman Catholic or Orthodox. The concluding correlation shows a very weak, positive relationship between being Roman Catholic Orthodox and family income ($r = .064$), which suggests that if an individual is Roman Catholic or Orthodox, they have a higher family income.

*Multivariate Results*

According to Table 3, the regression equation is statistically significant at the $p < .001$ level with 49 percent of the variation in racial resentment explained by the variables for which this study
controls ($R^2 = .491$). With an $F$-value of 1164.34, the regression model is statistically significant ($p < .001$). As the final model of the iterative regression presents, political views ($\beta = .624$) is, overwhelmingly, the largest predictor of white racial resentment towards African Americans. Educational attainment ($\beta = -.161$), being Roman Catholic or Orthodox ($\beta = .062$), age ($\beta = .044$), and being Protestant ($\beta = .035$) follow political views as further predictors of white racial resentment.

[Insert Table 3 about here]

The regression analysis does not find a statistically significant association between county slave proportion in 1860 and racial resentment, thus rejecting the central hypothesis of this study. Similarly, the tertiary hypothesis is unsupported as this study finds no statistical significance between a Southern county’s score on the dissimilarity index and racial resentment at the agent level. The interrelation between racial resentment and both residence permanence and family income and racial resentment are nonsignificant in result.

As aforementioned and congruent with the results of the bivariate analysis, the regression reveals conservatism to be statistically significant in relation to racial resentment, finding this variable to be the most powerful predictor of this study’s dependent variable. An unstandardized coefficient of .644 indicates that for every point higher an individual scores on a five-point scale measuring conservatism, an individual’s racial resentment will increase by nearly six and a half tenths of a point. Thus, an individual who is “very conservative” will score, on average, approximately three points higher on the five-point scale of racial resentment than an individual who is “very liberal.” Further, as the increase in the $R^2$ values between models 8 and 9 presents, conservatism accounts for 31 percent of the variance on the racial resentment variable, and its impact is such that the dissimilarity index which is statistically significant through the eighth
regression model is stripped of its significance upon incorporation of conservatism into the equation. Although the religious affiliation variables are statistically significant in the final regression equation, the magnitude of their effect is substantially reduced when conservatism is introduced (as seen in model 9). This change in magnitude both underscores the cogent predictivity of conservatism and indicates that the command of religion on racial resentment is partially mediated by conservatism.

Following conservatism, education is the variable with the next largest effect on racial resentment scores \((b = -.134)\). The unstandardized coefficient displays that, on average, with every additional category of education an individual attains, an individual’s racial resentment will decrease by .134. Religious affiliation, as noted previously, is also discerned to positively direct individual racial resentment. If an individual is Roman Catholic or Greek/Eastern Orthodox, on average, their racial resentment will increase by .221; whereas if an individual is Protestant, their racial resentment will increase by .091. Situated between these two religion variables (in terms of standardized strength), age is also shown to impact upon an individual’s racial resentment as well \((b = .003)\). With every year older a respondent is, an individual’s racial resentment will increase, on average, by three thousandths of a point— an individual of 60 years might have a racial resentment score .120 higher than their younger counterpart of 20 years. With the exception of the dissimilarity index and residence permanence, the variables that were nonsignificant in the final model were nonsignificant across all of the models in which they were included. It should be noted that while there was bivariate association, family income is nonsignificant in the full model.

DISCUSSION

There are innumerable approaches to be engaged in the operationalization of racial animus, past and present— each accompanied by their own merits, rationales and discrepancies. Whereas
SLAVERY AND WHITE RACIAL RESENTMENT

the present study involves 1860 slave proportions and white racial resentment towards African Americans in its operationalizations, previous literature has studied other variables intended to measure variations of racial animus. Past operationalizations have included lynching, convict leasing, voting inclination, and racial disparities exhibited within residential composition, school enrollment and the criminal justice system. Inquiry into these enumerated arenas has worked within a resolve to better apprehend the intricate appearances of racism today (Acharya et al. 2018; Billingham and Hunt 2016; Cook et al. 2018; Corzine et al. 1983, Fairlie Resch 2002; Reece and O’Connell 2016).

Considering the results of the previous section, the substance of the bivariate findings unveils intriguing correlations between particular variables of this study. Most prominently, the interactive effect of conservative political perspective on white racial resentment, is quite striking in its magnitude. Although other statistically significant variables, e.g. education, exist in the correlation and regression analyses ($p < .001$) the strength of conservative political ideology in relation to racial resentment is such that this variable is positioned as the primary focus of this section.

This study reveals neither past slave legacy nor present segregation to be predictors of contemporary racial resentment. The findings do, however, stress the authority of conservative political ideology on white racial resentment and provide further commentary on the polarization of the political arena today. Figure 10 evidences the striking liberal-conservative divide. The lines representing individuals on the liberal side of the spectrum exhibit a completely opposite trend from that which is captured through the direction of lines representing individuals on the conservative side of the spectrum. To call upon specific data points: 76 percent of respondents in the “very liberal” category score between one and two on the racial resentment scale (indicating
minimal racial resentment) whereas only .8 percent of respondents in the “very conservative” within this scale range. A similar yet inverse dissonance between conservative and liberal attitudes can be seen on the other end of the graph in that 65 percent of respondents in the “very conservative category” score between four and five on the racial resentment scale whereas three percent of respondents in the “very liberal” category score between four and five. These percentages evoke the incontrovertible split between conservatives and liberals today on matters related to race.

[Insert Figure 10 about here]

Select previous literature inquiring into both similar and dissimilar race related topics also find conservative political views to have a palpable effect when involving partisanship variables (Acharya et al. 2016; Acharya et al. 2018; Baumer et al. 2003; Jacobs et al. 2005; Jacobs and Tope 2007; King et al. 2009; Mears et al. 2019). For example, the conclusions of Baumer et al. (2003) present the impact of political ideology on support for death penalty, finding that respondents who reside in geographic areas in which the political climate is moderately conservative (rather than liberal) are more likely to support this practice. Rooted in data on actualized death penalty sanctions (from 1970 to 1990 in ten southern states) and along a similar thread of thought, Jacobs et al. (2005) find that state conservativism is associated with black death sentences at $p < .001$, whereas it is not associated with all death sentences until $p < .05$. In other words, conservativeness, although both a predictor of black death sentences and overall death sentences, is a larger predictor of the former than the latter within these states. The conclusions of Jacobs and Trope (2007), too, note the abated support for liberal legislation subsequent to increased minority presence, foregrounding the practical and macro level implications of attitudes held. With distinct focus to voting behavior, this study positions right-wing voting as a public mode of countering a perceived loss of social control. These and similar findings further nudge the reader towards consideration
of the interaction between conservative political affiliation and the production of adverse racial realities.

Attention to conservative politics might also benefit the numerous studies that have not considered the effect of the prevalent political ideologies in a given locale on race related arenas. For instance, incorporating a measure of aggregated conservativeness in the context of studies on public school enrollment disparities might work to discern whether regional conservative climate is a predictor of the racial homogeneity of public-school systems (Billingham and Hunt 2016; Fairlie Resch 2002; Reece and O’Connell 2016).

As mentioned previously, the conclusions drawn from Table 2 are not in support of this study’s hypotheses: markedly, the independent and dependent variables do not have a notable association to one another. This remains true in the multivariate regression analysis as well (Table 3). It must be acknowledged that the absence of statistical significance between proportion slave in 1860 and racial resentment is inconsistent with the results of Acharya et al. (2018) that identified a positive association between these variables, deriving its racial resentment data from CCES 2006 to 2011. The discrepancy in conclusion across these two studies initially surfaced as counterintuitive as, if they were to differ, I would have postulated the results of the present study to reveal an association of greater strength than the former due to the aggravated political climate nurtured under the Trump administration (which would not have been relevant to the conclusions of Acharya et al.). This inconsistency is likely a product of the fact that the former study engaged hierarchal linear modeling and has aggregated the CCES data to the county level.

Moreover, despite the receding, and ultimately evanesced, statistical significance of the dissimilarity index in the regression equation, the bivariate correlation between the dissimilarity index and racial resentment and the first eight models shown in Table 3 counters the second
hypothesis of this study which conjectures that counties exhibiting less segregation will be associated with lower white racial resentment, in favor of the intergroup contact theory. The finding, instead, substantiates the arguments of racial threat literature through revealing increased exposure between whites and blacks to provoke heightened racial resentment of whites towards blacks. The implications of this association, at the bivariate level, suggest an unfortunate truth about contemporary race relations and are particularly important in acquiring an inclusive understanding of the ecological variables conducive to the intensification of racial resentment. This conclusion cannot be extracted from the regression analysis as the association between the dissimilarity index and racial resentment is nonsignificant. The bivariate conclusion that counties once highly reliant on slave labor have less contemporary segregation between blacks and whites, and the multivariate conclusion showing no significance between these two variables, however, work to disclose the changing composition and perhaps ideologies of the South.

Although this study does not infer in support of the institutional replication theory, in both the bivariate and multivariate analyses occupying conservative political ideology emerged as the strongest predictor of high racial resentment, explaining 31 percent of the variance on the dependent variable. This recorded finding proves incredibly telling of the polarization between liberal and conservative ideologies and illuminates crevices of the political realities that divide contemporary society and function to the detriment of African Americans. Furthermore, in advancing the conclusions of Acharya et al. (2018), this finding reveals the heightened rigidity of conservative ideologies of relevance to present discourse centering the interaction between race and policy as it relates to the persistence of hegemonic structures and the limitations of social progression.
CONCLUSION

The present does not operate in isolation of the past; instead, necessarily, the former operates as an extension of the latter, thus rendering the two inextricable. With particular focus on Southern states, this study endeavors to reveal the extent to which the institution of slavery, and the convictions that allowed for its persistence, are evident in contemporary racial resentment of whites towards African Americans. Specifically, the leading hypothesis of this study asserts that higher the proportion of slaves in a given 1860 county, the higher the racial resentment of white individuals presently residing within that county. The function of county-level black and white dissimilarity is also explored through the hypothesis that the higher the segregation between whites and blacks in a given county, the higher the racial resentment of white individuals presently residing in that county. To assess these hypotheses, this study employs three sources of data: the U.S. Census Bureau provides statistics from 1860 reporting on the distribution of slaves at the county level, the 2017 five-year ACS estimates provide black-white proportions at the county level allowing for the calculation of dissimilarity indices, and the CCES provides information towards the construction of the racial resentment index and the inclusion of the demographic control variables at the agential level (n = 10,880). The findings, although they refute the hypotheses and theoretical framework of this study, evince the overwhelming effect of conservative politics on white racial resentment, net of all other variables, and prompt further inquiry.

The conclusions of the focal intrigue of this study, centering the inquiry into whether the racial past of the United States endures within a contemporary context, accent the influence of conservative politics. As such, we are impelled to cogitate on the practical and theoretical implications of this finding. A host of past literature has pointed to the reality that phenomena of the past are ingrained and, to a certain degree, subsist to dictate the functioning of society’s present
circumstance. Conversely, this study intimates (via its specific operationalizations) that past racial animus might not be related to that which exists today. This stresses the importance of continual analytic engagements that explore the differing ways in which legacies embedded in history might currently present or have dissipated. The findings of this research indicate the sharp polarization of political partisanship in a climate predicated on principles of binary opposition in which the “conservative democrat” is a rarity. The lack of association between slave legacy and white racial resentment, as well as between residence permanence and racial resentment, furthermore suggests attitudinal change in the South since the late nineteenth century. This alteration might be a product, in part, of the increased mobility of individuals residing within the United States as well as the proliferation of individuals, whose familial lineage originates elsewhere across the globe, to the North America. Civil Rights movements, too, might have influential bearing on attitudinal transformations. On balance, although this study disconfirms axioms of the institutional replication theory, it is evident that racial resentment is salient in contemporary society and warrants thoughtful investigation.

Limitations of the Present Study and Recommendations for Future Research

As maintains across all research, this study is not without limitations in its operationalizations and method. Afflicting the United States’ past and present, racial animus and prejudice towards African Americans can neither be accurately captured in a single equation nor without consideration of historical lineages of racist exhibitions. Rather, a multitude of variables and definitions must be involved in order to account for the variegated nature of racist exhibitions in society—some more disguised than others. This research advances the study of but two measurements of racial animus in relation to one another: 1860 slave proportions and racial resentment. Thus, although the selection of these variables has allowed for important recognition
of the effect of conservative politics on attitudes surrounding race, it must be acknowledged that these variables are limited in their scope and ability to unveil the intricacies of past and present expressions of racism. For this reason, consideration of other variables, either supplement to those within this study or in lieu of them, is critical for informed scholarship to ensue.

Conversation of deficiencies in operationalizations might also be applied to variables of this study with focus exterior to racial animus. To present one application: this study inserts residence permanence as an indicator of the embeddedness of an individual in their county of residence, which is but one measurement approach. As this embeddedness might better be assessed through use of a different variable or conceptualization, future research might consider the impact of the length an individual has resided in the south relative to their age (thus, proportionally), or might explore counties in which generations of the same family lineage have persisted so as to study the effect of intergenerational transmission and region on racist expressions and attitudinal measures. Similarly, future studies should investigate the merits of other concentration and intergroup exposure measures excepting the dissimilarity index.

Future research, too, must continue to be informed and prompted by past literature. The findings of the present study accent the importance of further inquiry into the position of conservative political ideology in contemporary racial discourse and interactions at policy and interpersonal substrata. As such and towards this end, ensuing studies of similar subject-matter might benefit from the foregrounding or inclusion of political partisanship measures. Extensions of this and previous research should also inquire into practical implications, perhaps investigating the extent to which reported attitudes surrounding race translate to actualized voting behavior. This genre of study could, to a point, elucidate the congruity or lack thereof between attitudes that might
impact more so at a micro level and those that might have particular macro or policy-level implication.

Perusing past literature might also allow for the development and use of inventive operationalizations where applicable. For example, Acharya et al. (2018) operationalize white attitudes towards blacks prior to emancipation through use of data on the number of slaves per dwelling and proportion of slave deaths to white deaths in a given year. Similar novel quantifications must continue to be appraised in longitudinal, comparative and other analyses to develop an inclusive illustration of the inimical interactions between race and society in the United States. Such license in measurement might also propel examinations of the interaction between racial threat and intergroup contact theories and actualized concretized principles of institutional replication.

Altogether, an inquiry such as that examined in this study would benefit from the application of hierarchical linear modeling as this would enable more complex and insightful analyses that recognize the variance in levels of analysis and consider measurement error. Aggregating to a county level, as done in pockets of previous research, might also better serve the analytic purpose of this class of study given the dissimilar units of analysis involved, and thus the appropriateness and merit of aggregation should be assessed for compatibility within the context individual studies. As subsequent analyses are engaged, their efforts must continue to be founded in informed rationale.

*Final Remarks*

It is with the exploration of a variety of mechanisms and measurements that we are provided lens through which to discern the scars that racial brutality and hierarchies, pervasive in U.S. history, engrave in our present. Advancing from the sweeping and indisputable racist
demonstrations of the past, the patent and latent manifestations of racism in contemporary society continue to impede racial progress and adversely impact upon the lived experiences of many. Exhaustive inquiry into the extensions of this country’s racial past not only has historic theoretical implication but is of profound consequence to the contemporary enactment of effectual policy and informed social advocacy.
SLAVERY AND WHITE RACIAL RESENTMENT

REFERENCES


SLAVERY AND WHITE RACIAL RESENTMENT


SLAVERY AND WHITE RACIAL RESENTMENT


Appendix A.

Southern States— as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau \((n = 17, \text{ including DC})\)

- Alabama
- Arkansas
- Delaware
- District of Columbia
- Florida
- Georgia
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Maryland
- Mississippi
- North Carolina
- Oklahoma
- South Carolina
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Virginia
- West Virginia
Appendix B.

“Thinking back over the last year, what was your family’s annual income?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Category</th>
<th>New Income Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>less than $10,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000 - $19,999</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000 - $29,999</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000 - $39,999</td>
<td>$35,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40,000 - $49,999</td>
<td>$45,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000 - $59,999</td>
<td>$55,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$60,000 - $69,999</td>
<td>$65,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$70,000 - $79,999</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$80,000 - $99,999</td>
<td>$85,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000 - $119,999</td>
<td>$110,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$120,000 - $149,999</td>
<td>$135,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000 - $199,999</td>
<td>$175,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$200,000 - $249,999</td>
<td>$225,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$250,000 - $349,999</td>
<td>$300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$350,000 - $499,999</td>
<td>$425,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500,000 or more</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The income categories were originally coded 1 to 16.
SLAVERY AND WHITE RACIAL RESENTMENT

TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1. Means, Medians, and Standard Deviations for all Variables ($n = 10,880$)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of Slaves</td>
<td>25.00</td>
<td>23.00</td>
<td>17.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial Resentment</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>1.278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissimilarity Index</td>
<td>43.00</td>
<td>43.00</td>
<td>11.300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>52.82</td>
<td>55.00</td>
<td>16.656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence Permanence</td>
<td>16.84</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>15.651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Attainment</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservativeness</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic and Eastern or Greek Orthodox</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Income</td>
<td>72926.47</td>
<td>55000.00</td>
<td>62607.915</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. Bar Graph of Proportion of Slaves in 1860 in Southern Counties
SLAVERY AND WHITE RACIAL RESENTMENT

Figure 2. Bar Graph of Racial Resentment (scale)

Figure 3. Bar Graph of Dissimilarity Index using 2017 Five-Year Estimates
SLAVERY AND WHITE RACIAL RESENTMENT

Figure 4. Bar Graph of Age,

Figure 5. Bar Graph of Educational Attainment
SLAVERY AND WHITE RACIAL RESENTMENT

Figure 6. Bar Graph of Family Income

Figure 7. Bar Graph of Years Lived in Current Place of Residence
SLAVERY AND WHITE RACIAL RESENTMENT

![Bar Graph of Political Ideology](image)

Figure 8. Bar Graph of Political Ideology

![Bar Graph of Religious Affiliation](image)

Figure 9. Bar Graph of Religious Affiliation
SLAVERY AND WHITE RACIAL RESENTMENT

Table 2. Correlations \((r)\) between Racial Resentment and Nine Variables (listwise deletion, two-tailed test, \(n = 10,880\))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Proportion Slave (1860)</th>
<th>Dissimilarity Index</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Residence Permanence</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Conservatism</th>
<th>Protestant</th>
<th>Catholic/Orthodox</th>
<th>Family Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Racial Resentment</td>
<td>.026</td>
<td>-.071*</td>
<td>.203*</td>
<td>.119*</td>
<td>-.269*</td>
<td>.676*</td>
<td>.237*</td>
<td>.066*</td>
<td>-.074*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion Slave</td>
<td>-.252*</td>
<td>-.002</td>
<td>-.005</td>
<td>.043*</td>
<td>.038*</td>
<td>.033*</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissimilarity Index</td>
<td>-.011</td>
<td>.044*</td>
<td>.043*</td>
<td>-.076*</td>
<td>-.069*</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>.035*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.311*</td>
<td>-.075</td>
<td>.210*</td>
<td>.137*</td>
<td>.074*</td>
<td>.034*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence Permanence</td>
<td>-.107*</td>
<td>.104*</td>
<td>.103*</td>
<td>-.009</td>
<td>-.023</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-.156*</td>
<td>-.037*</td>
<td>.034*</td>
<td>-.362*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservatism</td>
<td>.338*</td>
<td>.036*</td>
<td>-.006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>-.400*</td>
<td>-.025</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic/Orthodox</td>
<td></td>
<td>.064*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\*p < .001

Table 3. Iterative Regression between Racial Resentment and Nine Variables \((n = 10,880)\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
<th>(7)</th>
<th>(8)</th>
<th>(9)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion Slave</td>
<td>.190</td>
<td>.060</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>.064</td>
<td>.172</td>
<td>.146</td>
<td>.130</td>
<td>.128</td>
<td>.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissimilarity Index</td>
<td>-.786*</td>
<td>-.757*</td>
<td>-.794*</td>
<td>-.619*</td>
<td>-.469*</td>
<td>-.473*</td>
<td>-.476*</td>
<td>-.168</td>
<td>-.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.015*</td>
<td>.014*</td>
<td>.013*</td>
<td>.011*</td>
<td>.009*</td>
<td>.009*</td>
<td>.003*</td>
<td>.003*</td>
<td>.044*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence Permanence</td>
<td>.005*</td>
<td>.003*</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.003*</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.020</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-.208*</td>
<td>-.205*</td>
<td>-.209*</td>
<td>-.212*</td>
<td>-.212*</td>
<td>-.134*</td>
<td>-.161*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>.516*</td>
<td>.704*</td>
<td>.704*</td>
<td>.919*</td>
<td>.919*</td>
<td>.919*</td>
<td>.919*</td>
<td>.919*</td>
<td>.919*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic/Orthodox</td>
<td>.635*</td>
<td>.633*</td>
<td>.221*</td>
<td>.062*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Income</td>
<td>(2.431e-7)</td>
<td>(-3.122e-7)</td>
<td>(-.015)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservatism</td>
<td>.644*</td>
<td>.624*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>(3.232)</td>
<td>(3.601)</td>
<td>(2.768)</td>
<td>(2.778)</td>
<td>(3.539)</td>
<td>(3.335)</td>
<td>(3.266)</td>
<td>(3.267)</td>
<td>(1.490)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(df\) \((1, 10878)\) (2, 10877) (3, 10876) (4, 10875) (5, 10874) (6, 10873) (7, 10872) (8, 10871) (9, 10870)


\(R^2\) .001  .005  .046  .050  .111  .151  .177  .177  .491

\*p < .001
SLAVERY AND WHITE RACIAL RESENTMENT

Figure 10. Line Graph of Conservatism and Racial Resentment