

Would You Vote For Colin Powell? White Support for a Not Quite Colorless Black Candidate*

April Gresham
Villanova, PA

Robert Maranto
Villanova University

Sigelman et al (1995), Williams (1990), and Sonenshein (1990) find that whites stereotype African-American candidates as less competent and more liberal than white candidates. Yet increasing numbers of African-Americans win election in white constituencies. We used a natural experiment, the media boom for a Colin Powell presidential bid in 1994, to test the degree to which various race-related attitudes affected Powell support among white voters. We conducted a phone survey of 350 white Pennsylvania residents from June to November 1994. Powell had as much support as any Republican. Powell support was unrelated to conservatism, party, and affirmative action. For Democrats, Powell support was related to attitudes toward NAFTA and immigration. For Republicans, Powell support was related to authoritarianism and populism. We conclude with speculation about future directions for research.

Introduction and Hypotheses

Schuman, Steeh, and Bobo (1988 73-81) and Thernstrom and Thernstrom (1997) report that the percentage of whites willing to vote for an African-American presidential candidate rose sharply from the late 1950s to the early 1970s, and slowly thereafter. By the early 1980s, more than 80% of whites expressed willingness to vote for a black presidential candidate. Further, some African-Americans have won election to overwhelmingly white constituencies. These include former Senator Carol Moseley Braun (D, IL), former Virginia Governor L. Douglas Wilder, former U.S. Representative Alan Wheat (D, MO, who lost a 1994 Senate race), former U.S. House member Gary Franks (R, CT) and current U.S. Representative J.C. Watts (R, OK)(Barone and Ujifusa 1993).

Yet black candidates in white constituencies still face obstacles. Voters use personal information about candidates, including ethnicity, to make presumptions about political views (Popkin 1992, 63-64, 77-79). As Williams (1990) finds, national surveys show that whites assume black candidates to have certain generic racial attributes, among them liberal-

* We wish to thank Lafayette College and Villanova University for material support of this project, Paul Sniderman for helping design measurement strategies, and Tali Mendelberg and several anonymous reviewers for their comments. The usual caveats apply.

ism and relative incompetence in office. Using experimental manipulations of the race and ideology of hypothetical candidates, Sigelman et al (1995) show that whites assume even conservative African-American candidates to be less competent and more sympathetic to disadvantaged groups than comparable white candidates. Successful African-American politicians in white constituencies have overcome stereotypes in part by emphasizing conservative stands or social characteristics. For example, former Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley stressed his background as a policeman in early races and his business support in later ones (Sonenshein 1990). Similarly, former Massachusetts Senator Edward Brooke and Virginia Governor L. Douglas Wilder emphasized their tough stands against crime. Wilder also stressed his southern style and status as a military veteran (Sonenshein 1990, 1993).

A natural replication of such research was made possible by the 1994-95 media boom about a hypothetical presidential bid by former Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Colin Powell, the first African-American (technically Caribbean American) to hold the post. Though he did not declare his Republican affiliation until October 1995 and had contributed campaign money to Democrats and Republicans alike, Powell's military career flourished under Republican presidents, and he was widely assumed to be Republican. Powell's military career appealed more to Republicans than to Democrats, as did his frequent talk on religious issues and the need for strong families. Powell was popular among white religious conservatives, as shown by the Powell biographies frequently featured at religious bookstores (Interview 1; Woodward 1991).

Powell was a particularly interesting candidate to examine since previous black presidential candidates (Jesse Jackson, Shirley Chisholm) were liberals, while Powell was thought to be moderate or conservative.

In 1994-1995 draft Powell organizations formed, one led by historian and Eisenhower biographer Stephen Ambrose. As Ambrose said, "when people look at him [Powell], it makes you proud to be an American...because, like Ike, he makes you believe in the American dream" (Elliason 1995). A *Times-Mirror* survey conducted in August 1994 showed a Republican Powell beating Clinton by 51 to 41%. The survey also found a 74% Powell approval rating and 8% disapproval. Powell himself encouraged presidential speculation, stating, "The Chairman of the JCS is the best job in the world, except for maybe one or two others."¹ Notably, Powell's perceived success in Operation Desert Storm and the status of the military might well inoculate him against racial stereotypes of incompetence (Elliason, "All Things Considered," March 31, 1995; Interview 1; Raum 1994). Similarly, African-American Republicans in general, and former generals in particular, might be immune from stereotypes that they are liberal. We thus propose to test:

H1: A Powell presidential candidacy could gain considerable support among whites.

This is not to say that a Powell candidacy would be race neutral. We will explore the possible impact of three different types of racism on voting for Powell: modern or symbolic racism, also referred to as encoded racism; blatant authoritarian racism; and populist racism based in realistic group conflict.

Modern racism researchers contend that many whites pretend color-blindness while embracing policies that harm African-Americans; thus much of what passes for conservatism is in fact disguised, or “modern” racism (McConahay 1986; Sears 1988). Hagen (1995) and Bloom (1995) investigate “encoded racism” or “explainable racism,” racism expressed by code phrases such as opposition to welfare and concern about crime. Their preliminary findings indicate that educated voters in particular express such subtle views and vote prejudicially.

One way to explore this type of racism is by examining the relationship between views of Powell’s candidacy and affirmative action. Affirmative action could be seen as a racial issue—one of coded or explainable racism (Bloom 1995). If so, support for Powell might be inversely related to affirmative action opposition. On the other hand, Powell had not as of 1994 linked himself with affirmative action and seemed conservative on other issues. Thus, we propose:

H2: Views of affirmative action will not be related to white support for a Powell candidacy.

A second type of racism is noted by Sniderman and Piazza (1993), who find that many whites still admit blatantly racist views. They also find that such racism is not strongly related to ideological conservatism but rather to a long-standing personality correlate of prejudice—authoritarianism (Allport 1954). Notably, this minority of white Americans holds authoritarian views on such issues as maintaining respect for America’s power, strengthening law and order, making sure all people acquire similar values and ideals, and teaching children respect for authority. Authoritarians are not conservatives. They endorse conventional conservative political views only on law and order issues, and unlike other conservatives they negatively stereotype Jews (a group that stereotypically embodies the Protestant Work Ethic) as well as African-Americans. In short, authoritarian opinion denigrates *all* other races (Sniderman and Piazza 1993, 55, ch. 2, 3; Uslaner 2002). Thus, we predict:

H3: Powell support will be inversely related to authoritarianism.

A third type of prejudice is realistic group conflict. According to realistic group conflict theory, a stagnant or unstable economy is associated with heightened intergroup tensions as groups compete for scarce resources (Bobo 1988; Hofstadter 1964; Fritzsche 1990; Uslaner 2002). Immigrants are prime targets of prejudice since they represent competitor groups. According to this theory, voters see wealth as finite. Thus, Americans compete with non-citizens (immigrants) for jobs in America, and American workers compete with workers in other countries (such as Mexico) in the world market. Such competition is associated with prejudice against members of the competing group(s).

Two political issues at the time of the survey lent themselves to investigating realistic group conflict based prejudice: NAFTA and immigration. These issues highlight a fault line among Republicans. "Optimist" conservatives such as Jack Kemp argue that free trade and immigration help all Americans; they thus support both NAFTA and immigration. In contrast, "Nationalist" conservatives such as Pat Buchanan see economic growth as a zero-sum enterprise: immigration and NAFTA take away "American" jobs. More important, immigration could destroy America's European based culture, and increase crime and disorder. As Buchanan, who other conservatives accuse of racism and anti-Semitism, asks, "[w]hose country is it, anyway?" (Frum 1994; Lind 1993; Buckley 1992). (On the relationship between optimism and tolerance, see Uslaner 2002.)

The contrast between Nationalists and Optimists was especially pronounced in comparisons of the Kemp and Buchanan 1996 presidential campaigns. Kemp's standard stump speech urged the GOP to be the party of Lincoln, a Biblical good shepherd for every sheep. He noted that unemployment in American ghettos was so high as to justify not only riots, but also "the French Revolution, the Russian Revolution" (C-SPAN 1992). He saw capitalism as so good that the poor needed to be part of it. He typically urged his (usually all white) audiences to remember that blacks had the same aspirations for their children. Once, when a hand-shaker urged Kemp to consider Bob Dole for Vice-President, he answered "How about Colin Powell?" (C-SPAN 1992). Republican activists in Virginia in the months after the 1992 election distributed Kemp-Powell buttons (C-SPAN 1992; Interview 1). Kemp campaigned against the anti-illegal immigrant Proposition 187 in California and dropped out of the GOP presidential race after it passed. In sharp contrast, Pat Buchanan's 1995 announcement for president denounced moral decay, the crimes of illegal aliens, and the greed of such (Jewish named) companies as Goldman-Sachs that gave executives huge bonuses while laying off 2,000 clerks (C-SPAN 1995). Accordingly, we predict that:

H4: Support for NAFTA and immigration will be directly related to support for Powell.

Optimists and Nationalists can be likened to the libertarian and populist currents in mass ideology described by Maddox and Lilie (1984). Like Optimists, libertarians favor less government regulation in both the economic and social-cultural spheres of life. Libertarians also tend to be younger, better educated, and relatively optimistic. In contrast, populists are pessimistic about human nature and want a strong government, both to control business and social morality and to protect the working class. Populists are older, poorer, less educated, more skeptical about programs aiding African-Americans, and less trusting generally (Maddox and Lilie 1984; Uslaner 2002).

Maddox and Lilie suggest that as of 1982, populists and libertarians could be found in substantial numbers in each party, unlike liberals and conservatives. Suggesting that populist-nationalist Democrats are more likely to believe in social control, to stereotype others, and to hold relatively authoritarian views may explain the surprising findings of Sniderman et al (1993) that stereotypes about African-Americans were strongly related to welfare policy views for economic liberals, but not for economic conservatives. While conservatives oppose assistance for *anyone*, high stereotyping liberals oppose assistance targeted to *blacks*. Perhaps these supposed "liberals" are in fact the populist-nationalists discussed above: economically liberal but socially conservative or even authoritarian. Thus:

H5: Support for Powell will be inversely related to populism.

Procedure

Sniderman and Piazza's findings are based on California and Kentucky surveys focusing on racial issues. We have partly replicated Sniderman and Piazza's measures of racial stereotyping and authoritarian values using two surveys. Our Racism survey focuses on racial stereotyping and affirmative action, though it also includes a few general questions about political attitudes. Our Politics survey uses an embedded design in which a few race-oriented questions are embedded within a broader survey of political attitudes. The following analyses use questions from the Politics survey, except tests of H1 (Tables 2-3), which pool the data sets.²

We conducted a phone survey of Pennsylvania's 15th U.S. House district (the Lehigh Valley and surrounding area) from June 15 to November 30, 1994. Respondents were normally called three times before being counted as refusals or four times before being categorized as unreachable. The household and household member to be interviewed were selected randomly (Lavrakos 1992). Of the 753 households contacted, 55

were unable to participate due to inability to speak English or poor hearing. Three hundred and seventy of the remaining 698 potential subjects completed the survey, for a 53% completion rate. Of the 370 individuals surveyed, 350 (94%) are included in the analyses that follow.³ Of the 350, 187 completed the Politics survey and 163 completed the Racism survey. As Table 1 shows, sample demographics resembled those for the 15th District as a whole as reported from Barone and Ujifusa (1993, 1113).

Table 1
Comparing the Sample with the 15th U.S. House District

Attributes	Sample	15th District
Median Household Income	\$30-45,000	\$33,049
Percent White	94	92
Percent Over Age 64	16	15
Percent W/ College Degree	36	37
Percent, Who, in 1992, Voted for Clinton-Bush-Perot	41-43-16	41-37-22

Forty percent of survey respondents report being Democrats and 38% call themselves Republican. Official registration figures for the district show Democrats with 56% of the two party registration total, though registered independents tend to think of themselves as Republicans. This is particularly true of the many recent immigrants from New Jersey, an open primary state. Many of the newcomers came to escape high taxes, high housing costs, and crime. In addition, as explained below, Lehigh Valley Democrats increasingly vote Republican (Interview 2).

The Lehigh Valley is an interesting area in which to study the intersection of race, class, and politics. The area is overwhelmingly white but ethnically diverse. It was originally settled by British and German immigrants whose descendants still make up more than half the population. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries came waves of Irish, Italian, and Eastern European immigrants. Survey respondents are 36% Catholic, 55% Protestant, and 1% Jewish. Immigrants worked in such large manufacturing industries as Bethlehem Steel, Dixie Cup, and Mack Trucks. These heavy industries hit hard times in the study period, making NAFTA a significant political issue. Despite economic change, joblessness was near the national average, with new industries moving in from New York and New Jersey. In addition, many factory workers (or their children) moved down Interstates 78 and 81 to the Sun Belt. Still,

the Valley remained heavily blue collar and 25% rural, with politically significant unions, gun and sportsmen's groups, and ethnic clubs. The district had 78,000 veterans, and military issues often figured in local politics. Then U.S. Representative Paul McHale, a Democrat, upset Republican incumbent Don Ritter in 1992 in part by emphasizing his military record. In its heavy industry days the district elected Democratic U.S. House members from 1932 to 1978, when Ritter upset a longtime incumbent. Later congressional races were closely contested. The district was Democratic in state and local elections through the 1970s, but since then it has trended Republican because of Cold War issues, economic changes, and migration from New Jersey. While Hubert Humphrey beat Richard Nixon by a 50% to 46% margin in 1968, George McGovern could manage only 40% in 1972. Jimmy Carter won the district with 52% in 1976, but Ronald Reagan beat Carter by 50% to 39% in 1980. George Bush won 55% in 1988, but in a bad local economy in 1992 he lost to Clinton 41% to 37%, with Perot winning 22%.⁴ At the same time, from 1982 to 1994 the GOP narrowed the two party registration edge from 63% to 37% to 56% to 44%. Many of the 15th's Democrats are considered "God and country" or "Reagan Democrats" who vote Republican nationally on cultural and defense issues but have ethnic and economic links to the Democratic party and tend Democratic for local offices. Although Democrats are a plurality in our survey, 51% of respondents consider themselves conservative—35% liberal. Indeed, the presence of so many Reagan Democrats led the Clinton campaign to conduct focus groups in Allentown before the 1992 Democratic convention.⁵ Despite the local losses for Bush and U.S. Representative Ritter in 1992, the GOP continued its gains in the area. In 1986 Democrats held 14 of the Lehigh Valley's 15 state house seats, and all three major city mayor's offices (Allentown, Bethlehem, Easton). As of 1994, GOP mayors ran the three cities and Republicans held 12 of 15 house seats (Barone and Ujifusa, 1975, 1981, 1983, 1989, 1993; Interview 2).

While economic and national issues seemingly dominated area voting behavior, race also may have had an impact. Overwhelmingly white, the Lehigh Valley has grown more diverse. Hispanics, African-Americans, and Asian Americans made up 8% of the population in the study period, and they were even more in the three major cities. Downtown Allentown and Easton were widely perceived as unsafe because of ethnic minorities. The dominant local newspaper gave substantial coverage (often including photos) to crimes committed by ethnic minorities and to moves to make Allentown an "English only" city (Lehigh Valley *Morning Call* 1995). In addition, most Valley residents watch New York and Philadelphia television. Further, as Kinder and Mendelberg (1995) find, racial isolation actually enhances the impact of prejudice on white opinion. Similarly,

Dionne (1991, 88) recalls Nixon campaign speeches denouncing urban crime and welfare dependency in such places as New Hampshire. An area need not have "urban" problems to see minorities as a threat. Indeed such appeals work best in white rural areas long fearful of all manner of urban evils (Hofstadter 1964). The Lehigh Valley had an active klavern and neo-Nazi groups, one of which came into prominence when two brothers in the group killed their religious, racially tolerant parents and younger brother. A local Republican political consultant maintained that it was difficult for African-Americans to win election in the Lehigh Valley, though Colin Powell might be the one exception (Interview 2).⁶

In short, while overwhelmingly white, the Lehigh Valley is an interesting place to study whites' willingness to vote for African-Americans. Its economic and social transitions and social conservatism make it a good place to look for authoritarian and populist tendencies in American politics.

Testing the Hypotheses

As Table 2 shows, Hypothesis 1 is consistent with the data. Colin Powell would have been a serious presidential candidate, essentially tying then-Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole as the first GOP choice among Lehigh Valley voters, with 23% to Dole's 25%. Powell led all other GOP contenders as a second choice and in combined (first and second place) support. Of course, one might suspect that as a nonpartisan figure Powell will have more support among Democrats than other

Candidates Chosen	Percent Listing	Percent Listing	Percents Combined*
Dole	25	13	20
Kemp	18	14	16
Quayle	8	8	8
Buchanan	2	4	3
Powell	23	22	23
Gramm	3	3	3
Other/ Refuse	22	35	
	100%	100%	
	N=100	N=100	

*Does not equal mean of first two columns because of different numbers of missing cases.

Table 3
Percent Listing Powell as a Preferred
1996 GOP Presidential Candidate by Party.

Views of Powell	Respondent Self-Rating			
	Democrat Strong	Democrat Weak	Independent	Republican Weak Strong*
Does Not List Powell	63	69	66	52 66
Powell Listed as Second GOP Choice	14	13	20	17 19
Powell Listed as First GOP Choice	24	19	14	31 15
Total percentage	100 ^a	100 ^a	100	100 100

$\chi^2(8) = 7.75, p = .46$ $N = 335$

* Total candidate percentages in this table are greater than in Table 2 since this table combines two variables (FIRST and SECOND choice) for individual cases: it is additive rather than a mean.

^a Actual percentages add to 100; there is slight inflation in the table due to rounding error.

GOP contenders can muster. In fact, this is not the case. As Table 3 shows, relationships with party are not statistically significant.

Powell seemingly appealed most to weak Republicans, 48% of whom list him as either their first or second choice. Only 34% of strong Republicans and 36% of the sample as a whole do so. Strong Republicans preferred more partisan candidates. Yet we found no clear tendency for Powell supporters to back him less against Clinton. On the Politics survey respondents were asked whether, if the election were held today, they would vote for President Clinton or for their favorite Republican. Those who choose Powell as their first choice break 63% to 37% for Powell; those choosing other GOP candidates support them by 75% to 25% margins, but the differences do not approach statistical significance in the small sample, $\chi^2(5) = 4.01, ns$. Naturally those unwilling to choose a Republican backed President Clinton. In short, H1 is supported.

In investigating the other hypotheses, we first examine zero-order correlations between Powell support and hypothesized predictors: affirmative action (H2), authoritarianism (H3), NAFTA and immigration support (H4), and populism (H5). In addition, we examine the correlations

Table 4
Zero-order Correlations between Powell Support and Hypothesized Predictors by Education Level

Hypothesized Predictor	Education Level			
	No College		College or More	
	r	N	r	N
Authoritarian Scale	.02	75	-.26 ***	97
Support for Affirmative Action	-.02	77	.08	96
Conservative Ideology	-.08	83	-.05	101
Anti-Immigration	-.17	85	-.17	100
Pro-NAFTA	-.03	83	.25 **	99
Pro-Defense Spending	.10	84	-.03	101
Populism Scale	.01	85	-.23 **	101
	N=85		N=101	

p<.05, *p<.01

between Powell support and two other variables less relevant to our hypotheses, ideology and defense spending.

We present correlations separately for those with no college and those with some college or above (See Table 4) since attitude constraint is strongly related to education (Devine 1970). Sniderman and Piazza (1993) and Uslaner (2002) find education inversely related to authoritarianism. In addition, as Popkin (1991) notes, issues important to the more attentive public in the year before a campaign may become important to the less attentive in the months of a campaign; thus issue relationships among more educated respondents now may predict those among the less educated in the 1996 campaign season.

For both groups, there are no relationships between support for Powell and general ideology, defense spending, and affirmative action. (Items are available on request at robert.maranto@villanova.edu.) Low education respondents show no relationships between support for Powell and measures of authoritarianism, populism, and NAFTA. For both education groups, those opposing (legal) immigration are somewhat less likely to support Powell, though the relationship attains statistical significance only when the two groups are combined for a higher n, $r(186)=-.18$, $p=.02$. High education respondents show statistically significant relationships

Table 5
Zero-order Correlations between Powell Support and Hypothesized Predictors by Respondent Party

Hypothesized Predictor	Respondent Party			
	Democrat		Republican	
	R	N	r	N
Authoritarian Scale	-.10	59	-.23	*72
Support for Affirmative Action	.01	59	.03	76
Conservative Ideology	-.07	62	.02	81
Anti-Immigration	-.27 **	63	-.04	81
Pro-NAFTA	.28 **	61	.11	78
Pro-Defense Spending	-.04	61	.04	81
Populism Scale	-.03	63	-.20 *	81

N = 63 N = 81

*p < .08, **p < .05

between support for Powell and authoritarianism, populism, and NAFTA. More authoritarian, populist respondents who oppose free trade and immigration are less likely to support Powell. In short, correlations tend to support H2, H3, and H4, and H5, at least for the educated. Affirmative action support does not predict support for Powell, but support for NAFTA and (possibly) immigration do. General ideology does not predict support for Powell relative to other GOP candidates, nor does defense spending, but authoritarianism and populism do.

As Table 5 shows, presenting Powell support correlations by party tells a somewhat different story. Of the hypothesized variables, for Democrats, only NAFTA and Immigration have statistically significant relationships with Powell support. For Republicans, authoritarianism and populism are nearly significant at .05, with p-values of .054 and .078, respectively. In short, realistic group conflict variables influence white Democratic support; the ideological variables of authoritarianism and populism seem to affect white Republican support. Thus, the zero-order correlations strongly support H2, work for H3 and perhaps H5 with Republicans, and support H4 for Democrats.

Zero-order correlations only examine the relationship between the predictor variable and Powell support without simultaneously controlling

Predictor Variables	B	SE B	Beta	T-test	Sig. T
Affirmative action	-.005	.01	-.05	-.33	.742
Authoritarian scale	.006	.01	.06	.46	.645
Pro-NAFTA	.009	.03	.04	.27	.785
Anti-immigration	-.05	.04	-.18	-1.37	.177
Populism Scale	-.05	.10	-.07	-.47	.640
Constant	.87	.80		1.09	.281
Multiple R=.18354					
R ² =.034, F(5,63)=.44 , p=.82					

for other relationships. We used a hierarchical multiple regression to determine the pattern of Powell support with each predictor variable while taking into account its relationship with other predictors. We entered predictor variables in the following order: affirmative action, authoritarianism, NAFTA, Immigration, and Populism. Affirmative action was entered first to test H2 and authoritarianism was entered on the second step to test H3. Next, views on specific issues were entered, to see if they added explanatory power over and above the first two (more general) predictors. Finally, populism scores were entered last to see if they added any explanation, over and above the other predictors, which are better established in the literature.

This hierarchical multiple regression was run for four separate subsamples: respondents with high school education or less (Table 6a), those with some college or more (Table 6b), Democrats (Table 6c), and Republicans (Table 6d). Tables present the betas and tests for individual significance after all variables have been entered into the equation. Although the tables show different patterns for these subsamples, indicating the necessity of splitting up the sample, lack of power is a problem due to small N's. However, multicollinearity is not a problem, as predictors' intercorrelations never reach .3 and are seldom significant.

As Table 6a indicates, for less educated respondents Powell support is not significantly related to any predictors by the end of the analysis. None of the F-values for the R² change approached significance at any step—though immigration comes closest—indicating that Powell support was not related to predictor variables at any step.

Table 6b

**Final Hierarchical Multiple Regression Summary Table
for Respondents with Some College and Above.**

Predictor Variables	B	SE B	Beta	T-test	Sig. T
Affirmative action	-.005	.01	-.04	-.43	.666
Authoritarian scale	-.02	.01	-.22	-2.16	.034
Pro-NAFTA	.08	.03	.25	2.55	.013
Anti-immigration	-.03	.03	-.09	-.85	.397
Populism Scale	-.19	.08	-.25	-2.44	.017
Constant	1.81	.58		3.14	.002
Multiple R=.43261					
R ² =.18715 F(5,87)=4.00, p=.00					

Table 6b tells a more interesting story for the better-educated respondents. Affirmative action was not significant at Step 1, but the R² change of .063 was significant for authoritarianism at Step 2, F(2,90)=6.09, p=.016. NAFTA views, entered on the third step, also accounted for a significant increase in R² change of .057, F(3,89)=5.8, p=.018. Immigration (Step 4) was non-significant, but populism scores, entered last, accounted a definite R² change of .055, F(5,87)=5.95, p=.017. The F for the final equation was highly significant, F(5,87)=4.01, p=.003.

Democrats, portrayed in Table 6c show very little predictability in supporting Powell. The one variable that indicated a significant R² change was NAFTA, entered on Step 3, F(1,54)=2.06, p=.05. Immigration had the next highest T, but did quite not reach significance, F(1,54)=-1.52, p=.14. The F for the overall equation at that step was not significant; neither was the final equation with all five predictors entered.⁷

Table 6d shows that for the Republican subsample affirmative action is not significant but authoritarianism is. When authoritarianism was entered at Step 2, it led to a significant R² change of .05, F(1,66)=3.95, p=.051. The other significant predictor is populism, entered last, which results in an R² change of .058, with F(1,66)=4.19, p=.045.

Discussion: Not Quite Color Blind

Survey results must be interpreted with caution. Saying that one will vote for an African-American candidate and actually doing so are different things.⁸ For our findings in particular, the small n of cases limit the

Predictor Variables	B	SE B	Beta	T-test	Sig. T
Affirmative action	-.01	.02	-.09	-.64	.527
Authoritarian scale	.002	.01	.02	.17	.865
Pro-NAFTA	.09	.04	.28	2.06	.045
Anti-immigration	-.07	.04	-.21	-1.52	.136
Populism Scale	-.13	.12	-.15	-1.08	.285
Constant	1.09	.84		1.29	.202
Multiple R=.37049					
R ² =.136, F(5,50)=1.59, p=.18					

power of analyses. Further, the sheer prestige of Colin Powell may limit our ability to apply findings for less prominent African-American candidates. Still, our findings accord with a growing literature examining the determinants of growing white support for African-American politicians. Results suggest that had he run, Colin Powell would have been a formidable presidential candidate. At the time of our survey, in a "Reagan Democrat" area, Powell was essentially in a first place tie among white voters with then Senate Majority Leader and eventual 1996 Republican nominee Robert Dole. Further, in contrast to Bloom (1995) but in line with the findings of Sniderman and Piazza (1993), Powell support was not generally linked to support for affirmative action. Perhaps actual candidates, as opposed to experimental simulations, can overcome racial stereotypes—at least up to a point.

Still, race matters. For better-educated respondents and for Republicans, authoritarianism and populism inversely correlated with support for Powell.⁹ This finding seemingly counters Sniderman et al's (1993) findings that race related views have more impact on Democratic than on Republican opinion when considering "liberal" issues like welfare. Yet our finding complements theirs in that Powell—a black Republican candidate—may provide more inconsistent cues for high stereotyping Republicans than for high stereotyping Democrats. In other words, the minority candidate's ideology, like the nexus of issue and party noted by Sniderman et al (1993), could moderate the impact of racial beliefs on political behavior.

For Democrats, support for NAFTA and immigration was associated with increased Powell support, suggesting the utility of realistic group conflict models in

Table 6d

**Final Hierarchical Multiple Regression Summary Table
for Republican Respondents**

Predictor Variables	B	SE B	Beta	T-test	Sig. T
Affirmative action	-.04	.01	.002	.02	.987
Authoritarian scale	-.03	.01	-.26	-2.10	.039
Pro-NAFTA	.03	.04	.09	.73	.468
Anti-immigration	-.008	.05	-.02	-.18	.861
Populism Scale	-.19	.09	-.27	-2.05	.045
Constant	2.14	.77		2.77	.007

Multiple R=.36768
 $R^2=.135$, $F(5,62)=1.94$, $p=.10$

explaining Democratic support. Our finding is somewhat consistent with McLauren (1995) who found that holding democratic norms increases benevolence towards non-European immigrants in several European countries. These trends may reflect the self-perceived economic vulnerability of white working class Democratic constituencies. In short, ideological variables seem best to explain Republican support for Powell; for Democrats, group conflict variables hold more promise.

Our finding that populism predicts Powell support for Republicans and higher educated respondents shows the potential of a populist-libertarian dimension for explaining racial attitudes and voting behavior. While widely used by political consultants, this dimension is rarely addressed in the voting behavior literature and needs more research. For instance, determining whether the basis for populism lies more in an authoritarian Democrat or a working class liberal faced with realistic group conflict would provide much needed construct validation. This should be a topic of future research.

The failure of party and general ideology to explain Powell support compared to the success of authoritarianism, populism, and NAFTA suggests that, as Sniderman and Piazza show, political scientists should not confuse conservatism with racism. Similarly, researchers should be more attentive to issue dimensions cutting across the conventional liberal-conservative continuum. Finally, researchers must pay heed to the context of issues for different populations. In particular, for losers in the marketplace, realistic group conflict models may have more impact. In short, race still matters, though in a more complex manner than in the past.

Notes

1. At the 1995 Gridiron dinner in Washington (at which Congress members and others hold skits), both the Democratic and Republican presidential race skits featured a Powell look-alike adorned with medals and a halo, introduced with “Colin Powell, Superstar” to the tune of “Jesus Christ, Superstar” (C-SPAN, “Washington Journal,” March 27, 1995).

2. We expected the embedded design to yield different responses on controversial racial issues. In fact it did not, so questions used in both surveys can be pooled for analysis.

3. Minority respondents included 4 Asians, 4 blacks, 6 Hispanics, 1 Native American, 3 multi-racial, and 13 don’t know / refuse. The 6 Hispanics and 1 Native American were included with the 343 whites in all subsequent analyses.

4. Perot had a strong local organization. In the 1994 House election, Patriot Party (Perot) candidate Vic Mazziotti took 5%. Since first term incumbent Paul McHale won by only 400 votes out of 150,000 cast and the articulate Mazziotti ran as a fiscal conservative, many local GOP activists felt that Mazziotti kept the party from picking up a House seat. Clinton was perceived as unpopular in the district, particularly among veterans, gun owners, senior citizens still resenting the 1960s, and Catholics concerned with social issues. Local GOP candidates sought to tie local Democrats to Clinton in 1994, and did well (Interview 2).

5. At one of these focus groups an Allentown woman complained of Clinton’s credibility, saying, “If you asked him his favorite color, he’d say plaid” (Interview 2). In response, the Clinton campaign carefully crafted the candidate’s personal image in the pre-convention days to emphasize his humble background and Arkansas roots.

6. Similarly, in our interactions with local political activists of both parties, one often hears that it is hard for women to win in the Valley, sometimes followed by remarks such as “I think people here might be ready for that now.” Female politicians of both parties see sexism as an obstacle. The local state legislative delegation of 19 has not included more than three women. A notable exception was longtime State Senator Jeanette Reibman, a liberal Democrat who stressed her strong family and National Rifle Association membership.

7. The same hierarchical regression run for Independents had an n of only 34; no predictors were significant at any time.

8. Indeed, as the 1989 Douglas Wilder-Marshall Coleman race for Virginia Governor showed, whites commonly lie in exit polls about their willingness to vote for black candidates so as not to appear racist—even though some may in fact be racist. (We encountered this phenomenon while doing election night commentary on a Virginia radio station—pollsters predicted a Wilder landslide, not a 1% triumph.) This is as good an argument as any for the utility of modern racism research.

9. This correlation may be described best by saying that low authoritarians are more likely to vote for Powell, given the high support of Powell among the typical category for libertarians – weak Republicans (see Table 3).

References

- Allport, Gordon W. 1954. *The Nature of Prejudice*. Garden City:
- Barone, Michael and Grant Ujifusa. (1976; 1981; 1983; 1989; 1993). *Almanac of American Politics*. Washington: National Journal
- Bloom, Joel David. 1995. "A Wolf in Wolf's Clothing: The Return of Overt Racism in the 1992 National Election Studies." Paper presented at the annual Midwest Political Science Association Convention in Chicago, April 6-8.
- Bobo, Lawrence. 1988. "Group Conflict, Prejudice, and the Paradox of Contemporary Racial Attitudes." In *Eliminating Racism*, ed. Phyllis A. Katz and Dalmas A. Taylor. New York: Plenum Press.
- Buckley, William F., Jr. 1992. *In Search of Anti-Semitism*. New York: Continuum.
- C-SPAN. 1992. "Road to the White House." December 13.
- _____. 1995. "Road to the White House." March 26.
- Devine, Donald J. 1970. *The Attentive Public: Polyarchical Democracy*. Chicago: Rand McNally.
- Dionne, E.J., Jr. 1991. *Why Americans Hate Politics*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Elliason, Maura. "All Things Considered." March 31, 1995.
- Fritzsche, Peter. 1990. *Rehearsals For Fascism*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Frum, David. 1994. *Dead Right*. New York: Basic Books.
- Cresham, April W., Jinhui Yun, and Eileen Leacy. 1995. "Origins of Modern Racism: Protestant Work Ethic or Blatant Prejudice." Poster presented at the annual convention of the Eastern Psychological Association, Boston, March.
- Interview 1. November 9, 1994 with a Virginia political consultant.
- Interview 2. March 30, 1994 with a Lehigh Valley political consultant.
- Hagen, Michael G. 1995. "Encoded References to Racial Issues." Paper presented at the annual Midwest Political Science Association Convention in Chicago, April 6-8.
- Hofstadter, Richard. 1964. *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*. New York: Vintage.
- Kinder, Donald R., and Tali Mendelberg. 1995. "Cracks in American Apartheid: The Political Impact of Prejudice among Desegregated Whites," *Journal of Politics* 57 (2): 402-24.
- Lavrakos, Paul, Jr. 1992. *Telephone Survey Methods*. Applied Social Research Methods Series, Vol. 7. Newbury Park: Sage.
- Lehigh Valley *Morning Call*. 1995. May 30, May 31, and June 2.
- Lind, Michael. 1993. "Aliens Among Us: the new right's new gambit on immigration," *The New Republic*, August 23, 22-23.
- Maddox, William S., and Stuart A. Lilie. 1984. *Beyond Liberal and Conservative*. Washington: CATO Institute.
- McConahay, J.B. 1986. "Modern Racism, Ambivalence, and the Modern Racism Scale." In *Prejudice, Discrimination, and Racism*, ed. J.F. Dovidio & S.L. Gaertner. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- McLauren, Lauren. 1995. "Individual, Contextual, and Cultural Explanations of Support for the Rights of Immigrants in Western Europe." Paper presented at the annual Midwest Political Science Association Convention in Chicago, April 6-8.

- Popkin, Samuel L. 1992. *The Reasoning Voter*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Raum, Tom. 1994. "Polls find people would pick Powell as next president," *Lehigh Valley Morning Call*, September 12, A11.
- Schuman, Howard, Charlotte Steeh, and Lawrence Bobo. 1985. *Racial Attitudes in America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Sears, David O. 1988. "Symbolic Racism." In *Eliminating Racism*, ed. Phyllis A. Katz and Dalmas A. Taylor. New York: Plenum Press.
- Sigelman, Carol K., Lee Sigelman, Barbara J. Walkos, and Michael Nitz. 1995. "Black Candidates, White Voters: Understanding Racial Bias in Political Perceptions," *American Journal of Political Science* 39 (February): 243-65.
- Sniderman, Paul M., Edward G. Carmines, Philip E. Tetlock, and Anthony M. Tyler. 1993. "The Asymmetry of Race as a Political Issue: Prejudice, Political Ideology, and the Structure of American Politics." Presented at the American Political Science Association Convention in Washington, D.C.
- _____ and Thomas Piazza. 1993. *The Scar of Race*. Cambridge: Belknap.
- Sonenshein, Raphael J. 1990. "Can Black Candidates Win Statewide Election?" *Political Science Quarterly*. 105 (2): 219-241.
- _____. 1993. *Politics in Black and White*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Thernstrom, Stephen, and Abigail Thernstrom. 1997. *America in Black and White*. New York: Touchstone.
- Uslaner, Eric M. (2002, forthcoming). *The Moral Foundations of Trust*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Vidanage, Sharmaine, and David Sears. 1995. "The Foundations of Public Opinion Toward Immigration: Self-Interest, Group Conflict or Symbolic Politics?" Paper presented at the annual Midwest Political Science Association Convention in Chicago, April 6-8.
- Williams, Linda. 1990. "White/Black Perceptions of the Electability of Black Political Candidates," *National Political Science Review* 2: 145-64.
- Woodward, Bob. 1991. *The Commanders*. New York: Simon & Schuster.