



**OXFORD JOURNALS**  
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

## American Association for Public Opinion Research

---

Interregional Migration and Political Resocialization: A Study of Racial Attitudes Under Pressure

Author(s): James M. Glaser and Martin Gilens

Reviewed work(s):

Source: *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 61, No. 1, Special Issue on Race (Spring, 1997), pp. 72-86

Published by: [Oxford University Press](#) on behalf of the [American Association for Public Opinion Research](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2749512>

Accessed: 11/09/2012 12:26

---

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at

<http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



American Association for Public Opinion Research and Oxford University Press are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Public Opinion Quarterly*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

# **INTERREGIONAL MIGRATION AND POLITICAL RESOCIALIZATION**

## **A STUDY OF RACIAL ATTITUDES UNDER PRESSURE**

---

JAMES M. GLASER  
MARTIN GILENS

Racial attitudes have long been viewed as having deep psychological roots and, in consequence, remaining highly stable over time and across the life course (see, e.g., Converse 1964; Harding et al. 1969; Kinder and Rhodebeck 1982; Kinder and Sears 1981; Rothbart and John 1993; Sears 1975). This “psychological persistence” model of racial attitudes explains their resistance to change during adulthood by pointing to their early acquisition (Sears 1975), their strong affective component (Harding et al. 1969; Sears 1988), and their centrality in individuals’ belief systems (Converse 1964).

The familiar view of racial attitudes as strongly held and persistent over time is not the only perspective on racial attitudes, however. Research on political socialization has come increasingly to recognize the malleability of political attitudes during adulthood in response to life transitions, social change, mass media, and other socializing influences (see, e.g., Hoskin 1989; Miller and Sears 1986; Sigel 1989; Steckenrider and Cutler 1989). This “adult socialization” perspective suggests that environmental influences may continue to shape racial views in adulthood.

Similarly, realistic group conflict theory (Bobo 1988) points to the adult environment as central in shaping racial views. From this perspective, racial attitudes (and in particular racial policy preferences) reflect perceived competition between racial groups over limited resources. If the adult political context of intergroup competition changes, then group conflict theory implies that racial attitudes should change in response. For example, research in this tradition has shown that in places where blacks are more numerous and therefore more politically powerful, and where government assistance to blacks means assisting many people instead of

JAMES M. GLASER is assistant professor of political science at Tufts University. MARTIN GILENS is assistant professor of political science and a fellow at the Institution for Social and Policy Studies at Yale University.

a few, whites are more hostile to black interests (Giles and Evans 1986; Glaser 1994). Like the adult socialization approach, then, group conflict theory suggests a lifelong openness to change in racial attitudes in response to alterations in adult political environment.

One way to assess the persistence of racial attitudes is to examine the behavior of these attitudes in the face of a change in adult environment. Individuals experience a variety of environmental changes during their adult years that might influence their racial attitudes, including changes in jobs, friends, and involvement in social organizations such as churches and clubs. For most people, however, the most important change in social and political environment results from a move to a new city or town. A substantial move—for example, from one state to another—brings with it dramatic and simultaneous changes in friends, neighbors, jobs, and ties to social organizations. An interstate move also may bring with it a change in racial-political context if the locations differ in the representation of different racial groups and the political mobilization of these groups. Thus geographical relocation may result in changes, both in the racial attitudes that one encounters daily and in the degree of political competition among racial groups in one's new locale. This kind of change, then, has the potential to put existing racial attitudes under pressure. The "persistence hypothesis" suggests only limited change in racial views in response to this pressure, since an individual's fundamental psychological predispositions are thought to remain stable. In contrast, the "lifelong openness" view of racial attitudes suggests the potential for substantial attitudinal change following a change in racial-political environment.

In this article we take advantage of the differing racial environments of the northern and southern United States to examine the behavior of racial attitudes in response to changes in adult political context. Specifically, we ask whether white adults who move from the more racially conservative South to the more racially liberal North (or vice versa) maintain the racial attitudes they developed as adolescents, or whether these interregional migrants embrace the racial views of their new neighbors. We also examine differences in the persistence of different kinds of racial attitudes in response to the same changes in racial-political environment, allowing us to draw some lessons regarding the applicability of alternative theoretical understandings to different dimensions of racial attitudes.

### **Past Analyses of Racial Attitudes and Interregional Migration**

The change, or lack of change, in racial attitudes exhibited by interregional migrants first caught the eye of observers long ago. In *An American*

*Dilemma*, Gunnar Myrdal (1944, p. 79) reported the “common observation” that northern migrants to the South change their racial attitudes in a conservative direction, while southern migrants to the North do not change their racial views: “It is a common observation that the white Northerner who settles in the South will rapidly take on the stronger race prejudice of the new surroundings; while the Southerner going North is likely to keep his race prejudice rather unchanged and perhaps even to communicate it to those he meets.”

Myrdal provided no data to support this observation, but the single study from this period did support his contention, as far as it went. Sims and Patrick (1936) compared native northern and southern students at the University of Alabama, observing that native southerners’ attitudes did not change over time, but that native northerners became more racially conservative, to the point that they were almost as conservative as their southern classmates by the time they reached their senior year in college. Students, however, clearly represent a special population, both because they are of an “impressionable age” and because they face an unusually intense social environment.

Studies of interregional migrants from the general population were not conducted until the 1960s, and these studies did not show the pattern of change that Myrdal had suggested. In fact, Hyman and Sheatsley (1964) and Sheatsley (1965) showed the reverse: Native southerners living in the North were almost as liberal in their racial views as native northerners, while northerners who had moved to the South expressed racial attitudes that fell between those of northern and southern natives. Middleton (1976) also used data from the mid-1960s and found a third pattern: Both sets of migrants displayed attitudes midway between native northerners and native southerners. This same pattern was found by Wilson (1986), on the basis of survey data from the early 1980s. Finally, Freymeyer (1982), using data from the mid-1970s, found little difference in racial attitudes between native southerners and southern residents who had migrated from the North.

The divergent results from past analyses of interregional migration might be due to a number of differences among the studies. Differences in the time period in which the data were collected (the 1960s vs. the 1980s), the measures of racial attitudes employed, or the introduction of demographic controls by some, but not all, past researchers could all contribute to the different findings reported. Unfortunately, there are too many dimensions along which these past studies differ, and too few studies, to be able to draw any conclusions about which differences are most responsible for the divergent findings.

Complicating the effort to draw conclusions from previous research on interregional migration is a limitation shared by all of these studies. Because interregional migrants make up a small proportion of all Americans,

a typical survey of one or two thousand respondents contains too few migrants from which to draw reliable conclusions. The data sets used in previous analyses contained between 1,250 and 2,232 white respondents. And even the largest of these (Wilson 1986) included only 110 southern natives who had left the South, and only 70 northern migrants to the South. Thus all previous attempts to assess the impact of interregional migration contain large standard errors and consequently unreliable estimates of the true differences between migrant and nonmigrant groups. We overcome this problem in the current study by combining data from the 1980 through 1993 General Social Surveys (GSSs) resulting in an overall sample of almost 10,000 white respondents, and yielding about 600 northern migrants to the South, and about 300 southern migrants to the North.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to a larger sample size, a broader range of racial attitudes, and a more comprehensive set of statistical controls, our study differs from previous research on interregional migration in another important way. Past studies have assumed that attitudinal differences between migrants and nonmigrants represent the impact of the new environment rather than preexisting differences between “movers” and “stayers.” While this assumption was unsupported in previous research, we offer a variety of evidence from our own and others’ work that supports this interpretation of attitudinal differences between migrants and nonmigrants.

## Findings

Our analyses rest on the fact that the southern United States and the northern United States (defined here and throughout the article as the non-South) are characterized by different racial environments. Although whites’ racial attitudes are converging in the South and the North, a regional gap still persists—the legacy of the past still reaches into the present (Kuklinski, Cobb, and Gilens 1997; Reed 1986; Schuman, Steeh, and Bobo 1985). Moreover, the racial composition of the two regions is different. While blacks comprise 9 percent of the northern population, few blacks reside outside of urban areas in the North; in contrast, blacks comprise 19 percent of the southern population and 29 percent of the population of the Deep South, and are more widely distributed across urban and rural areas.<sup>2</sup> As a result, blacks are a political force throughout the

1. Fewer cases are available for some variables; see tables 1 and 2 for specific *Ns*. We start with data from 1980 because after a period of dramatic change (Schuman, Steeh, and Bobo 1985), whites’ racial attitudes plateaued during the 1980s.

2. The Deep South consists of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina. Eighty-one percent of northern blacks live in urban areas with a population of at least one-half million, compared with 41 percent of southern blacks (calculated from U.S. Bureau of the Census 1992, table 2).

**Table 1.** Racial Policy Attitudes of Migrants and Their Neighbors: Predicted Probability of Holding Conservative Views, Whites Only

	Southerners	Southern Migrants to the North	Northern Migrants to the South	Northerners	<i>N</i>
Government assistance <sup>a</sup>	63	54	58	53	7,684
Federal spending <sup>b</sup>	28	16	22	18	6,919
Open housing <sup>c</sup>	57	42	48	44	8,932
Busing <sup>d</sup>	82	74	82	75	7,773

SOURCE.—General Social Survey, 1980–93.

NOTE.—Probabilities are calculated via logistic regression controlling for age, income, urban and suburban residence, education, subregion settled in, and ideology.

<sup>a</sup> “Some people think that blacks have been discriminated against for so long that the government has a special obligation to help improve their living standards. Others believe that the government should not be giving special treatment to blacks. Where would you place yourself on this [5-point] scale, or haven’t you made up your mind on this?” (“4” and “5” coded as conservative.)

<sup>b</sup> “We’re faced with many problems in this country, none of which can be solved easily or inexpensively. Are we spending too much money, too little money, or about the right amount on improving the conditions of blacks?” (“Too much” coded as conservative.)

<sup>c</sup> “Suppose there is a community-wide vote on the general housing issue. There are two possible laws to vote on. One law says that a homeowner can decide for himself whom to sell his house to, even if he prefers not to sell to blacks. The second law says that a homeowner cannot refuse to sell to someone because of their race or color. Which law would you vote for?” (“The first law” coded as conservative.)

<sup>d</sup> “In general, do you favor or oppose the busing of black and white school children from one school district to another?” (“Oppose” coded as conservative.)

South, particularly the Deep South, to a degree that they are not in the North.

To assess the impact of political context, we identify two groups of migrants: whites who lived in the South at age 16 and resided in the North at the time they were surveyed and whites who lived in the North at age 16 and resided in the South when they were surveyed. We compare these two migrant groups with the larger populations of northern and southern whites, while controlling for demographic characteristics that might produce attitudinal differences between migrants and nonmigrants.

Table 1 shows the predicted percentage of white respondents with conservative racial policy attitudes, based on logistic regressions that include age, income, education, ideological self-identification, level of urbaniza-

tion, and subregion settled in as controls.<sup>3</sup> We find some very striking differences between migrants and nonmigrants in both North-to-South and South-to-North directions. First, on all four measures of racial policy preferences, whites who left the South are considerably more liberal than all southern whites. For instance, on the question of government assistance to blacks, 63 percent of all white southerners reject such assistance, compared with 54 percent of white southern migrants to the North, controlling for demographic characteristics (see table 1 for question wording). Furthermore, white migrants to the North adopt this racially conservative position in similar numbers to all white northerners, 53 percent of whom disapprove of the antidiscrimination law. We find a similar—although weaker—pattern in examining migration from North to South. White northerners who have moved to the South are more likely to reject government assistance to blacks than are all white northerners. Fifty-eight percent of white northern migrants reject government help for blacks, making them not as conservative as their new southern neighbors, but more conservative than the northerners they left behind. These same patterns of attitudes appear with regard to both South-to-North and North-to-South migrants on the other three racial-political items, dealing with the expenditure of federal money to solve the problems of blacks, open housing laws, and busing of black and white children from one school district to another.

In all four cases, migrants are quite different from the residents of their former region, holding attitudes closer to the averages of their new environment. But it is also true that in each case the effect of migrating South is not as strong as the effect of migrating North. To quantify this difference, we examine the average amount of change in migrants' attitudes as a percentage of the difference between white northerners and white southerners. For example, on the government assistance question, white southerners are 10 percentage points more conservative than white northerners (63 percent compared to 53 percent). White southern migrants to the North differ from white southerners by 9 percentage points (54 percent compared to 63 percent). Thus white southern migrants' attitudes fall nine-tenths, or 90 percent, of the way between the region they left behind and the region they now inhabit. Following this same logic, the attitudes of white northern migrants to the South toward government assistance fall 50 percent (five-tenths) of the way between their old region and their current one.

Assessing attitude change in relation to the difference between migrants' old and new regions of residence, and averaging across all four questions, we find that the racial policy attitudes of white northern migrants to the South fall 55 percent of the way toward their new region,

3. We use logistic regression because a number of our racial attitude questions are dichotomous. For ease of comparison, and to facilitate summary measures across racial attitude items, we dichotomize the other racial attitude questions as well.

while white southern migrants to the North are actually more racially liberal than white northerners as a whole, with racial policy attitudes that fall 110 percent of the way between their old and new regions. (Thus, white southern migrants to the North appear to “overshoot” their new regional neighbors as their racial attitudes change in a liberal direction.)

Why do white southern migrants to the North change more than white northern migrants to the South, and why are white southern migrants to the North even more liberal than white northerners as a whole? We suspect that the same phenomenon explains both of these results. In our analyses, we use region of residence as a proxy for social or political context. But region is a very crude indicator of political environment, since even within regions racial attitudes differ from state to state, city to city, and neighborhood to neighborhood. If the distribution of migrants within their new region differs from the distribution of all of that region’s residents, then we may not be gauging migrants’ current attitudes in comparison with the appropriate environmental context. In particular, if migrants tend to settle in the more racially liberal parts of their new regions, we would expect political context to lead to more liberal attitudes than would be the case if their settlement pattern matched that of their new region. Thus, if northern migrants move disproportionately to the peripheral South, and if their new neighbors consequently hold more liberal racial views than those of southerners as a whole, we would not expect northern migrants’ attitudes to become as conservative as those of all southerners, but instead to change more modestly. Similarly, if southern migrants to the North settle in the more racially liberal western states, we would expect their attitudes to change even further in a liberal direction than they would if these migrants were proportionately distributed across the North.

The limited geographical indicators on the GSS do not allow us to fully test these hypotheses, but they do indicate that this phenomenon is at least partially responsible for both the asymmetry of change in migrants’ attitudes, and the overshooting by white southern migrants to the North. To the extent we can judge, it appears that white interregional migrants do tend to settle in the more liberal subregions of their destination. Forty-nine percent of white migrants to the North settle in the more racially liberal Mountain and Pacific states, while only 28 percent of white northerners live in these states.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, 70 percent of white migrants to the South settle in the more racially liberal South Atlantic states, home to

4. The Mountain and Pacific states include Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, Washington, Oregon, California, Alaska, and Hawaii. On average, 45 percent of the white respondents in these states gave conservative responses to our four racial policy questions, compared with 49 percent of whites in the remainder of the North. Unfortunately, the GSS does not record geographical location by any finer category than Census subregion.



only 48 percent of all white southerners.<sup>5</sup> As a consequence of the greater likelihood of white migrants to settle in the more liberal parts of their new region, those moving from North to South experience a less dramatic change in racial environment than those moving from South to North. Furthermore, because white migrants to the North move to the more liberal parts of the North, they may only appear to be more racially liberal than their new neighbors. In fact, if we were to compare their attitudes with those of their immediate environments we might well find that (like white migrants to the South) their racial attitudes fall somewhere between their old and new environments.

The best test of the impact of contextual change clearly would be to compare migrants' attitudes with the attitudes of others in their own city or town. Unfortunately, we can only identify which of the country's nine subregions our respondents live in. We have no information on their city or town, nor, if we did, would we have any reliable way of estimating the racial views of such a small geographical unit. Even with these limitations, however, we can get some sense of the degree to which patterns of settlement might explain the asymmetry found in table 1. For the analyses shown in table 1 we have used the subregional data available on the GSS to control for whether white migrants to the North settle in the western or nonwestern states, and whether white migrants to the South settle in the South Atlantic states or elsewhere in the South. These crude divisions are only a small step toward defining the political "microenvironment" of migrants, but they are one step better than the simple North/South dichotomy. To gauge the importance of subregion, we compare the results in table 1 (which control for subregion) with an identical analysis that does not include subregion as a control. Without subregion, we find that white migrants to the North fall 129 percent of the way between white southerners and white northerners (compared with 110 percent with subregion held constant). Thus the very substantial "overshooting" of white southern migrants to the North with no subregional controls is substantially reduced when subregion is added to the prediction equations. Although we lack finer data, we would expect more detailed measures of political context to indicate that white migrants to the North are not more liberal than other whites in their immediate political environments.

With regard to northern migrants to the South, the parallel analysis without subregional controls shows these migrants' attitudes fall 48 percent of the way toward their new region (compared with 55 percent with subregion held constant). Again, we expect that finer contextual data

5. The South Atlantic states include Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, and the District of Columbia. On average, 56 percent of the white respondents in these states gave conservative responses to our four racial policy questions, compared with 59 percent of whites in the remainder of the South.

would further close the apparent gap between migrants' attitudes and those of their new neighbors. Our ability to distinguish between subregions of the South is particularly limited by the available data. The Census Bureau's subregions, which the GSS employs, do not capture well the political differences across the South. While we would like to split off the more racially conservative Deep South from the more liberal peripheral South, we are unable to do so because the Deep South states are distributed among all three southern subregions. Instead we divide the South Atlantic states from the other southern states, but the racial attitudes in these two subregions differ quite modestly (see n. 5).

#### RACIAL PREJUDICE

The findings in table 1 lend strong support to the lifelong openness view of racial attitudes and suggest that the persistence hypothesis does not fit well with these racial policy preferences. But a question remains: Do whites' racial policy preferences respond to environmental change because they are not firmly rooted in more fundamental psychological predispositions? Or do they change because these more fundamental predispositions are themselves open to the influence of the adult political environment?

To address this question we calculate the same logistic equations described above but we examine four measures of racial prejudice and social distance in place of the racial policy items shown in table 1. We distinguish these two dimensions of racial attitudes on two bases. First, a variety of perspectives, including the symbolic racism approach (Kinder and Sears 1981; Sears 1988), identify prejudice as a more deeply rooted or psychologically primary element of racial attitudes than racial policy preferences. The psychologically fundamental nature of racial prejudice may imbue it with a resistance to change that racial policy attitudes lack. In addition to this theoretical distinction, a confirmatory factor analysis of the eight racial attitude variables in tables 1 and 2 supports the hypothesized two-factor model.<sup>6</sup>

Table 2 indicates the effect of migration on four measures of racial prejudice or social distance: whether there should be laws against intermarriage, whether the respondent would object to a black dinner guest at his or her house, whether the respondent would be willing to send his or her child to a majority-black school, and whether the respondent would be willing to vote for a qualified black candidate for president, if nomi-

6. The LISREL 7 program (Joreskog and Sorbom 1988) was used to test a two-factor model with the four racial policy variables defining the first factor and the four prejudice variables defining the second factor. This model showed a good fit to the data (adjusted goodness-of-fit index = .97,  $\chi^2/df = 4.6$ ).

**Table 2.** Social Distance and Prejudice Attitudes of Migrants and Their Neighbors: Predicted Probability of Holding Antiblack Views, Whites Only

	Southerners	Southern Migrants to the North	Northern Migrants to the South	Northerners	<i>N</i>
Law against intermarriage <sup>a</sup>	36	26	20	15	9,114
Black dinner guest <sup>b</sup>	28	20	16	15	3,951
Mostly black school <sup>c</sup>	53	47	49	44	6,012
Black candidate <sup>d</sup>	18	14	10	10	7,451

SOURCE.—General Social Survey, 1980–93.

NOTE.—Probabilities are calculated via logistic regression controlling for age, income, urban and suburban residence, education, subregion settled in, and ideology.

<sup>a</sup> “Do you think there should be laws against marriages between blacks and whites?” (“Yes” coded as antiblack.)

<sup>b</sup> “How strongly would you object if a member of your family wanted to bring a black friend home to dinner? Would you object strongly, mildly, or not at all?”

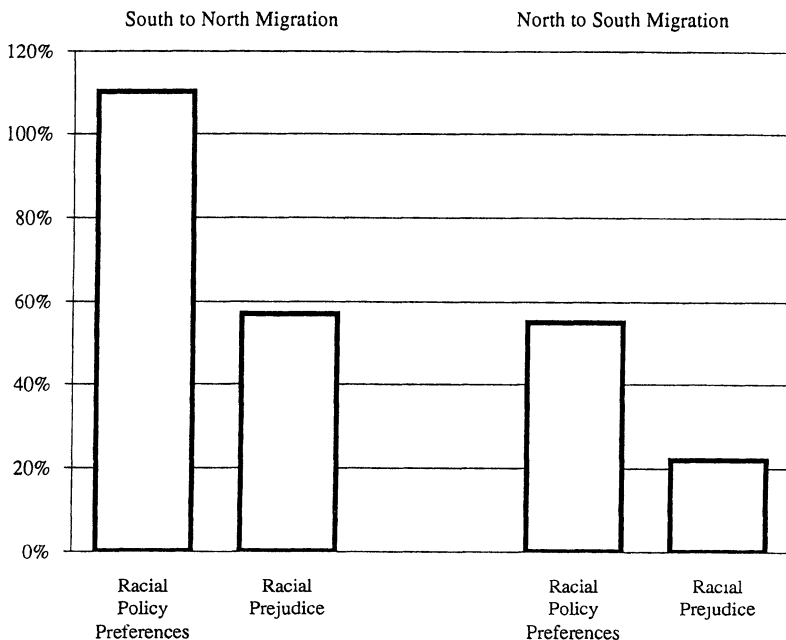
(“Strongly” or “mildly” coded as antiblack.)

<sup>c</sup> “Would you have any objection to sending your children to a school where most of the children are blacks?” (“Yes” coded as antiblack.)

<sup>d</sup> “If your party nominated a black for president, would you vote for him if he were qualified for the job?” (“No” coded as antiblack.)

nated by the respondent’s party. As in table 1, we do find differences between migrants and those they left behind. But the changes in these measures of racial prejudice are far smaller than the changes we find in racial policy preferences. Averaging across all four items, we find that white southern migrants to the North move 57 percent of the way toward their new region of residence, compared with 110 percent change in racial policy preferences for these same migrants (see fig. 1). For white northern migrants to the South we find an average of only 22 percent change in racial prejudice, compared with 55 percent for the racial policy items.

As with our analysis of the racial policy items in table 1, we believe that the asymmetry in attitude change is due to the tendency of white migrants in both directions to settle in the more racially liberal areas of their new region. Consequently, better subregional controls would likely reduce the apparent change in racial prejudice of southern migrants to the



**Figure 1.** Change in interregional migrants' racial attitudes as a percentage of North-South difference. Source: General Social Survey, 1980–93. Average percent change across attitude items in tables 1 and 2. Based on logistic regressions controlling for age, income, urban and suburban residence, education, subregion settled in, and ideology.

North and increase the apparent change of northern migrants to the South.<sup>7</sup> The asymmetry of attitude change notwithstanding, it is clear that racial policy preferences undergo substantially more change in response to interregional migration than does racial prejudice.

#### SELECTIVE MIGRATION VERSUS ATTITUDE CHANGE

As we indicated earlier, an unsupported assumption in previous research on interregional migration is that attitudinal differences between migrants

7. While we do not have better subregional controls at our disposal, we can test what will happen in the absence of subregional controls, as we did above. Our expectation is that without subregion controlled for, the apparent change in the racial prejudice of southern migrants to the North should grow. It does, going from 57 percent of the way between southerners and northerners to 73 percent of the way. Our expectation of the apparent change in the racial prejudice of northern migrants to the South is that it should shrink when subregional controls are removed. Here, our expectations are not met as there is no difference in the apparent attitudinal change of northern migrants in the two equations.

and nonmigrants represent the impact of the new environment rather than preexisting differences between movers and stayers. We believe that the differences we report between migrants and nonmigrants represent real attitude change rather than preexisting differences. Preexisting differences between movers and stayers might arise for two reasons. First, migrants might have different demographic characteristics than nonmigrants, and these differences might be related to racial attitudes. For example, people with higher education might be more likely to move across regions and also hold more racially liberal views. To combat this potential bias, we have controlled for all demographic characteristics that we found to be associated with both migration and racial attitudes.

A second possible cause of preexisting attitudinal differences between movers and stayers arises from the possibility that migration may be motivated, in part, by a desire for a more politically congenial environment. That is, migrants may be prompted to migrate, or destinations may be chosen, to fit migrants' premigratory political attitudes. If migration is politically motivated (or in our case racially-politically motivated), then the similarity between migrants' attitudes and those of their new neighbors may not represent the influence of the new environment but, rather, self-selection.

Substantial evidence suggests that any influence of racial attitudes on migration patterns is quite limited at best. Studies of U.S. interstate migration show that migrants most often consider only a single destination and choose their new location primarily on the basis of job availability and proximity to family (Brown et al. 1985; Roseman 1983; Sell 1983). For example, an interview-based study of 278 interstate migrants concluded that work, affordable housing, and the presence of friends and family dominated migrants' decision making when choosing a destination (Brown et al. 1985). In addition, Brown (1988) specifically examined the possibility that migration patterns reflect migrants' tendency to move to politically compatible areas. He compared recent migrants' own partisan identification with the partisan characteristics of their old and new counties of residence. Brown (1988, p. 85) concluded that "migrants neither exit nor enter areas on the basis of partisan concentrations." In short, neither micro-level studies of migrants' decision making nor aggregate analyses of migratory patterns reveal any evidence of "politically motivated" internal migration in the United States.

Finally, we have seen that racial policy preferences change substantially in response to political context, while racial prejudice changes much less. The different behavior of these two dimensions of racial attitudes is incompatible with the self-selection hypothesis; if migrants were to seek a more politically compatible environment there is no reason to think that their new neighbors' racial policy preferences would be given greater consideration than their racial prejudice. In fact, if self-selection were an im-

portant factor we would expect the more “fundamental” aspects of racial attitudes (such as racial prejudice) to guide migratory patterns. The changes we observed in racial policy preferences, coupled with the persistence of racial prejudice, are thus another indication that interregional migration influences racial attitudes rather than the other way around.

## Discussion

In this article we examined the behavior of whites’ racial attitudes in response to changes in adult political environment. Using logistic regressions with controls for age, income, level of urbanization, education, sub-region settled in, and political ideology, we found that racial policy preferences change dramatically in response to changes in political context, while racial prejudice changes more modestly.

The broad conclusion suggested by the difference in behavior of racial policy preferences and racial prejudice is that the lifelong openness perspective better describes the former and the psychological persistence model the latter. But more specific insights into the applicability of the different approaches to racial attitudes can also be gleaned. First, these differences are fully consistent with the group conflict model of racial attitudes, since this perspective most clearly suggests that racial policy preferences should change in response to a change in racial environment. More personal attitudes toward blacks, such as attitudes about the social distance to be maintained between blacks and whites, should change less as there is little relation of them to group conflict over resources or power (Glaser 1994).

A second conclusion that can be drawn is that the adult socialization perspective is at least partly right as applied to racial attitudes. As table 2 showed, racial prejudice does respond to changes in adult political environment, even if this change is modest compared with that of racial policy preferences. Of the perspectives examined, only the adult socialization model, which posits a continuing influence of interpersonal contacts into adulthood, accounts for the observed changes in racial prejudice.

Finally, our findings that racial policy questions are particularly open to adult environmental influence are problematic for theories of symbolic politics, at least as they have been operationalized in the past. The very different behavior of the two domains of racial attitudes we examine calls into question the view that racial policy preferences represent a combination of deeply rooted and persistent political predispositions. While we do not wish to suggest that policy attitudes are unrelated to more psychologically fundamental orientations such as prejudice, our findings strongly suggest, first, that such underlying orientations are at best one influence

among others and, second, that these underlying predispositions may be more open to influence in adulthood than is often supposed.

## References

- Bobo, Lawrence. 1988. "Group Conflict, Prejudice, and the Paradox of Contemporary Racial Attitudes." In *Eliminating Racism: Profiles in Controversy*, ed. Phyllis A. Katz and Dalmis A. Taylor. New York: Plenum.
- Brown, Lawrence A., Susan O. Gustavus, Edward J. Malecki, and Karen Walby. 1985. "Choice Mechanisms in the Migration Decision." Center for Human Resource Research, Ohio State University.
- Brown, Thad A. 1988. *Migration and Politics*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Converse, Philip E. 1964. "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics." In *Ideology and Discontent*, ed. David E. Apter. New York: Free Press.
- Freymer, Robert H. 1982. "Republicans Flow South." *American Demographics* 4 (June): 35–37.
- Giles, Michael W., and Arthur Evans. 1986. "The Power Approach to Intergroup Hostility." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 30:469–85.
- Glaser, James M. 1994. "Back to the Black Belt: Racial Environment and White Racial Attitudes in the South." *Journal of Politics* 56:21–41.
- Harding, John, Harold Proshansky, Bernard Kutner, and Isidore Chein. 1969. "Prejudice and Ethnic Relations." In *Handbook of Social Psychology*, 2d ed., vol. 5, ed. G. Lindzey and E. Aronson. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Hoskin, Marilyn. 1989. "Socialization and Antisocialization: The Case of Immigrants." In *Political Learning in Adulthood*, ed. Roberta S. Sigel. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Hyman, Herbert H., and Paul B. Sheatsley. 1964. "Attitudes toward Desegregation." *Scientific American* 211 (July): 16–23.
- Joreskog, Karl G., and Dag Sorbom. 1988. *LISREL 7 Users Reference Guide*. Mooresville, IN: Scientific Software.
- Kinder, Donald R., and Laurie A. Rhodebeck. 1982. "Continuities in Support for Racial Equality, 1972 to 1976." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 46:195–215.
- Kinder, Donald R., and David O. Sears. 1981. "Prejudice and Politics: Symbolic Racism versus Racial Threats to the Good Life." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 40:414–31.
- Kuklinski, James H., Michael D. Cobb, and Martin Gilens. 1997. "Racial Attitudes and the 'New South.'" *Journal of Politics* 59 (May): 323–49.
- Middleton, Russell. 1976. "Regional Differences in Prejudice." *American Sociological Review* 41:94–117.
- Miller, Steven D., and David O. Sears. 1986. "Stability and Change in Social Tolerance: A Test of the Persistence Hypothesis." *American Journal of Political Science* 30 (February): 214–36.
- Myrdal, Gunnar. 1944. *An American Dilemma*. New York: Harper.
- Reed, John Shelton. 1986. *The Enduring South: Subcultural Persistence in Mass Society*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Roseman, Curtis C. 1983. "Labor Force Migration, Non-Labor Force Migration, and Non-Employment Reasons for Migration." *Socio-Economic Planning Sciences* 17(5–6):303–12.
- Rothbart, Myron, and Oliver P. John. 1993. "Intergroup Relations and Stereotype Change: A Social-Cognitive Analysis and Some Longitudinal Findings." In *Prejudice, Politics, and the American Dilemma*, ed. Paul M. Sniderman, Philip E. Tetlock, and Edward G. Carmines. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

- Schuman, Howard, Charlotte Steeh, and Lawrence Bobo. 1985. *Racial Attitudes in America: Trends and Interpretations*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Sears, David O. 1975. "Political Socialization." In *Handbook of Political Science*, ed. Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- . 1988. "Symbolic Racism." In *Eliminating Racism: Profiles in Controversy*, ed. Phyllis A. Katz and Dalmas A. Taylor. New York: Plenum.
- Sell, Ralph R. 1983. "Analyzing Migration Decisions: The First Step—Whose Decisions?" *Demography* 20:299–311.
- Sheatsley, Paul B. 1965. "White Attitudes toward the Negro." In *The Negro American*, ed. Talcott Parsons and Kenneth B. Clark. Boston: Beacon.
- Sigel, Roberta S. 1989. *Political Learning in Adulthood*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Sims, Verner M., and James R. Patrick. 1936. "Attitude toward the Negro of Northern and Southern College Students." *Journal of Social Psychology* 11:192–203.
- Steckenrider, Janie S., and Neal E. Cutler. 1989. "Aging and Adult Political Socialization: The Importance of Roles and Role Transitions." In *Political Learning in Adulthood*, ed. Roberta S. Sigel. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1992. *1990 Census of Population and Housing: Summary Population and Housing Characteristics, United States*. Washington, DC: U.S. Bureau of the Census.
- Wilson, Thomas C. 1986. "Interregional Migration and Racial Attitudes." *Social Forces* 65:177–86.