



**The Illogic of Literalness:**  
Narrative Lessons in the Presentation of Race Policies

A FrameWorks Research Report

Prepared for the FrameWorks Institute  
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## INTRODUCTION

For all that has transpired over the last two years, race remains a central cleavage in American society. Far from a significant amelioration of tension in the public discourse about race, the election of President Barack Obama has led to a volatile, complicated public dialogue. For example, how does one judge the vitriol leveled at the president by right-wing commentators, bloggers, and television talk show hosts? Are they simply expressing ideological disagreement? Didn't the left attack President Bush in the same way? After all, Bush's basic intelligence and competence for the job were challenged in rather direct and unflattering ways. Or, on the other hand, is what we are witnessing an expression of long-standing and deep-seated racial animus camouflaged in a shawl of freedom of expression? Is the invective directed at the president and his family a manifestation of the barely-below-the-surface racism that many believe defines the American identity?

The upshot of these complexities is that it has been, and continues to be, difficult to have a productive conversation about race in the United States. More to the point, for advocates of social justice and racial equity, this makes it all the more difficult to bring forward public policies that are likely to produce more evenhanded outcomes in communities of color. So the question becomes: *What is the most effective way to have a public conversation about race that leads to higher levels of support for a progressive race policy agenda?*<sup>1</sup> For the past several years, the FrameWorks Institute has been supported by a grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation to explore answers to questions like these about the intersection of race policy preference and communications. This report is one of a family of studies published at [www.frameworksinstitute.org](http://www.frameworksinstitute.org) with support from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation.

The prevailing wisdom among scholars and advocates advancing a racial equity agenda is that communications must “lead with race”. This means that there must be an up front acknowledgment of America's racist past early in the message. The twin assumptions of this argument are that:

1. It is highly unlikely that white Americans will see the need for interventions and policy reforms if they do not recognize the continuing legacy of the racial inequities embedded within the structures and policies of the American government and society (structural racism) which, in turn, helps explain differential outcomes or disparities between groups.
2. There is a moral imperative to confront America's racist past. On this line of reasoning, America must acknowledge and heal the wounds of its sordid racial history before it can move forward with open and honest dialogue. This argument

presents a “script” that denies the authenticity or importance of any policies that do not originate from this sequencing.

A second view, often carried forward by more conservative analysts, is the notion that any productive conversation about race must recognize the tremendous strides we have made as a society with regard to race. As such, this perspective perceives a steady and optimistic march toward a colorblind society in which people are judged by the “content of their character”, not the color of their skin. It is in this way, some argue, that America will become a truly equal opportunity society. The rationale for targeted intervention, then, is as a necessary evil to reach a truly colorblind society.

There is a third view which emanates from a body of work on communicating race conducted by the FrameWorks Institute over the last several years.<sup>2</sup> This approach, rooted in theories of framing, maintains that a dominant frame on race exists which exerts an almost primal pull on public communications that can (and does) derail public support for a progressive race policy agenda. Its gravitational force can be counteracted, however, by careful frame choreography that recognizes the pitfalls of the dominant frame and, instead, pays careful attention to the order in which the communications unfolds. In particular, we maintain that communications that begin with an articulation of certain core American values can build support among white Americans for race-targeted public policies.

Let us state now, clearly and without equivocation, that this is a report about communications, not socio-political analysis. In other words, this **is not** a study of the utility of racial equity or structural racism as analytic propositions. As a matter of fact, we are extremely partial to structural analyses of racial inequality and share the goals of a progressive race policy agenda. What is in question, however, is the appropriate communications strategy to achieve higher levels of race-specific policy support. We are not now, nor have we ever advocated that advocates should not talk about race. Rather, we have developed an argument – which we put to the test in this report – that focuses on the order of values, issue domains, and specific policies in public communications.

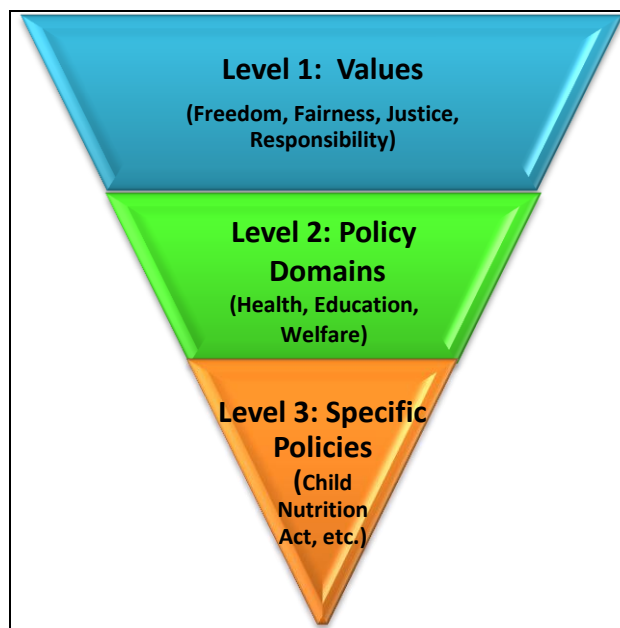
In short, the primary purpose of this report is to examine the extent to which race can be introduced in communications as a value proposition leading to higher levels of support for race-targeted public policies. We subject the hypotheses to a rigorous empirical test utilizing the latest technology in web-based experimental surveys that allow us to obtain a large nationally representative sample of American adults.

## FRAMING AND THE PRESENTATION OF RACE

The concept of frames is foundational to our approach. A decade of FrameWorks research confirms a growing body of scholarship from the social and cognitive sciences strongly suggesting that how social issues are framed has a significant impact on how the public understands cause and effect; what role people attribute to public and private actors; and what effective solutions might entail.<sup>3</sup> In short, frames are devices that people use to organize information in order to make meaning of the world around them.<sup>4</sup>

FrameWorks has forwarded an important conceptual distinction, called “levels of policy reasoning,” with regard to the way that framing contributes to people's understanding of social issues.<sup>5</sup> On this line of reasoning, ideas and issues are organized as hierarchies in people’s minds. As shown in Figure 1, there are three basic levels of public thinking with respect to the public’s consideration of policy preference. Level One is the highest level and refers to broad values such as freedom, justice, and individual responsibility. Level Two is the level at which ideas and issues are organized into categories of policies or policy domains such as health, education, housing, women’s rights, etc. Level Three is the most discrete level as it contains specific policies, actions, and programs such as affirmative action, minimum wage, the Earned Income Tax Credit, or the Child Nutrition Act.

**Figure 1. Levels of Public Policy Reasoning**



Each level in the hierarchy shapes and powerfully directs our thinking. Most important, research from the cognitive sciences suggests that people tend to reason from the broadest level (at the level of values) to the more specific levels (policy domains and then, to discrete policies/programs). Put differently, broadly held values serve as a lens through which people reason about particular issue domains and specific policy programs. For instance, how people think about a policy such as unemployment benefits may be a function of how much one believes in the role of individual responsibility in determining one's life chances. As a result, the way in which communications raise the issue of race is likely to be an important determinant of subsequent public support for race-based policies. By extension, when policy issues are raised without the contextualizing influence of a value, people will "fill in" the value they most commonly associate with that policy. Communications that allow for this filling in process are then subject to the public's arbitrary assignment of meaning to any particular policy.

### **Leading with Race**

At base, the argument about "leading with race" is based on the assumption that racism is one of the deeply held American values and that it must be directly challenged if we are to gain public support for ameliorating its impacts. To be sure, the sordid history of American race relations (and several contemporary events) underscores the validity of the assumption. This thinking is evident in the communications of social justice advocates. For example:

*Structural racism . . . touches and implicates everyone in our society—whites, blacks, Latinos, Asians, and Native Americans—because it is a system for allocating social privilege. The lower end of the privilege scale, characterized by socioeconomic disadvantage and political isolation, has historically been associated with "blackness" or "color." Meanwhile, the upper end of the scale that gives access to opportunity, benefits, and power has been associated with "whiteness." Between the fixed extremes of whiteness and blackness there is a fluid hierarchy of social and political spaces that are occupied by different groups of color at various times.*

*Structural Racism and Community Building,  
Aspen Institute, June 2004<sup>6</sup>*

Similar proclamations have come from institutions interested in mending race relations in the United States by directly confronting and proposing strategies to reduce "racial and ethnic disparities".

*Structural racism is the silent opportunity killer. It is the blind interaction between institutions, policies, and practices that inevitably perpetuates barriers to opportunities and racial disparities. Conscious and unconscious racism continue to exist in our society. But structural racism feeds on the unconscious. Public and private institutions and individuals each build a wall. They do not necessarily build the wall to hurt people of color, but one wall is joined by another until they construct a labyrinth from which few can escape. They have walled in whole communities.*

***Grantmakers in the Arts, 2009<sup>7</sup>***

*Structural racism in health care can make the difference between life and death for people of color...We must act now to demand equality in health care from lawmakers and decision-makers.*

***Elaine Gross, President of ERASE Racism, 2009<sup>8</sup>***

As stated earlier, we concur that structural inequalities are a leading source of racial inequality in the United States today; what remains to be seen, however, is whether or not racism/discrimination is an effective Level One value that boosts support for a progressive race policy agenda from a communications perspective. Put another way, does structural racism stand on its own as a core concept that can sway audiences to remedial and preventive policies or does it require translation? And, if the latter, what alternative values and communications elements can help deliver the vision that structural racism set out to evoke?

### **Race, Values, and Order**

The last several years of FrameWorks' research on race leads us to be skeptical of the capacity of racism as a Level One value to increase policy support for race-specific policy.<sup>9</sup> In particular, we have found that white Americans, in the main, reject the idea that racism plays a significant part in determining life chances for minorities in general, and African Americans in particular. The prevailing view is that racism is an historical artifact that has been outlawed by a series of legislative policies which ensure that individual acts of racism are effectively redressed. In fact, many groups have begun to argue that those policies need to be dismantled because they constitute "reverse discrimination" and actually advantage African Americans over other groups. From this perspective, it is easy to understand the consistent pattern of findings that emerge from our qualitative work - whites "shut down" when the conversation begins with a discussion of American racism.

As a result, FrameWorks has devoted a considerable number of both qualitative and quantitative



studies to finding alternative ways to communicate about race that mitigate the public's instinctive reactions to racism as a supposition for policy action. In that respect, we have found that priming people with fundamental, widely consensual American values such as opportunity for all, ingenuity, and prevention can lead to higher levels of support for race-targeted public policies and programs. The logic of this approach is found in the notion that Americans do indeed honor core ideas about the openness of the society, its opportunity structure, and its capacity to meet and solve even the thorniest of problems. When thinking is structured by the introduction of race neutral Level One values, we posit, people (i.e., white Americans) can and do support policies that are very clear about the proposed beneficiaries of the intervention (i.e., minorities). That is, we have found that leading communications with broadly shared values has a greater impact on enhancing public support for race-based policies than does leading with a direct statement about race or racism.

### **Toward A New Post-Racial, Color Blind Society?**

Ever since Dr. Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech, in which he spoke so eloquently about his dream that his children would not be "judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character"<sup>10</sup>, the goal of some progressive race advocates has been to move America toward a point where race is no longer a major social issue. The election of Barack Obama in 2008 was widely considered a watershed moment that renewed hope that Dr. King's vision could yet be realized. It also brought the discussion about the merits of and possibilities for a colorblind society outside of the discourse of legal philosophy and into mainstream public discourse.

The historical context for the perspective of America as a colorblind society, however, extends much further back in the annals of American jurisprudence. One example of this perspective in jurisprudence is found in what is now a strange twist on fate, in Justice John Marshall Harlan's dissent in *Plessy v. Ferguson*. Harlan wrote,

*"[O]ur Constitution is color-blind, and neither knows nor tolerates classes among citizens." The strange twist is provided by the fact that Justice Harlan was dissenting from the common view that held blacks as second-class citizens, while today it is the most conservative voices that argue for a color blind society. As blogger John Rosenberg wrote in 2008: "It is one of the many ironies in the strange career of racial equality that in order to defend racial preferences liberals today rely on purposefully ambiguous language resulting from the desire of the framers of the 14th Amendment to preserve segregation and states' rights, while the critics of racial preferences, who are usually viewed as conservatives, echo the radicals who wanted to proscribe all racial*

*distinctions. Today ... these “conservatives” are much more likely than liberals to honor Justice John Marshall Harlan’s eloquent assertion in his Plessy v. Ferguson dissent that “our Constitution is colorblind.”*

Or, as conservative commentator and activist Linda Chavez said, “We are, after all, the ones who argue for colorblind policies.”

Another example is found in a report issued by the Reagan transition team at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (the team was headed by black conservative J.A. Parker and included a pre-Supreme Court Clarence Thomas). The report concluded, “[T]he goal of all Americans of good will should be the creation of a society which is both color-blind and committed to economic growth and advancement. A system of racial quotas and classifications in a declining economy is the prescription for inter-group tensions and social dislocation. It violates our basic principles of individual freedom and our hope for continuing progress.”<sup>11</sup>

Obama’s election made many commentators begin to publicly reflect on the question of whether America had finally made a post-racial turn and the public discourse on race has been sated with open questions about the extent to which a color blind society (or the real possibility thereof) had finally arrived. Even a cursory look at the titles from newspapers, news magazines, and talk radio programs since the election gives a clear indication that this is now one new tact in the dialogue on race in America.

Table 1 offers only a small portion of the now prevalent menu of news stories about race. The diversity of new sources included here – from young adult (MTV) to conservative (FOX News and National Review) to mainstream news outlets and more – suggests that this frame has become virtually ubiquitous. The basic point here is that there is a renewed public discourse that invokes the idea of a colorblind or post-racial society.

It is clear from this coverage that many of the advocates of the colorblind mantra do not believe in benefits assigned by any classification, and certainly not by racial classification. As a result, we would not be surprised if exposure to the colorblind frame had the impact of depressing support for race-specific policies. Even so, there are some who believe that we must distribute public benefits to racial and ethnic minorities so that we can “move on” regarding the race issue. The ubiquitous nature of this frame and our speculation, (based on prior research) that it is likely to be counterproductive to progressive attempts to gain support for race-based policies, provided the catalyst for including it in our experimental research.

**Table 1. Selected Media Titles on Race, 2009**

<p><i>Does Obama's Win Show US Is Colorblind?</i> <b>FOX News - Jan 5, 2009</b></p> <p><i>Obama Builds On King's Dream – Post Racial America.</i> <b>Washington Times - Jan 19, 2009</b></p> <p><i>Morgan Welcomes Golden Globes Audience To 'Post-Racial America'.</i> <b>MTV.com - Jan 11, 2009</b></p> <p><i>Post-Racial Era? Go tell Victims Of Police Shootings.</i> <b>USA Today - Jan 13, 2009</b></p> <p><i>Is This How the Post-Racial Obama Administration Begins?</i> <b>FOX News - Jan 20, 2009</b></p> <p><i>Are We Living In A Post-Racial America?</i> <b>National Public Radio - Feb 11, 2009</b></p> <p><i>Mobilizing Against Racism In Post Racial America.</i> <b>San Francisco Chronicle - Feb 12, 2009</b></p> <p><i>Welcome To Post-Racial America.</i> <b>Philadelphia Weekly - Feb 27, 2009</b></p> <p><i>Election Of Barack Obama And Post-Racial Society.</i> <b>Daily Monitor - May 16, 2009</b></p> <p><i>Journalists Ignore Reality That 'Post-Racial' President Isn't.</i> <b>FOX News - Jun 5, 2009</b></p> <p><i>Colorblind Society Won't Erase Stereotypes.</i> <b>Philadelphia Inquirer - Jul 8, 2009</b></p> <p><i>The Recession Is Not Colorblind.</i> <b>Salon - Jul 15, 2009</b></p> <p><i>Post-Racial America Looks Pretty Racial To Me.</i> <b>Atlanta Journal Constitution - Jul 22, 2009</b></p> <p><i>Post-Racial America Still A Mirage.</i> <b>Philadelphia Inquirer - Jul 22, 2009</b></p> <p><i>So Much For Post-Racial America.</i> <b>Tampa Tribune - Jul 29, 2009</b></p> <p><i>So Much For A "Post-Racial" America?</i> <b>CBS News - Jul 30, 2009</b></p> <p><i>Miles To Go To Achieve A Post-Racial America.</i> <b>Kansas City Star - Aug 2, 2009</b></p> <p><i>Despite Progress, We're Still Not A Truly Post-Racial America.</i> <b>Seattle Times - Aug 7, 2009</b></p> <p><i>Jimmy Carter Is Wrong -- It's Just Not About Race Anymore.</i> <b>FOX News - Sep 16, 2009</b></p> <p><i>What Happened To 'Post-Racial' America?</i> <b>Korea Times - Sep 21, 2009</b></p> <p><i>Post-Racial America....What Is Post-Racial America?</i> <b>Huntingtonnews.net - Oct 7, 2009</b></p> <p><i>Farrakhan: Obama's Election No Post Racial America.</i> <b>CBS News - Oct 18, 2009</b></p> <p><i>"He's The American President, The Post-Racial America."</i> <b>The National Review -Oct 21, 2009</b></p> <p><i>Why We're Not 'Post-Racial'.</i> <b>Wall Street Journal - Nov 20, 2009</b></p>
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### SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

- In general, exposure to any values prime increases support for race-specific policies, compared to a control condition that does not expose people to a values prime. The impact of all of the values primes on policy support was positive. Moreover, effects of these values on child/youth policies in 7 of the 9 treatments were statistically significant; and on health policies, 4 of the 9 treatments proved to be statistically significant.
- Values such as Prevention, Opportunity for All, and Ingenuity were most effective in raising support for race-targeted policies and programs. These treatments attracted statistically significant coefficients in more than 80% of the tests. The findings were more robust for child and youth development policy than health policy.

- Exposure to a racism values prime was not as effective in raising policy support as exposure to values that were not connected to America's discriminatory racial past. Nonetheless, exposure to the Disparities prime was more effective than exposure to the Fairness Across Groups prime, particularly with regards to child and youth development policy.
- Exposure to the racism prime appeared to remind people of their prior orientations in terms of party affiliation and race. For example, there were strong differences in policy support across race and party affiliation but also in some cases (especially on health policy), across the entire spectrum of potential moderators. In particular, Fairness Across Groups – an appeal that closely mirrors common communications about disparities – had the effect of deepening existing social cleavages.
- The colorblind argument was the least effective in elevating support for race policies. Its related coefficients failed to reach statistical significance in any of the tests.
- Even introducing race (as opposed to racism) into the more general values prime in subtle ways undermined support for race-targeted policies. In particular, only 1 of 6 values (Opportunity for All) show statistically significant increases in policy support for child/youth policies or health policies when African Americans are specifically named as policy beneficiaries.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

The findings in this paper are drawn from two separate experimental studies conducted in October of 2009. The first, which we refer to throughout the report as *Study I*, included a nationally representative sample of 4,275 registered voters (weighted on the basis of gender, age, race, education and party identification<sup>12</sup>) and was drawn from a national online panel.<sup>13</sup> More than 400 hundred respondents were assigned at random to the control group (443), while the remainder was assigned to one of nine experimental conditions.

The second study, which we refer to as *Study II* throughout this report, also included a nationally representative sample weighted on the basis of gender, age, race, education, and party identification.<sup>14</sup> This study included 4,150 registered voters and was drawn from a national online panel in the same manner as our previous study. More than 400 respondents were assigned at random to the control group (450) and the remainder was assigned to one of the treatment groups.

The theory of random assignment in evaluation research design suggests that any variation between the control and the treatment groups, not stemming from exposure to the stimuli of the treatments, should be negligible or nonexistent. To test this proposition more specifically in our research, we conducted a series of overall F-tests to determine if there were any systematic differences in the race, gender, education, and party affiliation between the treatment and control groups. We found no differences significant at the  $p > .10$  level. Even so, as an additional precaution against selection bias caused by prior disposition or other observed characteristics, we also used statistical methods to control for the impact of a discrete set of demographic and political variables available to us. Whenever such methods are used to control for these factors, we note that in the text.

### **The Treatments**

In the two experimental studies discussed in this report, the treatments consist of text-based stimuli to which the subjects in the study are exposed. The overall objective of both studies is to test the efficacy of incorporating some discussion of race more explicitly as a lead in communications meant to build support for race-based policies. To fully test the implications of incorporating race as a lead-in to such communications, we developed stimuli across two studies that test the presentation of race at all three levels of public thinking – as Level One values, as Level Two policy domains and as Level Three specific policy actions. As such, both studies provide a unique window into this issue by testing this proposition in slightly different, but complementary ways.

More specifically, *Study I* was designed to test the extent to which the presentation of race at Level One heightens support for race-based policies and where the attempt to explain *why* society ought to address racial issues is made through an appeal to a Level II domain – in this case, racial disparities in access to quality health care and education.<sup>15</sup> The first set of stimuli test two values that inherently make racism and discrimination a prominent focal point for thinking about the kind of society we want to inhabit. Those stimuli are encapsulated in the treatments entitled “Disparities” and “Fairness Across Groups”. The first set of stimuli (where race is actively invoked) is tested against a second set of stimuli that do not feature racism or discrimination as an inherently American value proposition. The second set of treatments represents values that FrameWorks has tested in other experimental trials and found to be successful in increasing support for progressive public policies. These treatments are encapsulated in the treatments entitled “Prevention”, “Prosperity”, “Opportunity for All”, “Interdependence”, “Ingenuity”, and “Fairness Across Places”. Finally, we also include a treatment entitled “Colorblind” which invokes race but only as it relates to the ultimate goal of eradicating racism as a public issue. Texts of the nine study treatments can be found in Appendix A.

*Study II* was designed to get at the introduction of race in a more subtle fashion. Instead of directly representing racism/discrimination as a Level One value, we made two adjustments. First, while the value statement remained race neutral, we identified the recipient of the public benefits as African American. Second, and in response to claims often made by advocates that the public needs more specific information about the types of policies and interventions that are necessary, we included a set of very specific policy solutions in the values prime (i.e., Level Three explanations). As a result, the attempt to explain *why* society ought to address racial issues is made through the identification of a set of specific Level Three policies. So, the treatments (Prevention, Opportunity for All, Ingenuity, Fairness Across Places, and Fairness Across Groups) have been given a different orientation than our treatments in *Study I*, in ways that allow us to examine the presentation of race from a slightly different vantage point. The specific text of the five treatments from this study can be found in Appendix B.

In both studies, all of the treatments were compared to a control group that received no stimuli. Mean differences between each of the treatments and the control group in terms of policy preferences are reported herein as frame effects. We should also note that the text of the treatments in both studies have been evaluated for their readability and show that the average reading level is about 10<sup>th</sup> grade.<sup>16</sup>

## **Data Collection**

In both studies, subjects were first asked to respond to a brief series of introductory questions where they rated their level of concern about a set of unrelated political issues. To avoid contamination of testing effects, the series of political issues offered to subjects was rotated each time the survey was administered and was quite broad in subject matter. Immediately following this series of questions, subjects were assigned to either a treatment condition and their treatments were shown on the screen or they were assigned to the control condition (in which case they received no stimulus). Subsequently, all subjects were then asked to answer questions related to their support for a range of policy policies (described below) and their political attitudes in general. Questions within each of these outcome areas were also rotated to mitigate against order effects.

## **Outcome Measures**

Subjects from both experimental surveys were asked a series of questions that allowed us to

measure their policy preferences. Essentially, we compared responses across the treatments and control groups in both studies to better understand the impact of invoking race at different levels of presentation in communications.

To measure these policy preferences, we developed several index variables (referred to here as policy batteries) that tapped the approval/disapproval dichotomy of a series of policy proposals across several policy domains. In this report, we examine the frame effects on two of those policy areas included in both surveys: (1) child and youth development policies and (2) health policies. For both studies, we first collected a list of policy proposals being debated and discussed among policy advocates and then asked study subjects to indicate their support for those measures. For *Study I*, we designed the policy batteries to specifically underscore the impact of those policies on minorities and minority communities. The policies developed for *Study II* were more broadly targeted. The list of policies included in the policy batteries for both studies can be found in Appendix C.

To ensure reliability, we first pre-tested the policy items with a small pilot sample. The pilot suggested that the inter-item correlations between the questions within each battery were reliable. To test for validity, we performed a factor analysis to confirm that the batteries were, in fact, distinct. We then performed a Cronbach's Alpha test for the fidelity of the scales in each battery to gauge their general reliability. All tests demonstrated that the respective scales displayed coefficients well above the range of acceptability — reliability scores for all of the batteries were greater than .87. Assured of the reliability of the batteries as independent scales, we collapsed the questions into index variables that were subsequently used as outcome measures in the statistical analyses that follow. In addition, for ease of interpretation, these variables were rescaled to range from 0 to 1 (with one indicating higher levels of support) and are reported in these increments.

## FINDINGS

In this report, we examine the extent to which racialized communications impact policy thinking and at what level of presentation those communications are most advantaged by directly incorporating race (Level One, Two, or Three). To this end, we developed two experimental studies. *Study I* examines the relative impact of three presentations of a values prime:

- (i) racism/discrimination
- (ii) core American values
- (iii) colorblindness

Similarly *Study II* examines when race (as opposed to racism) is introduced as part of a general American values prime and includes discrete information about the beneficiaries of policy action

as well the nature of the action.

In this section of the report, we present the findings associated with exposure to the treatment conditions. Treatment effects are defined here in terms of differences in mean scores between the control condition and the experimental treatments. To estimate the treatment effects, we used a series of generalized linear regression models. Regression analysis is a useful technique because it measures the strength of the relationship between multiple variables of interest simultaneously. In addition, a number of control variables were added to the regression models (including race, gender, class, party affiliation, age, education, region of residency, religious affiliation, and marital status) to increase the precision of the effect measurements.

### Study I: Measuring the Strength of Racialized Appeals at Levels One and Two

#### Support for Race Targeted Child and Youth Development Policies

Table 2 presents the impact of exposure to values on policy support for child and youth development policy and health policy.

Table 2. Race Frame Effects – Child and Youth Development Policy		
Summary of Main Effects		
	Treatments	Control Group
	All Treatments	.037 (.012)**
	Racialized Value Treatments	.026 (.014)*
	Non Racialized Value Treatments	.042 (.013)***
Summary of Race Effects Across Discrete Treatments		
	Treatments	Control Group
Race Invisibility	Color Blind	.012 (.017)
Racialized Treatments	Disparities	.040 (.017)**
	Fairness Across Groups	.029 (.017)*
Non Racialized Treatments	Prevention	.054 (.016)***
	Prosperity	.015 (.016)
	Opportunity for All	.044 (.017)**
	Interdependence	.037 (.017)**
	Ingenuity	.049 (.017)**
	Fairness Across Places	.051 (.016)**
Statistically Significant Differences *** p ≤ .001; **p < .05; *p < .10		
<b>Note 1:</b> Standard errors are indicated in parentheses.		
<b>Note 2:</b> Several controls were included (age, race, party, marital status, religious observance, income, region of residence, and news attentiveness).		



The main effects of the treatments are presented in the top portion of Table 2 and suggest three things. First, *exposure to a value (whether racialized or not) is associated with higher policy support when compared to the control condition.* The bottom panel of Table 2 provides even more specific information about the efficacy of employing values as part of the communications strategy. Here we find that *all of the values tested (whether racialized or not) raised public support for child and youth policies when compared against the control group, and 7 out of 9 of them are statistically significant.*

Second, the positive treatment effects for non racialized values (as a group) are about twice that for racialized values (as a group). When the disaggregated treatment effects are examined, we can see that the strongest individual treatment effects come from Prevention (.054), Fairness Across Places (.051), and Ingenuity (.049). *These analyses show that, although advocates may gain some traction using racism as a Level One value, they garner almost twice as much support from values not associated with racism or discrimination.* Third, exposure to the colorblind values prime represents the smallest increase over the control group in terms of policy support. Although the coefficients are in the positive direction, they are statistically insignificant. In other words, *the treatment which argues that we ought to address racial disparities as a step toward a more colorblind or post-racial society proved least likely to raise support for policies that address those very disparities.*

We find both similarities and differences when we examine support for health policy. As before, Table 3 shows that the main effects of the treatments overall are positive increases in policy support. We also find that *the treatments that proved most effective in elevating public support for child/youth policies (Prevention, Fairness Across Places, Ingenuity, and Opportunity for All) proved successful in elevating health policies.* A final similarity is that the colorblind treatment again proved least likely to raise public support for race-based policies on health.

Still, there are important differences. Exposure to racism as a value proposition is *even less effective in elevating policy support on health than on child/youth policies.* None of the racialized treatments rose to the level of statistical significance in terms of their ability to raise public support for health. A final difference between the child/youth development policies and health policies is that the value of Interdependence falls short of statistical significance on health, although it was shown to be statistically significant in elevating public support for child/youth policies.

Table 3. Race Frame Effects – Health Policy		
Summary of Main Effects		
	Treatments	Control Group
	All Treatments	.022 (.012)*
	Racialized Value Treatments	.009 (.013)
	Non Racialized Value Treatments	.024 (.012)**
Summary of Race Effects Across Discrete Treatments		
	Treatments	Control Group
Race Invisibility	Color Blind	.004 (.017)
Racialized Treatments	Disparities	.017 (.017)
	Fairness Across Groups	.007 (.016)
Non Racialized Treatments	Prevention	.041 (.016)**
	Prosperity	.009 (.016)
	Opportunity for All	.034 (.016)**
	Interdependence	.012 (.016)
	Ingenuity	.030 (.016)*
	Fairness (Places)	.037 (.016)**
Statistically Significant Differences *** p ≤ .001; **p < .05; *p < .10		
<b>Note 1:</b> Standard errors are indicated in parentheses.		
<b>Note 2:</b> Several controls were included (age, race, party, marital status, religious observance, income, region of residence, and news attentiveness).		

Two broad implications emerge from these analyses. First, using a Level One value to begin a conversation on race is productive for increasing support for race-targeted policies and programs. We found this to be true across both policy areas under examination. Second, while it is true that racism as a value did have some positive effects, they were, in the main, about half as effective as exposing people to core American values that did not cite historical discrimination as an explanation for disparities in society. The fact that more generalized treatments were able to elevate support for policies that were specifically targeted to racial and ethnic minorities makes these effects even more compelling. *It suggests a kind of disjunctive irony – in order to garner support for race-based policies, advocates need to begin the conversation by invoking broader core American values. Being literal about racism in the public dialogue about race is not the most effective way to build public will for progressive race policy reforms.*

### **Evaluating the Moderating Impacts of Race, Gender, Educational Background, and Party Affiliation**

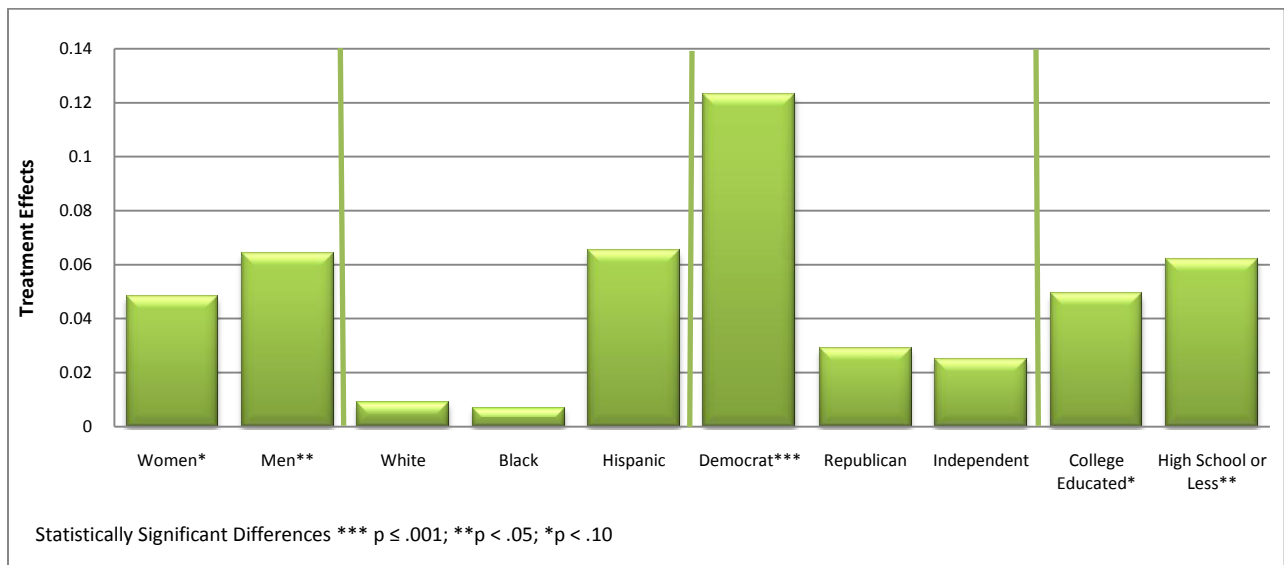
We recognize that these counterintuitive results might be a function of the interaction between the treatment effects and study participants' prior beliefs and predispositions. The literature suggests that framing effects can be attenuated by several factors. In some cases, strong prior beliefs about the issue or object will trump activation by short-term contextual cues (Chong and Druckman, 2007; Iyengar, 1991). In other words, there is a distinction between the temporary activation of cognitive structures and the chronic accessibility of long-standing beliefs.

As a result, we conducted regression analyses to evaluate the impact of several types of moderators found in our prior research to have some impact on policy preferences – race, gender, education, and party affiliation. We examine these moderators on policy support for two of the treatments tested in the study – (Prevention) and (Fairness Across Groups). Figures 2 and 3 present the interaction coefficients for the Prevention treatment for child/youth and health policy. Figures 4 and 5 do the same for Fairness Across Groups. In all of these Figures, the bars represent the extent to which the group identified is statistically different from its counterparts in the control group. For example, in Figure 2, women who received the Prevention treatment are statistically more likely than women in the control group to support child and youth policies.

More generally, from Figure 2 we can see that gender and education are not effective moderators of the treatment effects of Prevention, since there are statistically significant treatment effects across all categories in these areas. Put more simply, *irrespective of gender or educational background, study participants exposed to the Prevention treatment are significantly more likely than their counterparts in the control group to support child and youth development policies.* It does appear that there are some party moderating effects here, as only Democrats exposed to the Prevention treatment are statistically significant from Democrats in the control group, but those appear to be fairly minimal, since policy support by both Republicans and Independents is positive (albeit not statistically significant). There are no important impacts by race, since none of the racial categories has a statistically significant impact on policy support for child/youth policies.

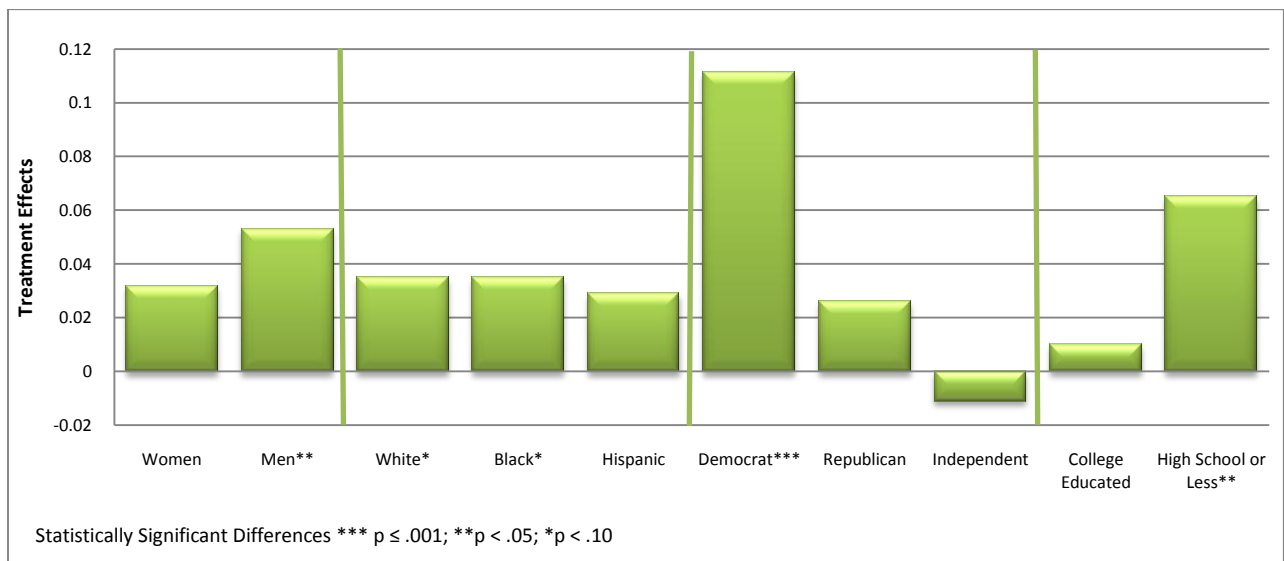
The overall effect of the moderators is similar when we evaluate support for health policy among study participants exposed to the Prevention treatment but there are a few important differences. Policy support among the college educated and Independents drops substantially on health policies. In the other direction, policy support increases among whites and blacks and it surpasses that of Hispanics (whereas the opposite trends were found on child/youth policy).

**Figure 2. Prevention Treatment and Potential Moderators - Child/ Youth Development Policy Support**



Perhaps most important, across both policy areas we see that the greatest impact of the Prevention treatments happens for Democrats, men, and those with a high school degree or less. Conversely, support among Republicans and Independents is most attenuated – likely a reflection of the fact that both groups are generally more critical of policy interventions in these areas and likely more cynical of attempts to intervene prior to the emergence of problems.

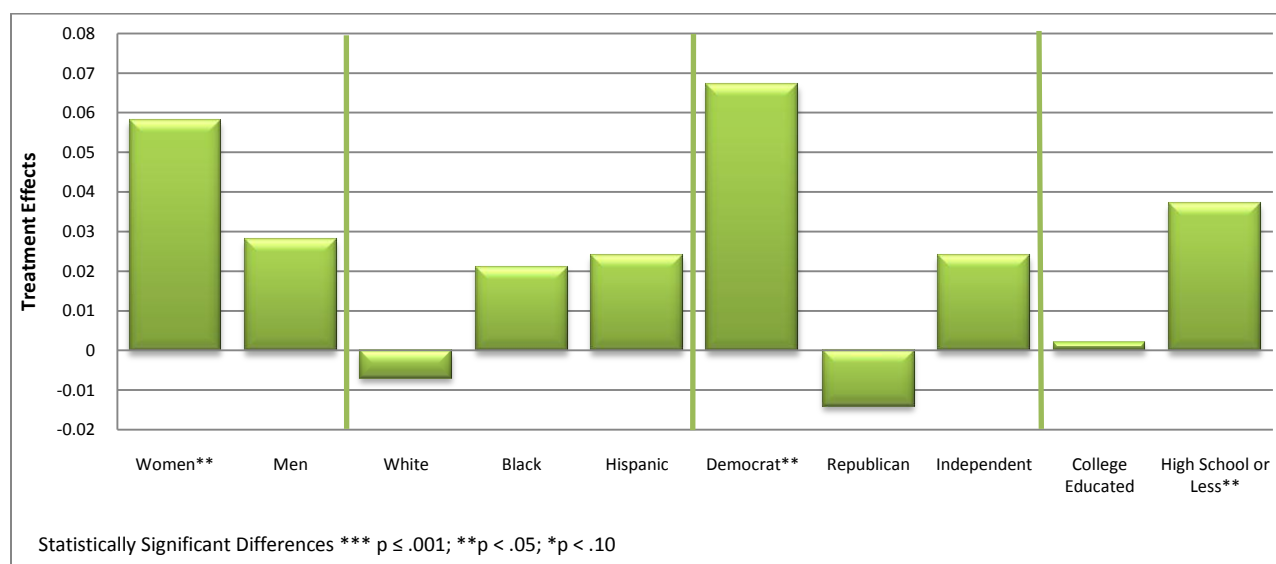
**Figure 3. Prevention Treatment and Potential Moderators - Health Policy Support**



We also chose to evaluate the moderators on those exposed to the Fairness Across Groups

treatment. On child and youth development policy, we find race and party affiliation to be strong moderators of support for child/youth policies after exposure to this treatment. In particular, policy support drops among whites and Republicans after exposure to Fairness Across Groups. On the other hand, policy support is strengthened after exposure among all other groups but especially among women and Democrats.

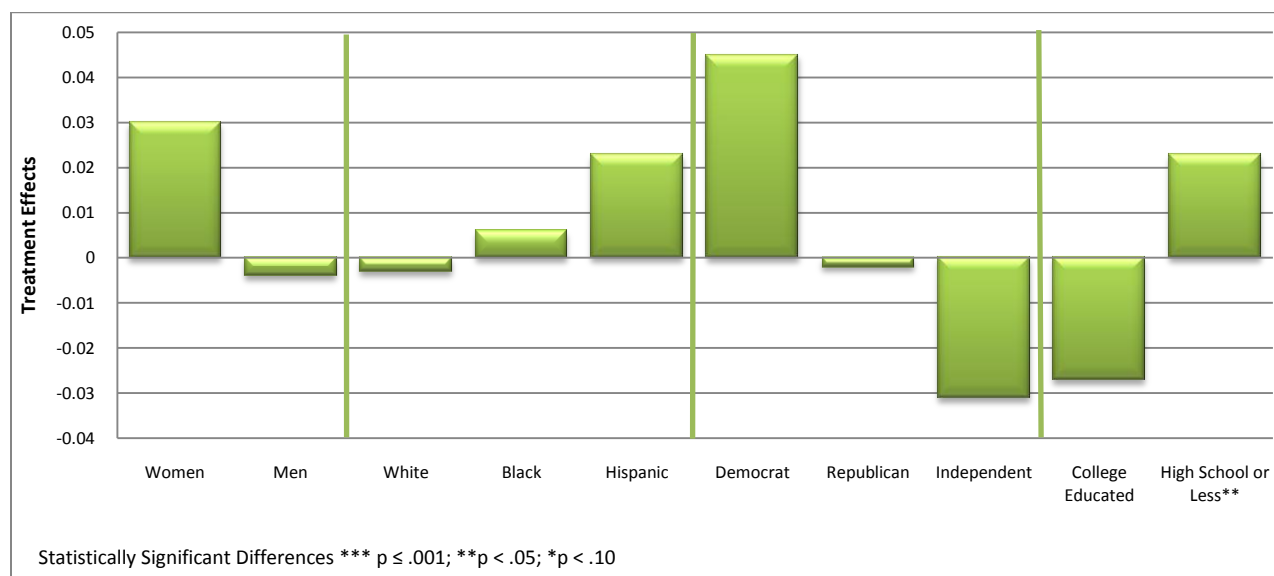
**Figure 4. Fairness Across Groups Treatment and Selected Moderators – Child/Youth Development Policy Support**



Women and Democrats continue to offer the strongest policy support after exposure to Fairness Across Groups when we evaluate health policies but support among other key groups is weaker compared to child and youth development policy. In particular, Independents and the college educated join whites and Republicans as groups for which policy support is lower after exposure to Fairness Across Groups than their counterparts in the control group.

In general, these analyses suggest that exposure to treatments with racism as a Level One value proposition *evoked stronger differences in policy support across race and party affiliation but also in some cases (on health policy support, for example), across the entire spectrum of potential moderators*. In some cases (especially on health policy), the bidirectional nature of the coefficients actually had the impact of canceling out any main effects of the treatments. For example, the increased policy support by blacks and Hispanics was largely cancelled out by dips in support among whites. Likewise, strong support by women, Democrats and non-college educated study participants was negated by equally strong opposition among men, Independents, and the college educated. *While it may be tempting for advocates to try to target the Fairness message to the groups who seemed to be most receptive, our data strongly suggest the efficacy of employing a more mainstream value like Prevention to garner more widespread support.*

**Figure 5. Fairness Across Groups Treatment and Selected Moderators - Health Policy Support**



## Study II: Measuring the Strength of Racialized Policy Appeals at Level III

From *Study I* we discovered that representing race as a value proposition about the discriminatory nature of American society has limited capacity to lift public support for race-targeted policies and programs. What we don't know is whether or not one can introduce race (as opposed to racism) in a core American value proposition. In other words, can race be subtly injected in a more general values prime? Can we "pitch" race at another level of presentation in the incoming communications stream? *Study II* is designed to answer this question.

### Support for Child and Youth Development Policies

To begin this analysis, we present the treatment effects related to policy support for child and youth development policy. Table 4 indicates that the overall treatment effects of the "racialized" policies (as a group) are positive but not statistically significant (at .009). For comparison sake, it is interesting to note that the treatment effects on core values in *Study I* averaged about .042.

Table 4. Race Frame Effects – Child and Youth Development Policy	
Summary of Main Effects	
Treatments	Control Group
All Treatments – Racialized	.009 (.014)
Summary of Race Effects Across Discrete Treatments	
Treatments	Control Group
Opportunity for All (African Americans)	.037 (.022)*
Ingenuity (African Americans)	.013 (.022)
Prevention (African Americans)	.006 (.022)
Fairness Across Groups (African Americans)	.002 (.022)
Fairness Across Places (African American)	.012 (.021)
Statistically Significant Differences *** $p \leq .001$ ; ** $p < .05$ ; * $p < .10$ <b>Note 1:</b> Standard errors are indicated in parentheses. <b>Note 2:</b> Several controls were included (age, race, party, marital status, religious observance, income, region of residence, and news attentiveness).	

Moreover, when we look at the disaggregated results in the lower portion of Table 4, we find that the only treatment for which we see statistically significant increases in policy support is for the value of Opportunity for All. Thus, while the coefficients suggest that these values have some effect on policy support (as indicated by the positive coefficients that range from .006 to .037), the increases are minimal and insignificant compared to the control condition.

Table 5. Race Frame Effects – Health Policy	
Summary of Main Effects	
Treatments	Control Group
All Treatments – Racialized	.015 (.016)
Summary of Race Effects Across Discrete Treatments	
Treatments	Control Group
Opportunity for All (African Americans)	.047 (.024)**
Ingenuity (African Americans)	.022 (.024)
Prevention (African Americans)	.023 (.024)
Fairness Across Groups (African Americans)	.011(.024)
Fairness Across Places (African American)	.006 (.024)
Statistically Significant Differences *** $p \leq .001$ ; ** $p < .05$ ; * $p < .10$ <b>Note 1:</b> Standard errors are indicated in parentheses. <b>Note 2:</b> Several controls were included (age, race, party, marital status, religious observance, income, region of residence, and news attentiveness).	

In Table 5, we evaluate how the treatments fare on health policies. We find that the coefficients on the treatments are generally lower than those found in *Study I*. The only “racialized” value with statistical significance in this study is *Opportunity for All*. The treatment coefficient on *Opportunity for All* is highly significant and comparable to the effects we found in *Study I* but it is the only value for which this is true.

### Evaluating the Moderating Impacts of Race, Gender, Educational Background, and Party Affiliation

We evaluate several potential moderators of the frame effects we found in this study. Analogous to our analyses in the first study, we present the results of regression analyses that evaluate the impact of race, gender, education, and party affiliation on support for child and youth policy and health policy. In Figure 6, we examine support for child/youth policies and evaluate several potential moderators on *Opportunity for All* (the value which garners the most policy support) and *Prevention* (as a follow-up to the analysis in *Study I*).

**Figure 6. Opportunity for All Treatment and Potential Moderators – Child/ Youth Development Policy Support**

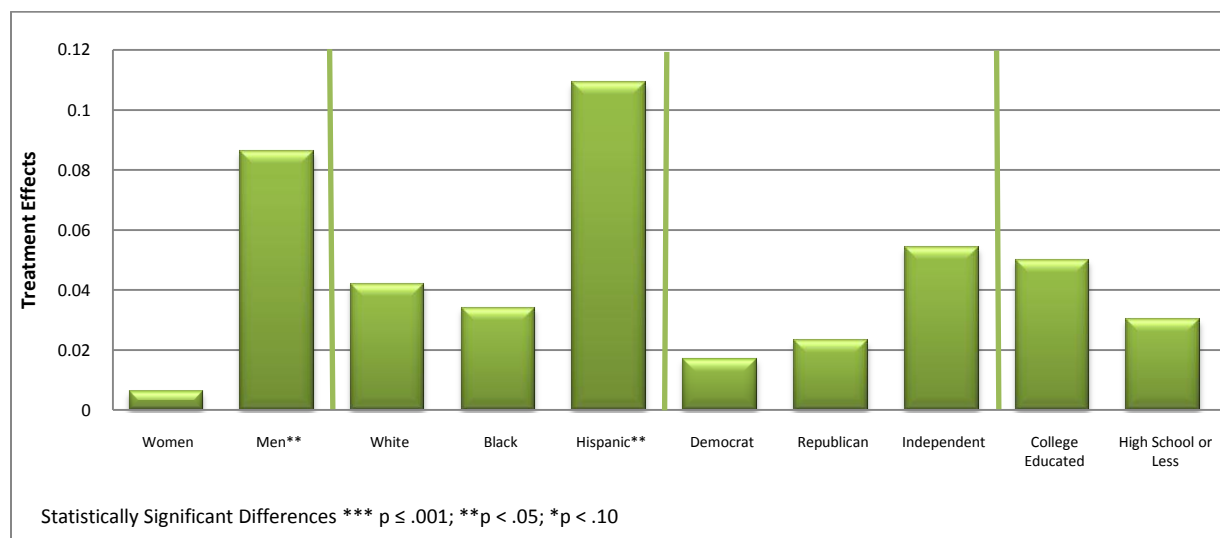


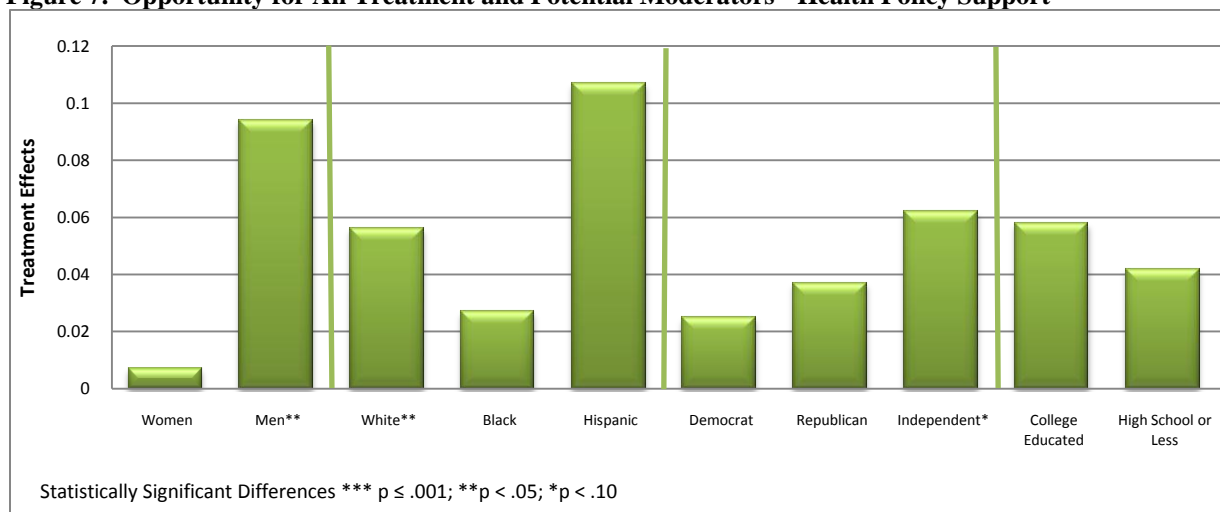
Figure 6 shows that *although support for child/youth development policies varies across groups, the potential moderators examined show minimal impacts*. That is, support for child/youth policies does not seem to be determined by differences in race, gender, class, and party affiliation.

Figure 7 evaluates the impact of these moderators on support for health policy following exposure to *Opportunity for All*. The overall pattern of findings mostly mirrors that found in



Figure 6, with only minor differences in the magnitude of the effects. As we discussed earlier in this section of the report, study participants had a slightly stronger response to the health policies than to the child and youth policies following exposure to the treatments, and Figures 7 reflects that.

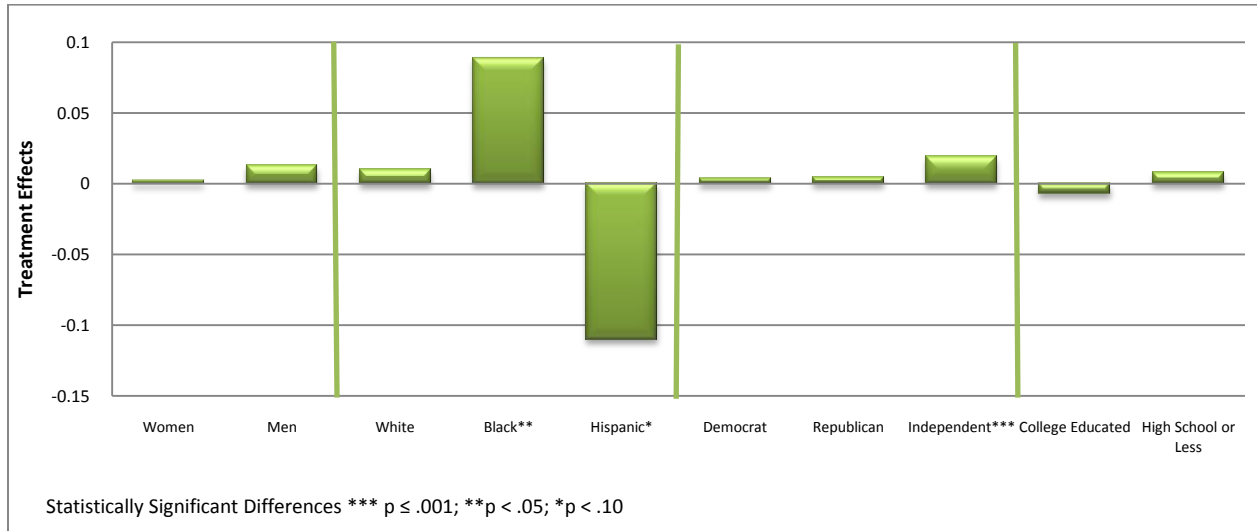
**Figure 7. Opportunity for All Treatment and Potential Moderators - Health Policy Support**



Figures 8 and 9 evaluate moderators for the Fairness Across Groups treatment. For child and youth policy it is clear that, for most groups, any differences between the treatment group and the control condition are fairly minimal. *In fact, the only factor for which we can observe fairly substantial movement after exposure to the Fairness Across Groups treatment is across race. For example, Blacks are much more likely to support child and youth policies after exposure to this treatment but this increase in support is negated by the strong losses in policy support after Hispanics are exposed to the same treatment.*

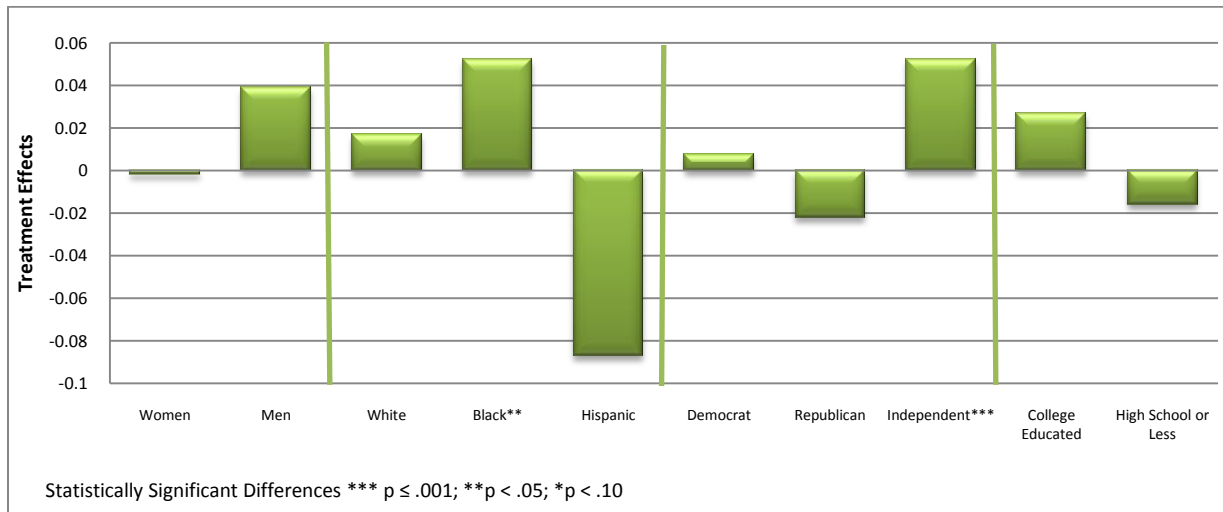
On support for health policy, as reflected in Figure 9, we find that the same pattern exists across the moderating effects. When comparing Figures 8 and 9, we also find that *policy support on health policy among women, Republicans and those with less than a college education is actually slightly lower than support among their counterparts in the control condition.* We also find the same dramatic bifurcation across race (between black and Hispanics) as well as party affiliation found for child/youth policy. Moreover, a closer examination suggests that impacts across all of the other moderators in the study are activated by the Fairness Across Groups treatment. *So, Fairness Across Groups in Study II, seems to have the same impacts as found in Study I - deepening existing social cleavages.*

**Figure 8. Fairness Across Groups Treatment and Potential Moderators - Child/ Youth Development Policy Support**



In sum, we evaluated two values treatments (Opportunity for All and Fairness Across Groups). On the former, we find surprisingly few moderating effects. *That is, irrespective of gender, race, party affiliation, or educational background, exposure to Opportunity for All produces increases in support for child and youth and health policies.* The picture is very different when we measure the moderating impacts on Fairness Across Groups. Here we find that race (and to some extent, party affiliation) act as powerful moderators that mitigate any overall positive impacts of the treatment. Other moderating effects are found to be active (albeit to a lesser extent) on support for health policy as well.

**Figure 9. Fairness Across Groups Treatment and Potential Moderators - Health Policy Support**



The findings related to the moderating impacts help explain why Opportunity for All is successful in elevating policy support on both sets of policy batteries in *Study II*. *Opportunity for All, even when it is directed at one group (in this case, African Americans), survives the “us” versus “them” zero-sum thinking often found when the public is faced with a message about policy benefits targeted to minority groups and, as a result, policy support is elevated across all groups.* By contrast, Fairness Across Groups directed at African Americans does not seem to survive this kind of zero-sum thinking and policy support wavers significantly across each of the moderators.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

We opened this report with a discussion about the implications of the Obama presidency on race relations in United States and how such a historically significant event might shape communications about race. In many ways, the findings discussed in this report are very much in alignment with the central argument that Obama himself has made about race relations in this country – that appeals for better conditions for African Americans stand on much firmer ground when they are bound to (and made on the basis of) better conditions for the broader society. That is, communications meant to broaden support for policies that address racial disparities are likely to have a greater impact when made on the basis of a broader set of shared values. In his March 18, 2008 speech on race, Obama expressed the essence of this viewpoint.

*“For the African-American community, that path means embracing the burdens of our past without becoming victims of our past. It means continuing to insist on a full measure of justice in every aspect of American life. But it also means binding our particular grievances - for better health care, and better schools, and better jobs - to the larger aspirations of all Americans -- the white woman struggling to break the glass ceiling, the white man who’s been laid off, the immigrant trying to feed his family.”<sup>17</sup>*

Obama’s words, however, stand in stark contrast to the practices among advocates of race-based policies that constitute what we deem to be a kind of illogic of literalness – this tenacious view that support for race-based policies can only be won if we are literal and direct in our communications about race; that is, an explicit acknowledgement of America’s discriminatory past and present practices. The findings in this paper suggest that adherence to this kind of literalness is not so much counterproductive as much as it is a strategy that short-changes the overall goal of broadening policy support. As such, the desire to have our communications about race reflect the vantage point that racism, discrimination, and inequality are alive and well may make us feel better – serving a kind of cathartic function – but it gets us no closer to building the

kind of public support for race-based policies that might actually make a difference. Obama captures this dilemma in his March 18<sup>th</sup> speech as well.

*“The fact is that the comments that have been made and the issues that have surfaced over the last few weeks reflect the complexities of race in this country that we've never really worked through - a part of our union that we have yet to perfect. And if we walk away now, if we simply retreat into our respective corners, we will never be able to come together and solve challenges like health care, or education, or the need to find good jobs for every American.”<sup>18</sup>*

Indeed, we could easily retreat to our respective corners, talking past each other by juxtaposing discussions of structural racism with those about reverse discrimination, inequality with those of political incorrectness, and social justice with historical progress but in doing so we put off an easier task that strategic communications offers. That is, ignoring what the research suggests as a way forward toward building a big tent of public support for race-based policies, and instead choosing to elevate race to prominence in the discussion, without thinking through the impacts on public thinking. And it is the latter position, an illogical position of sorts, which threatens to undermine the prospects for communicating a vision that leads to a true post-racial America.

## APPENDIX A: EXPERIMENTAL TREATMENTS – STUDY I

Now we would like to ask you to respond to some interesting things in the news today.

### 1. Control Group.

### 2. Disparities

Lately there has been a lot of talk about disparities in our country. Some people believe that discrimination continues to create differences in the quality of health and education programs and services available to people. This puts some groups at greater risk for problems than others. For this reason, it is important to reduce disparities by promoting programs and improving services available to those groups. According to this view, we should eliminate differences in the quality of services people can get because it harms their quality of life. Have you heard this explanation of why we should allocate societal assets to address disparities?

### 3. Colorblindness

Lately there has been a lot of talk about the value of having a colorblind society. Some people believe that in order to get to a point where race is no longer a dividing line, we need to resolve differences in the quality of health and education programs and services that racial and ethnic groups can get. These continuing differences block our ability to achieve a colorblind society. According to this view, we should promote programs and improve services to racial and ethnic minorities so that our nation can move on. Have you heard this explanation of why we should allocate societal assets to achieve a colorblind society?

### 4. Fairness Across Groups

Lately there has been a lot of talk about fairness between different groups in our country. Some people believe that some groups are struggling because they are not given a fair chance to do well. This is because programs and services are not fairly distributed among all groups in our society. When some groups are denied the resources they need, they are unable to overcome problems like poor health and education. According to this view, we need to make sure that all groups in our country have equal access to quality health and education programs and services. Have you heard this explanation of why we should allocate societal assets more fairly among groups?

### 5. Prevention

Lately there has been a lot of talk about prevention in our country. Some people believe that we should prevent health and education problems before they occur. When we don't address them, they eventually become worse and cost more to fix. For this reason, it is important to promote

programs and improve services that keep problems from occurring in the first place. According to this view, we can save lives and money if we make good prevention programs easier for everyone to access. Have you heard this explanation of why we should allocate societal assets to prevention?

## **6. Prosperity**

Lately there has been a lot of talk about prosperity in our country. Some people believe that we should do more to address problems that undermine prosperity, like poor health and education. When we support overall community well-being, it increases the chances that our society will thrive. For this reason, it is important to promote programs and improve services that keep our society moving forward. According to this view, developing human and community resources is vital to our ability to achieve a prosperous society. Have you heard this explanation of why we should allocate societal assets to create greater prosperity?

## **7. Opportunity for All**

Lately there has been a lot of talk about opportunity for all in our country. Some people believe that too many people still face barriers to good health and education. Our country's ability to achieve is undermined when not enough people have access to the things that help you succeed in life. For this reason, we need to ensure that everyone has access to the programs and services that strengthen opportunity in our country. According to this view, promoting programs and improving services that enhance opportunity will result in a better quality of life for the whole nation. Have you heard of this explanation of why we should allocate societal assets to improve opportunity for all?

## **8. Interdependence**

Lately there has been a lot of talk about how we are all connected in our country. Some people believe that we will only succeed when all parts of the nation are in good shape. Problems of poor health and education that happen in one part of the nation end up affecting us all. For this reason, moving ahead as a country requires promoting programs and improving services everywhere so that we all benefit from our interconnection. According to this view, all communities must be able to realize their potential and contribute to the country. Have you heard this explanation of why we should allocate societal assets to recognize the connections among communities?

## **9. Ingenuity/Solutions First**

Lately there has been a lot of talk about the need to use more innovation in our country. Some people believe that society is not applying enough American ingenuity to promoting programs and improving services that benefit communities. We can make progress toward solving health

and education problems if programs are evaluated and the effective ones are continued. For this reason, innovation should be a priority. According to this view, smart states have significantly made conditions better in some communities by finding innovative ways to improve and promote health and education programs. Have you heard this explanation of why we should allocate societal assets to inventing better solutions?

### **10. Fairness Across Places**

Lately there has been a lot of talk about fairness among different parts of our country. Some people believe that certain communities are struggling because they are not given a fair chance to do well. This is because programs and services are not fairly distributed across all communities. When some communities are denied the resources they need, they are unable to overcome problems like poor health and education. According to this view, we need to level the playing field so that every community has access to quality health and education programs and services. Have you heard this explanation of why we should allocate societal assets more fairly among communities?

## **APPENDIX B: EXPERIMENTAL TREATMENTS – STUDY II**

### **1. Control Group.**

### **2. Opportunity for All.**

Lately there has been a lot of talk about social conditions in America. Some people believe that African American communities still face many barriers to opportunity. They have more declining school budgets, restrictive lending practices, and fewer health professionals. The American Dream has always relied on creating an environment where everyone has an opportunity to achieve – including African Americans. According to this view, we need to devote more attention to ensuring that every community – including African American communities – provides an opportunity to succeed for all its residents. This will result in a better quality of life and future prosperity for the nation as a whole. Please tell us if you have heard this explanation of why we should allocate societal assets to improving conditions in African American communities.

### **3. Ingenuity/Solutions First.**

Lately there has been a lot of talk about social conditions in America. Some people believe that we as a society are not devoting enough attention to effective policies and programs that benefit African American communities. They maintain that effective solutions do exist. Progress can be made if programs are routinely evaluated and the good ones brought to scale in African American communities. According to this view, smart states have significantly improved conditions in some African American communities. They have done this by raising teacher quality, creating lending policies for buying homes, and increasing the number of health professionals. Please tell us if you have heard this explanation of why we should allocate societal assets to creating better solutions to problems affecting African American communities.

### **4. Prevention.**

Lately there has been a lot of talk about social conditions in America. Some people believe that preventing problems in African American communities is important because they will eventually become everyone's problems. Preventing declining school budgets, restrictive lending practices, and a scarcity of health professionals in African American communities will prevent worse problems in the future. According to this view, we can prevent further damage to our nation by devoting more resources to addressing these problems in African American communities before they become more serious. Please tell us if you have heard this explanation of why we should allocate societal assets to preventing problems affecting African American communities.

### **5. Fairness Across Groups.**

Lately there has been a lot of talk about social conditions in America. Some people believe that



many of the problems African Americans confront are the result of discriminatory practices that continue to unfairly target African Americans. Whether overtly or more subtly, African Americans are treated differently when it comes to such things as getting ahead in the classroom, applying for a home loan or being able to see a doctor. According to this view, we need to renew our commitment to a just society if we are to achieve real equality. We can do this by devoting more resources to policies that uncover discrimination and address fairness in our society. Please tell us if you have heard this explanation of why we should allocate societal assets in a manner that is fairer to African Americans.

#### **6. Fairness Across Places.**

Lately there has been a lot of talk about social conditions in America. Some people believe that America will only prosper when all American communities have a fair chance to achieve. The reality is that African American communities are not enjoying the same benefits as the rest of the nation. This happens because the efforts that enhance a community's well-being, like economic development, availability of health care programs, and opportunities for a good education, have not benefited African American communities. We need to make sure those parts of the country that are at a disadvantage get their fair share – including African American communities. Please tell us if you have heard this explanation of why we should allocate societal assets in a manner that is fairer to African American communities.

## **APPENDIX C: POLICY BATTERIES IN THE EXPERIMENTAL STUDIES**

### **Study I**

#### **Policies in the Child and Youth Development Battery**

1. Improve the quality of early care and education centers for racial/ethnic minority children by investing more resources in small class sizes, low teacher-child ratios, and highly skilled teachers.
2. Make high-quality early care and education programs more affordable for lower-income minority families by providing public subsidies.
3. Forgive federal loans for students who become trained and work for at least five years in child care and education programs in low-income minority areas.
4. Increase access to Early Head Start and other comprehensive, high-quality settings for minority infants and toddlers.
5. Require all parents that receive public subsidies for their children to attend preschool sign a pledge to read to their children at least 3 times per week.
6. Give publicly funded preschools in minority communities more authority to expel children who continuously disrupt the classroom until their parents complete a parental responsibility seminar.

#### **Policies in the Health Battery**

1. Increase recruitment and retention of underrepresented minorities in the health professions.
2. Improve funding for public hospitals and community health centers that provide comprehensive quality services to underserved minority populations.
3. Improve access to affordable health care for minorities by setting income-based standards for out-of-pocket health care costs (such as lower premiums, copayments and deductibles).
4. Fund community health assessments that measure and try to improve the effect of the “built environment” (such as the quality of housing or the availability of healthy foods) on people’s health in minority communities.
5. Allow insurers to adjust health insurance rates for minorities who have pre-existing conditions caused by unhealthy lifestyle choices.
6. Get health food manufacturers to provide coupons that can be distributed in minority communities to encourage families to buy healthier foods.

## Study II

### **Policies in the Child and Youth Development Battery**

1. Develop and fund programs that create a transition into school for poor children ages 3 to 6.
2. Make high-quality early care and education programs more broadly available and affordable for lower-income families through subsidies and sliding fee scales.
3. Increase K-12 school funding to rural school districts so that children in rural areas are provided with quality educational environments comparable to those children have in more densely populated areas.
4. Provide more fresh fruits and vegetables to schools by expanding federal fresh fruit and vegetable programs as well as by working through commodity food programs.
5. Fund community-based programs that encourage youth in low-income neighborhoods to serve as community leaders and social change agents.
6. Increase funding for initiatives at colleges and universities that increase opportunities for minority students to enter and complete their college degrees.
7. The Child Nutrition Act should be revised so that it updates and improves nutrition standards for schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program.

### **Policies in the Health Battery**

1. Require paid sick days be provided to all workers so they are not forced to choose between losing a day of work or not caring for themselves or a sick child.
2. Provide health care for all pregnant women and women in childbearing years.
3. Make these child health care services available for all children: well-child visits, oral health care, neonatal screening and follow-up, and vision and hearing screening.
4. Develop family resource centers in communities to encourage social networking, provide parenting education and make referrals for social services.

## ABOUT THE INSTITUTE

*The FrameWorks Institute* is an independent nonprofit research organization founded in 1999 to advance the nonprofit sector's communications capacity by identifying, translating and modeling relevant scholarly research for framing the public discourse about social problems. It has become known for its development of Strategic Frame Analysis™, which roots communications practice in the cognitive and social sciences. FrameWorks designs, commissions, manages and publishes multi-method, multi-disciplinary communications research to prepare nonprofit organizations to expand their constituency base, to build public will, and to further public understanding of specific social issues. In addition to working closely with scientists and social policy experts familiar with the specific issue, its work is informed by communications scholars and practitioners who are convened to discuss the research problem, and to work together in outlining potential strategies for advancing public understanding of remedial policies. The Institute publishes its research and recommendations at [www.frameworksinstitute.org](http://www.frameworksinstitute.org).

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<sup>1</sup> It is beyond the scope of this paper to delve into the parameters of a "progressive race policy agenda". Suffice it to say, however, it is fairly clear that it encompasses a range of structural reforms ranging from access to credit to more community health clinics.

<sup>2</sup> This work has been generously supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Mott Foundation, and the California Endowment.

<sup>3</sup> Iyengar, Shanto. (1991). *Is Anyone Responsible? How Television Frames Political Issues*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Gilliam, Jr., Frank D. and Susan Nall Bales. (2001). "Strategic Frame Analysis: Reframing America's Youth". Gilliam, Jr., Frank D. and Shanto Iyengar. (2000). "Prime Suspects: The Impact of Local Television News on Attitudes about Crime and Race," *American Journal of Political Science* 44, 3: 560-573. Stone, Deborah (2002). *Policy Paradox: The art of political decision making*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

<sup>4</sup> For a useful summary of the framing literature, see Reese et al., 2001.

<sup>5</sup> The theoretical foundations for these three levels of reasoning, see the following: (1) Schön, D. A., & Rein, M. (1994). *Frame reflection: Toward the resolution of intractable policy controversies*. New York: Basic Books. (2) Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

<sup>6</sup> Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change, 2004. *Structural Racism and Community Building*. Queenstown, MD: Aspen Institute, p.11.

<sup>7</sup> Grantmakers in the Arts. (2009). *Structural Racism: Arts and Social Justice Workshop*. Vol. 20, n. 1.

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<sup>8</sup> May 11, 2009 as quoted from the Suffolk county website:

<http://www.co.suffolk.ny.us/departments/healthservices/Press%20Releases/2009%20May/20090511%20REMINDER%20Suffolk%20County%20to%20Host%20a%20Documentary%20Film%20Screening%20and%20Workshop%20Series.aspx>.

<sup>9</sup> See for example, Gilliam, F. (2008). *Effects of explicitness in the framing of race: A FrameWorks research report*. Washington, DC: FrameWorks Institute.

<sup>10</sup> Martin Luther King, Jr. (1963) "I Have a Dream". Delivered 28 August 1963, at the Lincoln Memorial, Washington D.C.

<sup>11</sup> This quote is cited in a May 28 2009 posting on the Accuracy in Media website by Paul Brownfield commenting on Judge Sotomayor and the Ricci v. DeStefano firefighter's case (<http://www.aim.org/guest-column/toward-a-genuinely-color-blind-society>).

<sup>12</sup> The data in the survey are weighted to reflect the US population but the raw data characteristics are as follows: the median age of the sample was 46; 53 percent were women, 75 percent were white, 11 percent were black, and 7 percent were Hispanic. Respondents with a high school education represented 35 percent of the sample, those with some college 33 percent, and college graduates made up the remaining 32 percent. The sample included residents of all 50 states, with California, New York, Florida, Pennsylvania and Texas accounting for 34 percent of the sample. In terms of their political party affiliation, 33 percent identified as Democratic, 27 percent as Republican, and 27 percent as independent, 8 percent as other, and 4 percent as unsure.

<sup>13</sup> We specifically made use of the national Web-based surveys conducted by YouGov Polimetrix. YouGov Polimetrix requires its two million panelists to participate in weekly studies in exchange for free Internet access. To match those participants to our survey, a two-stage sampling procedure is utilized that creates a "matched" sample. That is, first a conventional random sample is drawn, and Polimetrix subsequently mirrors the conventional sample by selecting panelists who most closely resemble each member of the random sample.

<sup>14</sup> The data in this survey are weighted to reflect the US population as well but the raw data characteristics are as follows: the median age of the sample was 47; 53 percent were women, 73 percent were white, 11 percent were black, and 7 percent were Hispanic. Respondents with a high school education represented 33 percent of the sample, those with some college 35 percent, and college graduates made up the remaining 32 percent. The sample included residents of all 50 states, with California, New York, Florida, Pennsylvania and Texas accounting for 29 percent of the sample. In terms of their political party affiliation, 35 percent identified as Democratic, 31 percent as Republican, and 32 percent as independent, 3 percent as other, and 2 percent as unsure.

<sup>15</sup> Here, we should say that we choose these two domains because they represent two of the most compelling domains for the public or essentially, where we thought public support would be highest, thus making the best case possible for the argument made by advocates in the field.

<sup>16</sup> Readability statistics are important to evaluate because they measure how easily an adult can read and understand a text. We wanted to ensure that the treatment effects are not biased because the participants' inability to accurately understand the concepts in the treatments.

<sup>17</sup> Barack Obama speech made on March 18, 2008, "A More Perfect Union".

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.