Why Trump Won:
Outgroup Hostility as the New Ethnocentrism

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Donald Trump’s victory over Hillary Clinton in the 2016 presidential election has understandably sparked considerable debate among political analysts regarding the reason that Trump won. There is widespread agreement that an upsurge in support by working class white voters was critical to Trump’s improbable victory, especially in the rust belt states that comprised Clinton’s seemingly impenetrable “blue wall” of Democratic support (Edsall, 2016). Trump was in fact able to flip a large number of counties, including critical ones in key swing states (see Figure 1). Yet, there is much less agreement regarding the specific reasons why these voters were so supportive of Trump. Trump ran a campaign that fanned the flames of racial resentment and aligned himself with white nationalist groups such as the Alt-Right. There is debate as to whether Trump’s racialized appeals may have been more important than his promises to stand up for ordinary people by putting “America First” in order to “Make America Great Again.” This analysis seeks to contribute to that debate by suggesting a distinctive way of measuring racial resentment and showing that it was the primary force behind Trump’s victory.

Prominent recent studies already point to racial resentment and prejudice as the primary explanation for Trump’s unwavering support among many white voters (Sides, Vavarek and Tesler 2018); others go further to underscore how the white nationalist upsurge in support for Trump is part of broader wave of reactionary racism that is sweeping across the Western World, reflective of nativist anxieties over globalization, immigration and cultural diversification (Norris and Inglehart 2018). On the surface, explanations that emphasize the role of white hostility seems plausible for a variety of reasons. Trump’s campaign strategy, as reflected in his statements and policy proposals, appeared to be guided by the goal to both incite and court racially resentful whites. There is ample evidence that this strategy worked. White supremacist groups openly endorsed and campaigned for Trump in a way that was historically unprecedented. And it is well-known that education level, which proved to be the single strongest predictor of Trump’s support
among whites (see Figure 2), is associated with racial prejudice. Trump’s support among the less educated may have been driven in good part by race. But perhaps the strongest evidence of the important of racial attitudes in the 2016 election comes from analyses of surveys that find a strong association between support for Trump and hostility to various “outgroups” including blacks, Hispanics, immigrants and Muslims (Drutman 2017; Griffin and Teixeira 2017; Schaffner, MacWilliams and Nteta Sides 2017, Tesler 2016).

Yet, the study of “outgroup hostility” is only an emerging area of inquiry for understanding the effects of race in the current era. While it seems clear that racial hostility played a significant role in the 2016 election, we are still only beginning to understand the way that racial attitudes mattered, their relative impact compared to other conventional explanations for vote choice, and the extent to which the 2016 election represents a departure from patterns seen in other recent elections. In this paper, we address these questions by estimating the relationship between hostility toward racial and ethnic outgroups and presidential vote choice, using survey data from the last four presidential elections, 2004-2016.

Our paper make three important contributions to the study of racism in U.S. politics today. First, we provide further clarification regarding the specific types of outgroups attitudes that mattered in 2016. What distinguishes 2016 from previous elections is that in addition to resentment toward blacks, support for the Republican nominee was also significantly related to whites’ hostility toward immigrants (who are generally seen as Latinos) and Muslims. We show that these three sets of attitudes – resentment toward African Americans, Muslims and immigrants – represent a critical constellation of racialized anxieties affecting the vote choice in recent elections. They have become increasingly intertwined over the last 4 elections, contributing to a specific, politicized brand of ethnocentrism that we refer to as “outgroup hostility” (Kinder and
Outgroup hostility that includes resentment toward immigrants and Muslims as well as African Americans is the new, broader racialized resentment for the current political period.

Second, our analysis sheds new light on the critical debate surrounding the relative effects of racial attitudes, class and economic anxiety on Trump’s victory over Hillary Clinton (Fording and Schram 2017). Although education level and economic evaluations are strongly correlated with vote choice in bivariate analyses, once we control for our index of outgroup hostility these effects are significantly reduced or disappear entirely. This suggests that to the extent that education and economic anxiety mattered in 2016, their effects may have been exerted indirectly, through their effects on outgroup hostility. Outgroup hostility may well have served as a conduit for expressing economic anxiety among segments of the less educated.

Third and finally, we turn to the question of why outgroup hostility was so strongly predictive of support for Donald Trump in 2016 and why outgroup hostility was critical to Trump’s victory. Our analysis reveals that the strong effect of outgroup hostility in 2016 was not solely due to an increase in support for the Republican nominee among racial conservatives. Rather, consistent with recent elections it was due to the unprecedented polarization of Americans’ racial attitudes, reflecting what Tesler (2016) has called the “two sides of racialization.” While analysts continue to debate whether the public is increasingly polarized on ideological or partisan grounds (Kinder and Kalmoe 2017), we find that they are missing the point. It is racial polarization that has steadily increased in determining the vote choice in recent elections. Polarization about outgroups was crucial to Trump’s victory in 2016. In fact, we find that outgroup hostility was crucial in key swing state in mobilizing nonvoter from 2012 participate in the 2016 election and vote for Trump. We conclude with considerations about the role of increasing polarization in attitudes toward outgroups beyond the 2016 election. For now we focus on how 2016 was a polarizing election.
where white outgroup hostility proved crucial in mobilizing voters in key swing states and giving Trump his electoral victory.

**The Role of Racial Attitudes in Recent Presidential Elections**

A large literature has investigated the importance of whites’ racial attitudes in election outcomes. Most studies have focused on the effects of attitudes toward a single group, usually African Americans. Despite a marked decrease in prejudice toward racial and ethnic minorities since the 1970s, this literature overwhelmingly finds that prejudice has continued to play a central role in U.S. election outcomes (Hutchings and Valentino 2004). Specifically, scholars have focused on three related questions regarding how and why racial attitudes affect voter decision-making. Much of the early work on the effects of racial attitudes in American politics examined the effects of prejudice toward African Americans on the partisan realignment that occurred in the South in the aftermath of the Civil Rights Movement (Abramowitz 1991; Carmines and Stimson 1989; Black and Black 2002; Mayhew 2002; Valentino and Sears 2005). Although the findings from this literature are somewhat mixed, studies that utilize measures of racial resentment as a measure of racial prejudice find strong evidence for the role of race in the southern realignment (Kinder and Sanders 1996; Valentino and Sears 2005).

A second group of studies has focused on the effects of whites’ racial attitudes on support for black candidates. Experimental studies have often found that candidate race has an important effect on candidate evaluations (e.g. Terkildsen 1993; Philpot and Walton 2007), although it is difficult to disentangle the effects of candidate race from voter perceptions of candidate ideology (McDermott 1998; Sigelman, et al. 1995). Using survey data collected in the context of real elections, several studies have found that racial prejudice (variously measured) is negatively related to white support for black candidates (Berinsky 1999; Kinder and Sears 1981; Knuckey and Orey 2000). Scholarly interest in this question increased following the election of Barack
Obama in 2008. Several studies of support for Obama published since 2008 provide some of the strongest evidence to date that racial prejudice continues to have an important effect on whites’ voting behavior, especially when a black candidate is on the ticket (Pasek et al. 2014; Payne et al. 2009; Schaffner 2011; Tesler 2010).

Finally, a third strand of the literature has examined the effect of racial attitudes on candidate evaluations when both candidates are white, as was the case in 2016. Several studies have found that in contemporary U.S. politics, white voters will often reject explicit racial appeals due to the widespread belief in egalitarian norms. However, white candidates can successfully prime racial considerations by using less explicit, racial “code words” (Hurwitz and Peffley 2005; Mendleberg 2001; Valentino 1999; Valentino et al. 2002). Prior to 2016, the most notorious example of this strategy was the use of the “Willie Horton” ad by the Bush campaign to undermine support for Democrat Michael Dukakis (Mendelberg 1997). Such implicit racial appeals are successful in part because racial attitudes continue to be strongly related to a broad range of social policy issue positions, especially in the areas of welfare, crime, and immigration, among others (Gilens 1999; Kinder and Sanders 1996; Peffley and Hurwitz 2010). Thus, by simply branding oneself as the anti-welfare candidate, or by accusing one’s opponent of being “soft on crime,” a candidate can prime racial attitudes to become an important consideration in voters’ evaluations.

In addition to attitudes toward African Americans, scholars have discovered that attitudes toward Latino immigrants can also have important effects on political behavior. In recent years, Americans have become increasingly divided over immigration, leading to what Hajnal and Abrajamo (2015) refer to as a “white backlash” regarding immigration. This has been driven to some degree by the rapid growth in the immigrant population, as well as changes in the national origin of the immigrant population since the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act in 1965. Most significantly, of the immigrants who arrived after 1965, a majority (51 percent) have
come from Latin America (Pew Research Center 2015). Opposition to immigration among whites has been fueled by narratives that characterize Latino immigrants as a cultural, economic and security threat to white Americans. This has contributed to a public opinion backlash among whites (Brader, Valentino and Sudhay 2008) and has had profound political repercussions. Research by Hajnal and colleagues finds that Democrats have become increasingly identified as the “immigration party,” leading to a significant, rightward partisan shift among white voters, much like the racial realignment in the South during in the aftermath of the civil rights movement (Hajnal and Abrahamo 2015; Hajnal and Rivera 2014). Attitudes toward Latino immigrants have also had an impact on vote choice, leading to greater levels of support for McCain in 2008, and Republican congressional candidates in 2010.

In contrast to research that has focused on attitudes toward a single group (i.e., African Americans or Latino immigrants), Kinder and colleagues have argued that it is a general hostility toward minority “outgroups” – ethnocentrism – that has been the most politically potent “racial” attitude in recent elections (Kinder and Kam 2010; Kam and Kinder 2012; Kinder and Kalmoe 2017). Ethnocentrism is defined as a "deep-seated psychological predisposition that partitions the world into ingroups and outgroups—into ‘us’ and ‘them’” (Kam and Kinder 2012, 326). Theoretical accounts of enthnocentrism generally allow the specific groups that comprise one’s set of outgroups to vary, with the primary distinction between ingroups and outgroups being the contrast in “feelings of trust, familiarity and personal security” (Brewer and Campbell 1976; cited in Kinder and Kam 2009, 48). Kinder and Kam (2009) argue that in contemporary U.S. politics, race and ethnicity provide salient cues for defining outgroups, especially among whites. Based on a measure of enthnocentrism that combines attitudes toward blacks, Hispanics and Asians, they show that enthnocentrism had an important, negative effect on support for Barack Obama in 2008 (Kam and Kinder 2012; Kinder and Kam 2009). In addition, they find that enthnocentrism is an
important determinant of attitudes toward many politically relevant social policy issues (also see Soss, Fording and Schram 2011).

**Rethinking Ethnocentrism: Theorizing the Role of Outgroup Attitudes in Elections**

Did racial attitudes play a pivotal role in the 2016 election? And if so, how did “race” matter? The first and most important step in answering this question is to determine how racial attitudes should be conceptualized and measured. We agree with Kinder and colleagues that the most fruitful approach to understanding the role of racial prejudice in American politics today is to employ a broader conceptualization of racial animosity that goes beyond a focus on a single group to recognize that white voters may be motivated by a more generalized antipathy toward several racial or ethnic “outgroups” in their evaluations of candidates. For this reason, the ethnocentrism framework provides an attractive approach to understanding the relationship between “racial” attitudes and elections. However, due to its long history as a concept and its application across a variety of social behaviors spanning different social science disciplines, the concept of ethnocentrism is characterized by significant disagreement over its precise definition.

Perhaps the most important lack of agreement concerns the relative contributions of pro-ingroup attitudes (e.g., ingroup superiority, preference, loyalty) versus anti-outgroup attitudes (hostility, contempt) (Bizumic and Duckitt 2012; Raden 2003). As it was originally formulated, Sumner’s (1906) conceptualization of ethnocentrism assumed that these two dimensions were highly correlated. For decades afterward, this view dominated the measurement of ethnocentrism in the literature (Raden 2003). However, a large body of empirical research has found that ingroup favoritism and outgroup negativity are often weakly correlated (e.g., Brewer 1979; 1999; Hinkle and Brown, 1990; Kosterman and Feshbach, 1989). Therefore, a more prudent approach may be to separate attitudes toward one’s ingroup from outgroup evaluations in multivariate analyses of the effects of ethnocentrism (e.g., Pettigrew, et al. 1998). We follow this approach in our analyses.
below. Although we include measures of both ingroup and outgroup evaluations in our analyses, our theoretical argument as well as our empirical findings highlight the importance of outgroup negativity as the most important determinant of whites’ political behavior in recent U.S. elections.

Our focus on outgroup negativity is inspired by research on intergroup relations that highlights the role of emotion as a motivational force in politics. Research rooted in group appraisal theory has found that ingroup members can experience a wide range of negative emotions toward different outgroups, depending on their subjective appraisal of the relationship between the ingroup and the outgroup. These emotions can include anger, fear, disgust, pity, envy, or guilt, among others (Mackie, Devos and Smith 2000). Most importantly, this research finds that different emotions are associated with very different action tendencies (Cottrell and Neuberg 2005). Although political behavior has been found to be affected by several of these emotions, the research suggests that one of the most politically potent emotions is anger (Banks 2014). Generally, anger is triggered when an individual encounters a situation in which they feel that their goals or objectives are blocked, when they perceive they have been insulted, or when they perceive an injustice or violation of standards has occurred (Carver and Harmon-Jones, 2009). Studies have shown that when elicited by a political object or event, anger can have important consequences for political behavior. Anger leads to a greater reliance on motivated reasoning and a susceptibility to political misperceptions (Valentino et al. 2008; Weeks 2016), a greater reliance on stereotypes in political decision-making (Lerner, Li, Valdesolo, Kassam 2014), and a more punitive, retributive response as a solution (Nabi 2003; Goodall, Slater and Myers 2013). In addition, when combined with a strong sense of group identity, anger has been found to lead to an increase in political participation (Groenendyk and Banks 2014; Miller et al. 2009; Valentino 2011).

In addition to its direct effects, anger may also indirectly affect voter behavior due to its effect on the positive emotion of enthusiasm. As a response to threat, anger is most likely to be
experienced when the threat is attributable to a specific source, when one believes that they have control over the situation, and the threat can therefore be overcome (Groenendyk and Banks 2014; Mackuen, et al. 2010; Marcus, et al. 2000; Valentino, et al. 2011). Generally, enthusiasm is experienced when an individual perceives that their goals are being met (Brader 2005; Markus, et al. 2000). When ingroup members experience outgroup-induced anger, political candidates can therefore elicit enthusiasm from angry voters by signaling to them that they are both willing and capable of implementing punitive policies targeting the outgroup, thus eliminating the source of their anger. Like anger, the generation of enthusiasm has also been found to have important effects on political decision-making and mobilization in recent elections (Groenendyk and Banks 2014; Redlawsk et al. 2014; Valentino et al. 2011). For this reason, when the behavioral effects of voter anger and enthusiasm align in the same partisan direction in a political campaign, this can have a decisive effect on the outcome. As we demonstrate below, this is precisely what happened in 2016.

**Defining Racial Outgroups in Contemporary U.S. Politics**

Having settled upon white outgroup hostility as our object of focus, we are left with the task of defining and operationalizing “outgroup” in the context of contemporary U.S. politics. Theories of ethnocentrism make no assumptions regarding exactly how outgroups should be defined. Rather, the researcher must determine which groups comprise the relevant set of outgroups based on one or more ancillary theoretical assumptions. For example, in the first and perhaps most influential attempts to operationalize ethnocentrism, Adorno, et al. (1950) constructed a scale based on attitudes toward Jews, “Negroes” and Filipinos. While this may have been appropriate for 1950, obviously times have changed. In their more recent application of the ethnocentrism framework to American politics, Kinder and colleagues argue that racial and ethnic categories provide the most salient cues for the classification of outgroups. Based on this justification, Kinder
and Kam (2009) constructed their enthocentrism scale based on whites’ attitudes toward the three largest racial minority groups in the United States: blacks, Hispanics and Asians.

Our conceptualization of ethnocentrism maintains Kinder and Kam’s emphasis on racial and ethnic outgroups. However, we modify their theoretical criteria for identifying the most relevant outgroups to construct a measure of outgroup hostility that we believe is better suited for understanding its effects on contemporary political behavior. Specifically, we rely on two criteria that specify the conditions under which outgroup hostility may potentially become politically relevant. Based on research linking emotion to political behavior, the first criterion specifies that a significant percentage of ingroup members must display a high level of negative affect toward the outgroup. Our second criterion requires that there must be significant variation in the distribution of outgroup hostility among ingroup members. To understand the logic of the second criterion, consider the case where ingroup attitudes toward a specific outgroup are uniformly negative. When this is the case, we would expect rational political parties and candidates within both parties to support punitive policy positions that target the outgroup. This could undoubtedly have important policy effects detrimental to the outgroup, but in this case it is unlikely that outgroup hostility would have an important effect on voter decision-making due to the lack of constrast between party and candidate positions. When outgroup-induced anger is relatively polarized, only then does it become possible (and often likely) for this polarization to overlap with partisan cleavages, thus resulting in a significant contrast in the positions of parties and candidates in elections. Whether or not outgroup hostility maps onto partisan evaluations is highly contingent on what Kinder and Dale-Riddle (2012) refer to as the election frame – “the prominence and clarity of cues signaling that the candidates differ substantially in the social groups they favor and oppose” (20). When this happens, this creates the conditions under which outgroup hostility is most likely
to have important effects on both voter behavior, as when white partisan polarization increasingly parallels attitudes towards blacks, Latinos, immigrants and Muslims.

**Measuring Outgroup Hostility**

Kinder and Kam (2009) utilize two alternative strategies to measure ethnocentrism. Their primary measure of ethnocentrism is a Likert-type scale based on in-group members’ evaluations of outgroup members’ work ethic (lazy vs. hard-working), intelligence, and trustworthiness.¹ Using American National Election Studies (ANES) data, they construct a scale of ethnocentrism for whites by computing the average difference between the evaluation of these three traits for “whites” and three racial/ethnic outgroups – blacks, Hispanics and Asians. Kinder and Kam (2009) also construct an alternative indicator of ethnocentrism based on in-group affect toward outgroup members, using feeling thermometer scores. This affect-based indicator has been utilized in several other studies of whites’ racial attitudes, based on attitudes toward the same three outgroups – blacks, Hispanics and Asians (Banks 2014, 2016; Hajnal and Abrajamo 2015; Hajnal and Rivera 2014; Kam and Kinder 2012; Valentino, Brader and Jardina 2013).

We also rely on ANES data to measure outgroup hostility, as this provides the richest set of data on political attitudes as well as a variety of items measuring attitudes toward several racial and ethnic groups. However, our measurement strategy differs in two significant ways from the approaches described above. First, we do not utilize stereotype-based measures. Although outgroup stereotypes may often lead to the experience of negative emotions by ingroup members, this is not always be the case (Cottrell and Neuberg 2005). Thus, the effects of stereotypes on political behavior are less certain. Second, studies have shown that at least for blacks, measures of stereotypes may be plagued with measurement error among racial liberals due to social desirability

¹ In their analysis of the impact of ethnocentrism on the 2008 presidential election, Kam and Kinder (2012) construct their ethnocentrism scale utilizing just two of these traits – laziness and lack of intelligence – due to the fact that the trustworthiness item was not available in the 2008 ANES.
bias (Huddy and Feldman 2009; Sears and Savalei 2009; Iyengar, et al. 2009; Tesler 2016). Therefore, we rely on more direct indicators of ingroup affect toward outgroups to measure outgroup hostility. Second, we modify the specific set of outgroups that have been used to measure outgroup hostility in past research. Rather than blacks, Hispanics and Asians, we believe that in today’s political environment, the most politically relevant outgroups for white Americans are blacks, Latino immigrants, and Muslims.

Our rationale for choosing these three groups is based on both theoretical considerations and empirical evidence. We do not include Asians in our set of outgroups as there is little evidence to suggest that whites have a negative view of Asians. According to recent ANES data, whites rate Asians as more hardworking, less violent and more intelligent than whites. Thus, it would seem that Asians fail the most basic test of outgroup status because whites do not view them as inferior.² We largely agree with the choice of blacks and Hispanics as outgroups, but there is good reason to believe that the standard items used to measure affect toward these two groups – feeling thermometer scores – are often flawed as indicators of group affect.

The primary weakness of feeling thermometer scores is that much like stereotype measures, they are contaminated by measurement error due to egalitarian pressure to rate all groups equally (Tesler 2016). This is especially likely to be a problem when measuring global attitudes toward “blacks” and “Hispanics,” which are the terms used to identify these groups in the feeling thermometer items. Scores of studies have found that the expression of racial prejudice has become increasingly malleable and contextualized (Blair 2002; Dasgupta and Greenwald 2001; Wittenbrink, Judd and Park 2001). Whites are far more likely to hold negative attitudes toward blacks and Hispanics when they are seen as making political claims that threaten whites’ status

² Based on the 7-point stereotype scale for each trait, where 1=most positive and 7=most negative, the mean evaluations of “whites” vs. “Asians” among non-Hispanic whites were as follows: 2016: 3.19/2.80 (“violent”), 3.04/2.63 (“lazy”); 2012: 2.98/2.75 (“lazy”), 2.84/2.67 (“unintelligent”).
This is especially likely to be the case among whites who believe that blacks and Hispanics are to blame for their lack of socioeconomic progress, or that members of these groups violate important ingroup values. We address this problem by substituting the feeling thermometer scores for blacks and Hispanics with two related indicators of group prejudice that provide such cues. To measure anti-black hostility, we rely on the racial resentment scale developed by Kinder and Sanders (1996). Because the racial resentment scale more directly primes attitudes toward blacks in a political context, it is not surprising that it has consistently been found to be related to political behavior across a variety of contexts (Tesler 2016; Tesler and Sears 2010; Valentino and Sears 2005). And as recent research has shown, the effect of racial resentment on candidate evaluations appears to be mediated by partisan-directed anger (Redlawsk et al. 2014). As for Hispanics, research has found that negative attitudes toward Hispanics are most likely to exist when Hispanics are associated with images of Latino immigrants and “illegal” immigrants (Hartman, Newman and Bell 2013; Brader, Valentino and Suhay 2008), as the two are often conflated in the minds of many whites (Hajnal and Abrjamo 2015). Rather than the feeling thermometer for “Hispanics,” we follow Hajnal and Abrajamo (2015) and construct a multi-item scale measuring opposition to immigrants. The scale consists of the three items that tap attitudes toward immigrants and were included (in identical form) in the ANES from 2004-2016. Specifically, the three items include:

- The feeling thermometer score for “illegal immigrants,” reverse-scaled as a measure of hostility.
- A five-point scale of responses to the question “Do you think the number of immigrants from foreign countries who are permitted to come to the United States to live should be…(increased a lot - decreased a lot).
A four-point scale measuring responses to the question “How likely is it that recent immigration levels will take jobs away from people already here…” (very unlikely – very likely).

Factor analysis of these three items find that they strongly load on a single factor for each of the presidential election years, 2004-2016. We therefore created an immigrant opposition scale based on the results of the factor analysis. Although the “immigrants” referenced in these questions do not represent a specific racial or ethnic identity, the vast majority of whites associate illegal immigrants with Latino immigrants, or immigrants of some other nonwhite origin, thus justifying the inclusion of this scale as an indicator of racial outgroup affect.

Finally, we include attitudes toward one additional outgroup – Muslims. Although “Muslim” is a religious categorization, scholars have increasingly recognized the “racialization” of Muslims in the United States, especially those of Arab and South Asian descent and especially since 9/11 (Cainkar 2009). Muslims now occupy a subordinate position as an “ethnoracial” minority group in America’s racial order (Selod and Embrick 2013; Treitler 2015; Zopf 2017). Survey research has long documented the prevalence of negative stereotypes and hostility toward Muslims among whites, especially since 9/11 (Davis 2006; Kalkan, Layman and Uslaner 2009; Panagopoulos 2006; Sides and Gross 2013). Research has also shown that these negative attitudes toward Muslims, especially when primed by the mass media, can have important effects on approval of policies related to the War on Terror (Sides and Gross 2013), and policies that are likely to impose harm on Muslims in the U.S. or abroad (Nisbet, Ostman and Shanahan 2009; Saleem et al. 2017). Attitudes toward Muslims became politically activated beginning in 2008 due to the widespread belief among many conservative whites that Barack Obama was a Muslim

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3 The reliability (alpha) score for the three items was .70 in 2016, with an average inter-item correlation of .45. The results of our factor analyses underlying the construction of this scale are presented in our online appendix.
immigrant (Tesler and Sears 2010; Tesler 2016). And despite the fact that Obama was not on the
ticket in 2016, the political relevance of attitudes toward Muslims does not appear to have
subsided. Indeed, throughout the 2016 campaign, Donald Trump repeatedly targeted Muslims in
his campaign speeches, often characterizing “radical Islamic extremism” as a domestic security
threat. To measure hostility toward Muslims, we utilize the standard feeling thermometer item,
which we have reverse-scaled to create a measure of “coldness” toward Muslims.

**Outgroup Hostility and Ethnocentrism Compared**

In Figure 3, we present evidence that our preferred indicators of outgroup hostility look
much different than the three indicators used to construct the standard ethnocentrism scale. The
top panel of Figure 3 presents the distributions (based on kernel density estimation) for the four
thermometer-based indicators that serve as the basis for the ethnocentrism scale (Asians, Blacks,
Hispanics and Whites). Each indicator was reverse-scaled as a measure of hostility. The bottom
panel of the figure displays the distributions of our three preferred indicators – racial resentment
(rescaled 0-1), immigrant hostility (rescaled 0-1), and the feeling thermometer score for Muslims
(reverse scaled as hostility, rescaled 0-1). As seen in panel (A), the traditional indicators of
ethnocentrism display a heavily right-skewed distribution; only 10 percent of whites (or fewer in
the case of Asians) report a hostility score above the midpoint of the scale (50). The striking
similarity of the distributions also casts doubt on their validity as unique indicators of hostility. In
contrast, the distributions of our preferred indicators (panel B) are much more symmetric around
the center of the distribution and display far greater variation across the full range of the hostility
scale. The contrast across the two sets of indicators suggests one of two possibilities. The standard

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4 Following Kinder and Kam (2009), studies have operationalized the thermometer-based ethnocentrism scale for
whites by calculating the difference between each respondent’s score for whites and the score for Asians, blacks and
Hispanics. We present all four component measures separately in Figure 1 to highlight their similarity.

5 The mean score for whites for the “whites” hostility scale was 26.7 in 2016. The mean scores for Asians (31.5),
blacks (33.5), and Hispanics (33.6) all differed from the mean for whites by less than .4 standard deviations.
ethnocentrism items may suffer from significant measure error, perhaps due to social desirability effects. Alternatively, attitudes toward the specific outgroups that serve as the basis for the ethnocentrism measure (i.e. Asians, blacks, Hispanics) do not display enough variation to plausibly account for the conflict and political divisiveness witnessed in 2016.

In Table 1, we present additional evidence of the distinctiveness of the two sets of indicators for the presidential election years 2004-2016. In the top part of the table we report the results of an exploratory factor analysis which combined the three indicators of ethnocentrism (constructed as difference scores, white-Asian, white-black, white-Hispanic) and our three indicators of outgroup hostility. The analysis relies on ANES data, pooled over the four election samples. The factor analysis returned two significant factors. Our three preferred indicators of outgroup hostility consistently loaded on one factor, while the three indicators of ethnocentrism consistently loaded on a second, distinct factor. This analysis further supports the conclusion that the two sets of indicators represent concepts that are relatively distinct.

We created a final outgroup hostility scale based on the results of the pooled factor analysis (after dropping the three ethnocentrism indicators). We also created an ethnocentrism scale following the convention in the literature, which is to sum the ingroup-outgroup difference scores across the three outgroups (Banks 2014, 2016; Hajnal and Abrajamo 2015; Hajnal and Rivera 2014; Kam and Kinder 2012; Valentino, Brader and Jardina 2013). The bottom half of Table 1 presents the simple correlation between each scale and three external measures that have been theoretically linked to ethnocentrism, thus providing a test of construct validity of the outgroup hostility and ethnocentrism scales. The first of these three variables is a measure of “net anger” toward the Republican and Democratic presidential candidates. For each election, we constructed this measure by subtracting the degree of anger felt toward the Republican candidate from the degree of anger felt toward the Democratic candidate. We also constructed a measure of net
enthusiasm toward the presidential candidates in a similar fashion. Both indicators were scaled so that higher values indicate a more favorable emotional balance for the Republican candidate (i.e., greater anger toward the Democrat, greater enthusiasm toward the Republican). Based on literature connecting outgroup affect to political behavior (Banks 2014; Groenendyk and Banks 2014; Redlawsk et al. 2014; Valentino et al. 2011), we expect that the outgroup hostility and ethnocentrism scales should be positively correlated with these measures of partisan-directed emotion. The third measure included in the analysis is the standard authoritarianism scale, which has been found to be positively associated with ethnocentrism in many studies (Adorno, et al. 1950; Kinder and Kam 2009; Laythe, et al. 2001; Van Ijzendoorn 1989, 1990). For all three measures, we calculate the correlations with outgroup hostility and ethnocentrism separately for each election year, with the expectation that the strength of the correlations has increased since the election of Barack Obama in 2008 (Tesler and Sears 2010; Kam and Kinder 2012).

The pattern of correlations reveals three important sets of findings. First, the outgroup hostility and ethnocentrism scales are positively correlated with each of the three external measures, providing evidence supportive of measurement validity. Second, the correlation between each scale and the external measures has steadily increased over time, consistent with studies which find an increasing effect of racial attitudes (variously measured) since the 2008 election (Hajnal and Abrajamo 2015; Kinder and Kam 2010; Tesler and Sears 2010; Tesler 2016). Third, and perhaps most importantly for our analysis, the correlations are consistently stronger for the measure of outgroup hostility compared to the ethnocentrism scale, and in some cases the differences are quite large. Indeed, by 2016 the correlations for outgroup hostility were approximately twice the magnitude of the correlations for the ethnocentrism scale. In summary, this evidence suggests that while there may be some conceptual overlap between the two measures,
our measure of outgroup hostility may be more relevant to explaining political behavior in the current environment. We turn to this question in the remaining sections.

**Outgroup Hostility and Candidate Preference in 2016**

We begin our analysis of the political effects of outgroup hostility by examining its effect on presidential vote choice in 2016. A number of studies have found evidence that the component attitudes that comprise our measure of outgroup hostility – racial resentment, hostility toward immigrants and Muslims – had a significant effect on support for Trump in 2016 (Drutman 2017; Fording and Schram 2017; Griffin and Teixeira 2017; Schaffner, MacWilliams and Nteta Sides 2017, Tesler 2016). Therefore, we expect that our measure of outgroup hostility will be strongly related to Trump support. We are more interested in how the effect of outgroup hostility fares compared to other explanations offered to account for the political movement that was responsible for Trump’s victory. We are particularly interested in two alternative explanations that have been offered by election analysts.

Aside from racial resentment, the most widely accepted explanation for Trump’s victory is economic anxiety experienced by the white working class since the 2008 recession (Gest 2016, Cramer 2016, Hochschild 2016, and Devega 2017). Consistent with this explanation, whites with less than a college education overwhelmingly went for Trump, creating what Thomas Edsall (2016) called the “great democratic inversion.” Trump lost college-educated whites to Clinton but won the less-educated vote well beyond expectations for a Republican candidate. Rural areas, counties suffering economic decline, communities with older populations, and “landscapes of despair” where economic decline is correlated with increases in drug overdoses, all have been featured in research indicating that where people felt they were being left out or being passed over, there was a surge in the vote for Trump (Monnat 2016). To test the importance of economic anxiety
in the 2016, we include indicators of pocketbook and sociotropic economic evaluations, as well as indicators of education and family income.

In addition to economic anxiety, many analysts have argued that support for Donald Trump in 2016 was driven by the growing importance of racial consciousness among white voters. The idea that white racial identity influences voter behavior is not new, as it has been found to be a significant predictor of opposition to black candidates in biracial contests (Petrow, Transue and Vercellotti 2017). Although 2016 did not feature a black candidate on the ticket, white identity has emerged as a strong predictor of Trump support in post-election analyses, even after controlling for attitudes toward racial and ethnic minority groups and economic evaluations (Knowles and Tropp 2018; Sides, Tesler and Vavrek 2017; Yardina 2017). This finding is especially plausible given the visible support for Donald Trump among white nationalists during the election. We therefore test the hypothesis that white racial identity was positively related to Trump support, controlling for outgroup hostility and economic evaluations.

**Data and Estimation**

Our analysis of the 2016 election relies on ANES data. Although other national surveys focusing on the 2016 election are available, our choice of the ANES is based on the fact that it is the only survey that we are aware of that includes our outgroup hostility items for 2016, as well as for earlier years. The dependent variable is a dichotomous indicator of vote choice (0=Democrat, 1=Republican). In addition to our measure of outgroup hostility, we also include in our model Kinder and Kam’s (2010) measure of ethnocentrism (based on feeling thermometer difference scores). We include two types of measures of economic pessimism based on evaluations of the economy over the previous year. The first indicator asks respondents “Would you say that over the past year the nation's economy has gotten better, stayed about the same, or gotten worse?” The variable is coded as a 5-point scale, where 1=much better, 5=much worse. A similarly coded
indicator asks respondents to assess whether their personal financial situation has improved or gotten worse over the last year.\textsuperscript{6}

To measure white racial identity, we use four-item scale used by Sides, Tesler and Vevreck (2017) which relies of the following questions (asked of whites):

“How important is being white to your identity?”

“How important is it that whites work together to change laws that are unfair to whites?”

“How likely is it that many whites are unable to find a job because employers are hiring minorities instead?”

“How much discrimination is there in the United States today against each of the following groups?”

The responses to each question range from 1-5 and were scaled so that higher values indicate greater solidarity. The final index was computed by summing the four items. In addition to measures of outgroup hostility, economic pessimism and white identity, we also included several standard controls commonly used in studies of voting behavior: party identification (1-7, with 7 indicating strong Republican), ideology (1-7, with 7=strong conservative), warmth toward Christian fundamentalists (feeling thermometer), frequency of church attendance, union status, marital status, education, family income, gender and age.\textsuperscript{7}

The results for 2016 are displayed in the first three columns of Table 2. The first column (1) presents results for a model that is restricted to basic demographics. These results find that Trump was significantly more likely to receive votes from men, and from those who were married, had

\textsuperscript{6} The 2016 ANES also includes an item that asks respondents how much they “worry about their financial situation.” This measure may arguably be preferable due to the fact that it more directly taps anxiety experienced by economic stress. We tested this possibility by substituting the measure described in the text and represented in Table 2) with this alternative version of pocketbook economic evaluations. The coefficient was not only far from statistical significance for 2016, but the sign was opposite the hypothesized direction. Therefore, we include the measure based on a retrospective evaluation on the respondent’s personal finances in all of our analyses.

\textsuperscript{7} Details on all variables, including question wording and descriptive statistics, are included in our online appendix.
less education, came from a non-union household, and attended church more frequently. Column 2 provides results for a model that adds several attitudinal variables – party identification, ideology, warmth toward Christian fundamentalists, national and personal economic evaluations, the traditional measure of ethnocentrism and the white identity scale. Most of the attitudinal variables perform as expected. Consistent with explanations rooted in economic anxiety, support for Trump was significantly related to both measures of economic evaluations, as well as education level (both college and graduate). However, the results little support for the standard measure of ethnocentrism. Although the coefficient displays the hypothesized sign, it does not reach statistical significance.

Column 3 presents results for a model that adds our measure of outgroup hostility to model 2. The coefficient for outgroup hostility is positive, as expected, and highly significant. In addition, the inclusion of outgroup hostility results in two important changes to the estimates for the remaining variables. First, the coefficient for personal economic evaluations is reduced by approximately 30 percent and is no longer statistically significant. Second, the effect of education level is also reduced and is no longer statistically significant. Finally, our estimates for 2016 suggest that the effect of outgroup hostility was substantively large, compared to the effects of other independent variables. To facilitate this evaluation, we computed the discrete change in the predicted probability of Trump support given a mean-centered one standard deviation increase in the independent variable (a 0-1 change for a dichotomous variable) for each variable that was statistically significant in model 3. A one standard deviation increase in outgroup hostility is predicted to lead to an increase of .39 in the probability of a vote for Trump, compared to Clinton. This effect is approximately as large as the effect of party identification, larger than the effect of ideology, and twice as large as the effect of national economic evaluations. Clearly, outgroup hostility had an important effect on voter decisions in 2016.
**The Effects of Group-Specific Affect**

Although outgroup hostility was shown to have a strong effect on Trump support, due to the composite nature of this measure, one may legitimately question whether this effect is driven by hostility toward all three outgroups, or if attitudes toward one or two outgroups is driving the results. In addition, it is also possible that attitudes toward other outgroups not included in the model, including one or two of the specific components comprising the ethnocentrism scale, may also be related to Trump support. We tested this possibility by estimating a model that included attitudes toward specific (single) outgroups. These groups included the three components of our outgroup hostility scale (racial resentment, hostility toward immigrants and Muslims), the individual ethnocentrism items (feeling thermometer scores for Asians, blacks, and Hispanics, reverse-scaled), a feeling thermometer score for “Jews,” and the white racial identity scale. To estimate the effects of these outgroup items, we estimated a logit model that included the same control variables listed in Table 2. The estimated effects of the outgroup items, converted to odds ratios, are plotted in Figure 4.

Consistent with the results in Table 2, none of the ethnocentrism items have a significant effect on Trump support. The same is true for hostility toward Jews and the white identity scale. Yet, all three items that comprise the outgroup hostility scale have a positive and significant effect on support for Trump. These results confirm that the 2016 election was not driven by attitudes toward a single racial outgroup. Together with the factor analysis results presented in Table 1, these results suggest that racial attitudes in 2016 might best conceptualized as a new and potent ideology of hostility directed at blacks, immigrants and Muslims.

**Analysis of Candidate Feeling Thermometer Scores**

In addition to vote choice, we also estimated the effect of outgroup hostility, ethnocentrism and white identity on the feeling thermometer scores for Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton. In
addition to capturing the intensity of support for the two candidates, the advantage of this analysis is that it allows us to determine whether the effect of outgroup hostility is primarily driven by its effect on support for Trump, Clinton, or both. The results of these analyses are presented in the last three columns of Table 2. The first of the feeling thermometer models utilizes the difference in the feeling thermometer score (Trump minus Clinton) as the dependent variable. For the most part, the results for the variables of interest mirror those of the logit model of vote choice. However, the results for the individual candidate feeling thermometers provide at least one additional insight. White racial identity now has a positive, significant effect on support for Trump, lending some support to analysts who claim that Trump benefitted from a growing white nationalism that emerged in the aftermath of the 2008 recession. Yet, the effect is rather small in magnitude and is not statistically significant in the Clinton model. This explains why it fails to achieve significance in the vote choice model. Interestingly, outgroup hostility had only a slightly stronger effect on support for Trump than it had on support for Clinton. This suggests that in addition to Trump, affect toward Clinton also played an important role in the outcome of the election.

**Outgroup Hostility and the 2016 Election in Historical Perspective**

Thus far, we have found that outgroup hostility had a substantively significant effect on the 2016 election outcome. Was this effect unique to 2016, or was this simply a continuation of the racialized atmosphere brought on by the election of Barack Obama? To answer this question, we replicated the same model reported in Table 2 for the three previous presidential elections – 2004, 2008 and 2012. We are restricted to this time period due to the fact that the feeling thermometer item for Muslims was not included in the ANES prior to 2004. Yet, these three elections provide us with a useful set of comparison cases. The 2004 election serves as a good baseline, as this election occurred prior to the election of Obama, but well after attitudes toward Muslims were made politically salient due to the 9-11 attacks. Therefore, by comparing 2004 to 2008 and 2012
we can gain a better understanding of Obama’s impact on the politization of outgroup hostility. And by comparing 2008-2012 to 2016, we can determine whether and to what degree the racialized environment caused by Obama’s election spilled over to 2016.

We follow the same strategy as reflected in Table 2 by estimating models for vote choice as well as models for candidate feeling thermometer scores. The full results of our analyses for 2004-2012 are presented in our online appendix. Here we summarize the results for outgroup hostility. For vote choice, we find that outgroup hostility had a positive and highly significant effect on support for the Republican candidate in the previous two elections (2008 and 2012) when Barack Obama was on the ticket. The effect of outgroup hostility was insignificant in 2004, confirming prior research which finds that the salience of racial attitudes sharply increased with Barack Obama’s candidacy in 2008 (Tesler and Sears 2010; Tesler 2016). Most importantly for our purposes, the effect of outgroup hostility on vote choice was larger in 2016 than it was for either of the two elections won by Obama. The 2016 effect is approximately 50 percent larger than the 2012 effect, while the difference between the 2008 and 2016 effects are not nearly as large.

The effect of outgroup hostility across the four elections is graphically illustrated in Figure 5. The figure plots the predicted probability of a Republican vote across the range of outgroup hostility values, holding other variables at their mean. The figure confirms the similarity of the outgroup hostility effects in 2008 and 2016. While the strong effect seen for 2008 is expected, the fact that the 2016 effect was actually stronger is remarkable given the fact that the two major party candidates were both white. The figure also indicates that the effect of outgroup hostility in 2016 reflects what Tesler refers to as “the two sides of racialization” (2016). That is, the effect of outgroup hostility was driven just as much by support for the Democratic candidate among racial liberals as it was by support for the Republican candidate among racial conservatives. In other words, it may be more appropriate to characterize the effect of outgroup hostility in 2016 as due to
polarization, rather than (solely) as a surge of Republican support due to solely backlash by white racial conservatives.

As we did for 2016, we also estimated the effect of outgroup hostility on candidate-specific feeling thermometers for 2004-2012. While vote choice is what ultimately matters for the outcome of the election, the intensity of candidate support can play an important indirect role on the outcome through its effect on turnout, as well as the willingness among supporters to provide important campaign resources. Rather than assume linearity of the effect of outgroup hostility, we estimated the feeling thermometer models using a semiparametric estimation method (Robinson 1988) that places no restriction on the functional form of the relationship between outgroup hostility and candidate support. Importantly, the nonlinear specification allows us determine whether the stronger effect of outgroup hostility in 2016 is due to an especially positive reaction to Trump among racial conservatives, a particularly positive reaction to Clinton (i.e., a rejection of Trump) among racial liberals, or both. The use of a linear specification limits our ability to distinguish between these two sources of the outgroup hostility effect due to the fact that a change in the level of candidate support at either end of the distribution of outgroup hostility necessarily results in a change in the slope of relationship across the entire distribution. These results from the semiparametric regressions are graphically presented in Figure 6 and provide several key insights regarding the distinctiveness of 2016.

In panel (A), we see that relationship between outgroup hostility and support for Trump was far stronger than the effect seen for the three previous Republican nominees. As a result, despite the fact that Trump ran against a white candidate, he was the most preferred candidate among racial conservatives over the last four elections. But what is perhaps most interesting about the results for 2016 is how strongly Trump was rejected by racial liberals, once again illustrating the importance of the “two sides of racialization” (Tesler 2016). Panel (B) presents the relationship
between outgroup hostility and support for the last four Democratic presidential candidates. Outgroup hostility has the strongest effect on support for Obama during his first campaign in 2008. The slope of the relationship in 2016 was not all that different than it was in 2004 and 2012. What is most notable about 2016 is the relatively low position of the line along the Y-axis. As a result, among racial conservatives Clinton was considerably less popular than Kerry in 2004 and Obama in 2012, and about as unpopular as Obama in 2008. Yet, whereas Obama benefited from unusually strong support from racial liberals in both 2008 and 2012, Clinton did not. Instead, her level of support among racial liberals was about the same as Kerry in 2004, the last Democratic nominee to lose the general election.

**Trump and Outgroup Hostility Revisited: Candidate vs. Party Effects**

The results presented thus far suggest that much of the effect of outgroup hostility in 2016 was due to the polarizing effect of Donald Trump. However, it is not possible from these results to distinguish the unique effects of Donald Trump the candidate from the effects of Donald Trump, the Republican nominee. In other words, it is possible that the racial polarization underlying voters’ decisions in 2016 was simply another example of the “spillover of racialization” that began with the election of Obama in 2008. If this is the case, then the strong effect of outgroup hostility on support for Donald Trump’s might simply have been a coincidence. That is, the same effect might have been seen for virtually any Republican running against a candidate like Clinton, who was effectively framed as Obama’s hand-picked successor. We could easily test this possibility if we could comparing the relationship between outgroup hostility and support for Trump and Clinton to its effect on support for their primary challengers prior to the completion of the nomination process.

Fortunately, data exist to conduct this analysis. In January 2016, the ANES conducted a pilot study utilizing a national sample, similar to the ANES Time Series studies. Nearly all of the same
items exist in the 2016 pilot, allowing us to replicate our analyses of the feeling thermometer scores for all of the major candidates in the primary. Most importantly, the items used to construct our measures of outgroup hostility and white racial identity are identical to those used for our analyses of the general election. There is no feeling thermometer item for Asians; therefore we included the individual feeling thermometer scores for blacks and Hispanics (measured as difference scores). Finally, there was no item included in the survey to measure pocketbook evaluations. Therefore, in addition to the standard retrospective evaluation item we included an item measuring prospective evaluations of the economy (over the next 12 months). The economic items are scaled such that higher values indicate greater pessimism.

The results of our analyses for the key explanatory variables are presented in Table 3. The cell entries in Table 3 are X-standardized effect. That is, they represent the expected change in candidate warmth given a one standard deviation increase in the explanatory variable. All models include a full set of control variables (see Table 2 and note 8, as well as our online appendix). The results for outgroup hostility clearly indicate that the unusually strong effect of outgroup hostility in 2016 was due to Donald Trump and not Republican candidates, generally. Outgroup hostility had a statistically significant effect on support for Trump, as well as for Fiorina, Carson and Cruz. However, the effect for Trump was 2-3 times stronger than the effect seen for any of the other Republican candidates. The effect of outgroup hostility on Trump support was also significantly larger than the effects seen for the Democratic candidates, and even stronger than the effect on affect toward President Obama. Surprisingly, outgroup hostility had no significant effect on support for Clinton. We return to this finding in our graphical analysis below.

There were two additional differences between the two datasets that is relevant to our analysis. First, the pilot survey did not include a feeling thermometer item for Christian fundamentalists. As the purpose of this indicator was to control for positions on morality-based policies such as LGBT rights and abortion, we therefore include an item identifying respondents who self-identify as “born again.” Second, the survey did not identify union households. Therefore, we are unable to control for this variable. The full results for this analysis are presented in our online appendix.
The effect of white racial identity was also statistically significant for Trump, but not for any of the other candidates. Yet, the standardized effect was approximately one-third of the effect of outgroup hostility. This suggests that while ingroup affect may have been partly responsible for Trump’s success, it was far less important than outgroup attitudes. The effects of economic pessimism are insignificant for all of the Republican candidates, but are statistically significant for each of the three Democratic figures. This suggests that at least in the early part primary season, the effects of economic attitudes were largely being driven by evaluations of the incumbent party.

In addition to the OLS models reflected in Table 3, we also estimated semiparametric models to further explore the effects of outgroup hostility on candidate warmth. Panel (A) presents the relationship between outgroup hostility and support for the major Republican primary candidates. The results could not be more definitive and further underscore the uniqueness of Trump’s candidacy. As with the results for the general election (Figure 4), these results also highlight the importance of the two sides of racialization. That is, Trump was the most negatively viewed candidate among racial liberals, but he was the most preferred candidate among racial conservatives. However, in this analysis it is the strong preference for Trump among racial conservatives that stands out.

Panel (B) of Figure 7 displays the relationship between outgroup hostility and support for Clinton, Bernie Sanders, and President Obama. Even though Obama was not on the ticket, we include him in our analysis as a baseline for comparison. The results are somewhat surprising. There is virtually no relationship between outgroup hostility and support for Hillary Clinton, yet there is a modestly strong relationship between outgroup hostility and support for both Sanders and Obama. Interestingly, Clinton is just as unpopular among racial conservatives as Sanders and Obama. The lack of a relationship with outgroup hostility for Clinton thus appears to be due to the low level of enthusiasm for her candidacy among racial liberals. By comparing the effect of
outgroup hostility for Clinton in Figure 7 to the effect illustrated in Figure 6, we can see that by the time of the general election in November, Clinton was able to increase her support among racial liberals. However, her level of opposition among racial conservatives also increased sharply, undoubtedly due in part to a combination of Trump’s characterization of Clinton as Obama’s hand-picked successor, as well as Clinton’s vocal opposition to Trump’s racially conservative agenda.

**Polarization vs. Backlash**

Our analysis points to the growing polarization of attitudes toward outgroups (i.e., African Americans, Latino immigrants and Muslims). Our findings suggest that the 2016 election was significantly affected by polarization on this scale more so than simply white backlash against these groups. The data indicate that whites are becoming more polarized in the attitudes toward outgroups and that significantly affected people’s votes against as well as for Trump.

Figure 8 indicates a growing gap for whites on the outgroup hostility scale on a partisan basis. Not only are Republicans becoming more hostile toward the outgroups, Democrats are decreasingly inclined to express such hostility. Figure 9 shows that white attitudes toward outgroups as measured by our scale have become increasingly polarized over time for the 2004-2016 period. The 2016 election had the widest polarization on our outgroup hostility scale in good part because of an increase in whites expressing low levels of outgroup hostility. The growing polarization of whites in their attitudes to outgroups is due both to increased hostility by some and decreased hostility by others. This growing gap breaks down along partisan lines and helped make the 2016 election a polarizing one on this crucial issue.

**Mobilizing vs. Switching as the Key to Flipping Swing States**

Our findings so far support the hypothesis that Trump was able to garner significant support among in 2016 by exploiting the increased polarization of white attitudes toward outgroups hostility. A more specific question is whether this enabled him to increase support in key swing
states and if he did was it due to getting people to switch from having voted for Obama in 2012 or was this increased support due to mobilizing disaffected voters who had not voted in 2012. Switching suggests that Trump was able to appeal to whites who were not necessarily adverse to voting for Democrats like Obama. Switching therefore implies a class-based vote where whites concerned about economic issues saw something in Trump that was not inconsistent with the attitudes towards Obama. Mobilizing however is more consistent with the idea that Trump appealed to disaffected voters who had not voted at all in 2012 but now were responsive to Trump’s distinctive candidacy including his racialized appeals. While mobilizing versus switching does not map entirely with race versus class as the prime factor in Trump attracting support beyond the Republican base, there is enough of an overlap to investigat this issue as related to the question of the role of race over class in affecting support for Trump.

The issue of mobilizing over switching also is pertinent to understanding how Trump won key battleground states that could swing toward him. To better understand how this happened, we separated our sample into two groups – respondents in 11 key swing states (as identified by Politico in June 2016) and respondents in the remaining, less competitive states. We then estimated the effect of outgroup hostility on voter turnout in 2012 and 2016 for each sample. Figure 10 displays the predicted effect of outgroup hostility on voter turnout in noncompetitive states in 2012 and 2016. The figure shows that Whites turned out at a higher rate in 2016 than 2012 across the full range of the outgroup hostility scale. However, we can see that the increase in turnout in 2016 was significantly higher among racial liberals, compared to racial conservatives. Thus, in the noncompetitive states racial liberals were more effectively mobilized than racial conservatives, compared to 2012. This obviously did little to help Clinton, other than to pad her popular vote total, since these states were never in play.
Figure 11 displays the same relationships between outgroup hostility and voter turnout among voters in the 11 swing states. However, in contrast to Figure 10, the figure displays the opposite pattern. That is, compared to 2012, racial conservatives in competitive states voted at a significantly higher rate than racial liberals. While it is not clear why this pattern exists, this clearly suggests that outgroup hostility had a decisive effect on the 2016 election. Not only were racial conservative more likely to prefer Trump than previous Republican nominees, they were also more likely to turn out in key battleground states, where their votes mattered most.

These analyses suggest that many people who voted for Trump in 2016 may not have voted in 2016. However, it is also likely that some voters who supported Obama in 2012 “switched” to Trump in 2016. Based on 2016 ANES, voter-validated data, we find that Trump got more support from mobilizing people who did not vote in 2012 than he got from people who switched from voting for Obama in 2012. Nationally, we estimate that sixty-nine percent of Trump’s support came from people who voted for Romney in 2012, 10 percent came from people who voted for Obama while 21 percent came from people who did not vote in 2012. In other words, Trump got twice as many newly mobilized voters as switchers. Further, in additional multivariate models of voter turnout, we find that a primary predictor of whether a 2012 non-voter voted for Trump in 2016 was the level of outgroup hostility. We find this also to be true for switchers. The best predictor of whether either a 2012 non-voter or a 2012 Obama voter would vote for Trump in 2016 was the level of outgroup hostility. Our findings suggest that Trump benefited more from mobilizing nonvoters than getting Obama supporters to switch to voting for Trump in 2016; however in either case of switching or mobilizing the key factor was a high level of outgroup hostility. Outgroup hostility was critical mobilizing white voters in key battleground states, getting

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whites to switch away from voting for a Democrat and most critically in mobilizing 2012 non-voters to come out and vote for Trump in 2016.

Conclusion

Outgroup hostility has emerged as a key factor in affecting voting behavior. It proved crucial in helping Donald Trump become the 45th President of the United States. It reflects how racism is changing in an era of globalization. Now racial resentment as a factor affecting voter behavior is most effectively manifested as outgroup hostility toward Muslims and Latino immigrants was well as African Americans. Outgroup hostility is the new ethnocentrism underscoring how racial resentment has morphed to be a more generalized antipathy toward African Americans, Latino immigrants and Muslims.

Our measure of outgroup hostility updates who are the outgroups and how to best measure hostility towards them. Outgroup hostility is a better indicator of ethnocentrism compared to previous analyses. Our revision not only defines differently who are the key outgroups, we also improve on the measurement outgroup hostility. Our revised measure of outgroup hostility points to a process of racialization of immigrants and Muslims. Outgroup hostility broadens the targets of racial resentment and makes it less focused white antipathy toward blacks. This more generalized kind of outgroup hostility is what drove many white voters to cast their ballots for Trump.

We find that there has been an ongoing increase in polarization in attitudes toward outgroups as we have defined them. The 2016 election was about more than just white backlash. It reflected an ongoing polarization over attitudes towards outgroups. The parties intensified their differences in attitudes towards outgroups. And it was that growing gap that significantly affected the vote choice.
Outgroup hostility was more important for Trump’s victory than economic considerations. White economic anxiety post the Great Recession was filtered through outgroup hostility when it came to determining the 2016 vote choice. Economic anxiety is a significant factor in predicting the vote choice until our measure of outgroup hostility is added to our model. Outgroup hostility absorbs the effects of economic anxiety suggesting such economic considerations are filtered through outgroup hostility and that economic anxiety is expressed via the scapegoating of outgroups who are seen as a threat to white Americans, economically as well as in other ways.

Outgroup hostility proved to be critical not just in building a base of support for the Trump candidacy; it also proved to be crucial in flipping swing states toward Trump. Trump was able to increase turnout in key swing states among people with high levels of outgroup hostility. He was able to mobilize 2012 non-voters on the basis of outgroup hostility. Mobilizing non-voters was more important to the Trump coalition than garnering the votes of switchers who had voted Democratic in 2012.

Outgroup hostility is indicative of how racial resentment is changing in the current political climate. It is a new form of ethnocentrism, centered on hostility toward Latino immigrants and Muslims as well as African Americans. White attitudes about outgroups are increasingly polarized. The 2016 election more about polarization over outgroups than simply white backlash. Outgroup hostility was critical in Trump 2016 electoral victory. It was more important than economic considerations. It filtered economic anxieties by providing target groups that could serve as scapegoats for economic and other types of anxieties in an age of globalization. It mobilized the disaffected especially in swing states. It was therefore crucial in making Trump President. It is likely to continue to be an important fulcrum for political division continuing beyond Trump’s presidency however long it lasts.
Table 1. Factor Analysis Results for Alternative Outgroup Hostility Items, Presidential Election Years (2004-2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affect Items</th>
<th>Outgroup Hostility</th>
<th>Ethnocentrism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Racial Resentment</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposition to Immigrants Scale</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostility Toward Muslims (FT)</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asians (FT Difference)</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacks (FT Difference)</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanics (FT Difference)</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Proportion of Variance        | .38               | .44           |
| Sample Size (2004-2016)       | 8,035             |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlation with Net Anger Toward Democratic Presidential Candidate</th>
<th>Outgroup Hostility Scale</th>
<th>Ethnocentrism Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004 (N=678)</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008 (N=1,154)</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 (N=3,817)</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016 (N=2,524)</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlation with Net Enthusiasm Toward Republican Presidential Candidate</th>
<th>Outgroup Hostility Scale</th>
<th>Ethnocentrism Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004 (N=672)</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008 (N=1,147)</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 (N=3,789)</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016 (N=2,521)</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlation with Authoritarianism Scale</th>
<th>Outgroup Hostility Scale</th>
<th>Ethnocentrism Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004 (N=683)</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008 (N=1,165)</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 (N=3,832)</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016 (N=2,513)</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The sample for this analysis includes white (non-Hispanic) voters and is taken from the American National Election Study. Columns 1 and 2 report factor loadings for the first two factors that returned an Eigen-value >1.0. The factor analysis was conducted using principal-components factors and oblique rotation to allow for correlated factors. All correlations reported in the table are statistically significant at the .05 level.
Table 2. Regression Results for Effect of Outgroup Hostility on Presidential Support, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>Vote for Trump in 2016</th>
<th>Warmth Toward Candidate, 2016 (Feeling Thermometer)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outgroup Hostility</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnocentrism</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>2.779 (1.35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Racial Identity</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>0.331 (0.55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party Identification</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>0.803*** (1.38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideological Identification</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>0.903*** (7.84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Evaluation (National)</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>0.949*** (6.34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Evaluation (Personal)</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>0.301* (2.30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Fundamentals (warmth)</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>0.018*** (4.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Attendance (Baseline=Never)</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few times per year</td>
<td>0.694*** (4.74)</td>
<td>0.042 (0.14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 times per month</td>
<td>1.166*** (6.17)</td>
<td>0.100 (0.27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almost every week</td>
<td>0.919*** (5.44)</td>
<td>-0.285 (-0.77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every week</td>
<td>1.701*** (10.24)</td>
<td>0.310 (0.89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union Household</td>
<td>-0.347* (-2.38)</td>
<td>0.393 (1.39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education (Baseline=H.S. or less)</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Degree</td>
<td>-0.640*** (-5.01)</td>
<td>-0.414 (-1.54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Degree</td>
<td>-1.454*** (-9.64)</td>
<td>-0.987*** (-2.97)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Income</td>
<td>-0.0131 (-1.57)</td>
<td>-0.025 (-1.45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>0.340*** (2.79)</td>
<td>0.191 (0.75)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.00381 (1.19)</td>
<td>-0.007 (-1.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>-0.329*** (-2.98)</td>
<td>-0.308 (-1.32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.466 (1.55)</td>
<td>-10.43*** (-10.40)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Cell entries are logit coefficients (for vote choice) and OLS unstandardized slope coefficients (for feeling thermometer regressions), with t statistics in parentheses. For model 3 (2016), the column labeled △ Pr lists the discrete change in the predicted probability for a one standard deviation increase (centered around the mean) in each independent variable.  
* p<0.05  ** p<0.01  *** p<0.001
Table 3. Regression Results for the Effect of Selected Explanatory Variables on Candidate Warmth During the 2016 Primary Elections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Outgroup</th>
<th>White Identity</th>
<th>Hostility Toward Blacks</th>
<th>Hostility Toward Hispanics</th>
<th>Economic Evaluation (Past)</th>
<th>Economic Evaluation (Future)</th>
<th>Ideology</th>
<th>Party ID</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Republicans</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trump</td>
<td>10.985***</td>
<td>3.578*</td>
<td>-0.084</td>
<td>0.116</td>
<td>1.471</td>
<td>0.209</td>
<td>1.585</td>
<td>4.339***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cruz</td>
<td>3.386*</td>
<td>1.359</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>-0.174*</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.408</td>
<td>5.438***</td>
<td>3.472***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bush</td>
<td>0.609</td>
<td>-1.078</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-0.097</td>
<td>-2.494</td>
<td>-0.537</td>
<td>-0.483</td>
<td>4.314***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubio</td>
<td>1.966</td>
<td>1.149</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>-0.168*</td>
<td>-0.171</td>
<td>0.242</td>
<td>2.417*</td>
<td>4.246***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carson</td>
<td>3.622*</td>
<td>-1.027</td>
<td>-0.015</td>
<td>-0.213**</td>
<td>1.664</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>6.212***</td>
<td>2.282**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiorina</td>
<td>4.063**</td>
<td>-1.079</td>
<td>-0.025</td>
<td>-0.162*</td>
<td>-0.451</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>3.690***</td>
<td>2.895***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Democrats</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinton</td>
<td>-3.194</td>
<td>0.501</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.039</td>
<td>-6.486***</td>
<td>-3.099*</td>
<td>-5.194***</td>
<td>-4.587***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanders</td>
<td>-8.091***</td>
<td>-0.228</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>-0.064</td>
<td>-1.302</td>
<td>-3.257**</td>
<td>-6.676***</td>
<td>-1.965**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obama</td>
<td>-6.580***</td>
<td>1.003</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.037</td>
<td>-8.630***</td>
<td>-1.622</td>
<td>-6.009***</td>
<td>-4.522***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The cell entries contain X-standardized effect of each column variable on the candidate-specific feeling thermometer (i.e. the expected change in candidate warm given a one standard deviation increase in the column variable). The analysis was estimated using OLS regression, for white respondents only. Source: 2016 ANES Pilot Study. * p<0.05  ** p<0.01.  *** p<0.001
### Swing States in 2016

(Politico, June 2016)

- Colorado
- Florida
- Iowa
- Michigan
- New Hampshire
- North Carolina
- Ohio
- Pennsylvania
- Nevada
- Virginia
- Wisconsin
Figure 1. Counties that Voted Trump 2016 and Obama 2012

Here are all the counties Obama won in 2012. Trump took a ton.

In Wisconsin, Iowa, Ohio, and Michigan, Trump not only improved on Romney’s performance, but he snatched back several counties that had gone blue in 2012.

Trump’s margin of victory over Clinton

-15 pt -10 -5 -2.5 0 2.5 5 10 15

JEFF GUO / THE WASHINGTON POST
SOURCE: AP. Counties with fewer than 90% of precincts reporting excluded.
Figure 2. White Vote for Trump by Education and Income

Percent of white voters who supported Donald Trump

Data from American National Election Study. Figure created by Nicholas Carnes and Noam Lupu.
Figure 3. Distribution of Alternative Indicators of White Hostility Toward Outgroups in 2016

(A) Feeling Thermometer Scores for Asians, Blacks, Hispanics and Whites

Source: ANES 2016 Time Series Study (white respondents only). Feeling thermometer scores are reverse-scaled as measures of hostility.

(B) Hostility Toward Blacks, Immigrants and Muslims

Source: ANES 2016 Time Series Study (white respondents only). Muslim feeling thermometer is reverse-scaled as a measure of hostility.
Figure 4. Effects of Individual Outgroup Hostility and Ethnocentrism Items on Vote for Donald Trump in 2016

Note: The figure presents estimated odds ratios and 95 percent confidence bands for the effects of outgroup hostility items (racial resentment, immigrants scale, hostility toward Muslims) and ethnocentrism items (hostility toward Asians, Blacks and Hispanics), based on a logit regression model which includes the same set of control variables as model 3, Table 1. Indicators labeled “(FT)” are based on feeling thermometer items, reverse-scaled as measures of hostility. The sample includes whites only from the 2016 ANES.
Figure 5. Predicted Probability of Vote for Republican Presidential Candidate by Outgroup Hostility, 2004-2016

Note: Figure 6 presents the predicted probability of a Republican vote, excluding votes for independent or minor party candidates (i.e. 1=Republican, 0=Democrat). The predicted probabilities were calculated based on separate models for each presidential election year, 2004-2016. Control variables included the full set of control variables listed in Table 2 (model 3). Predicted probabilities were calculated setting other variables at their mean values. The full results are presented in our Online Appendix.
Figure 6. Predicted Support for Republican and Democratic Presidential Candidates by Outgroup Hostility 2004-2016

(A) Predicted Warmth Toward Republican Candidate

(B) Predicted Warmth Toward Democratic Candidate

Note: Figure 3 presents predicted “warmth” toward the Republican (3-A) and Democratic (3-B) presidential candidates. These values were calculated for each election year based on a semiparametric regression of candidate warmth on the full set of independent variables used for the vote choice analyses (see Table 2). These regressions were estimated in Stata 14.0 using the semipar command (with Outgroup Hostility specified as the nonparametric portion of the model). The full results are presented in our Online Appendix.
Figure 7. Predicted Support for Presidential Primary Candidates by Outgroup Hostility, 2016

(A) Predicted Warmth Toward Republican Candidate
(B) Predicted Warmth Toward Democratic Candidate

Note: Figure 7 presents predicted “warmth” toward the Republican (3-A) and Democratic (3-B) presidential primary candidates, estimated using the 2016 ANES Pilot Study (January 2016). These values were calculated for each election year based on a semiparametric regression of candidate warmth on party ID, ideology, an indicator of culture outgroup hostility (gays and lesbians, transsexuals, feminists), education, family income, marital status, two indicators of economic evaluations, age, church attendance, and gender. These regressions were estimated in Stata 14.0 using the semipar command (with Outgroup Hostility specified as the nonparametric portion of the model). The full results are presented in our Online Appendix.
Figure 8. Outgroup Hostility by Party Identification, 2004-2016

Figure 9. Distribution of Outgroup Hostility, 2004-2016 (Whites Only)

Figure 10. Turnout in Noncompetitive States by Outgroup Hostility, 2012-2016

Source: ANES Time Series Study, 2016. Predicted probabilities are generated from a logistic regression of voter turnout in 2012 and 2016 on outgroup hostility, controlling for the full set of controls reflected in Table 2.
Figure 11. Turnout in Swing States by Outgroup Hostility, 2012-2016

Source: ANES Time Series Study, 2016. Predicted probabilities are generated from a logistic regression of voter turnout in 2012 and 2016 on outgroup hostility, controlling for the full set of controls reflected in Table 2.