THE TEA PARTY IN THE AGE OF OBAMA: MAINSTREAM CONSERVATISM OR OUT-GROUP ANXIETY?

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ABSTRACT

With its preference for small government and fiscal responsibility, the Tea Party movement claims to be conservative. Yet, their tactics and rhetoric belie this claim. The shrill attacks against blacks, illegal immigrants, and gay rights are all consistent with conservatism, but suggesting that the president is a socialist bent on ruining the country, is beyond politics. This paper shows that Richard Hofstadter's thesis about the "paranoid style" of American politics helps characterize the Tea Party's pseudo-conservatism. Through a comprehensive analysis of qualitative interviews, content analysis and public opinion data, we find that Tea Party sympathizers are not mainstream conservatives, but rather, they hold a strong sense of out-group anxiety and a concern over the social and demographic changes in America.

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INTRODUCTION

In 2010 the Tea Party boasted major electoral wins in the U.S. House and Senate defeating both incumbent Republican and Democratic lawmakers alike. These results should come as no great surprise, given the widespread support the movement enjoys. The Tea Party claims a core membership of approximately 300,000 who have signed up to be members of at least one of the national Tea Party groups: 1776 Tea Party, ResistNet (Patriot Action network), Tea Party Express, Tea Party Nation, and Tea Party Patriots. Beyond this core group are two additional constituencies. One consists of the people who have attended at least one rally, donated, or purchased Tea Party literature: an estimated 3 million people.[2] Another layer consists of Tea Party sympathizers, people who approve of the Tea Party. According to data from a 2010 University of Washington study, 27% of the adult population, or 63 million Americans, strongly approve of the Tea Party.[3]

Given this level of support, what does the Tea Party want? From at least one account, the Tea Party believes in a reduced role for the federal government, more fiscal responsibility, lower taxes, a free market, and a commitment to states' rights.[4] Indeed, these are core conservative, even libertarian, principles, very much in keeping with traditional American political culture.[5] What's more, commitment to these values is widely considered patriotic. Yet, time after time, supporters of the Tea Party seem to be united by something beyond a belief in limited government. Specifically, Tea Party sympathizers appear united in their fervent disdain for President Barrack Obama, and seem to be squarely opposed to any policies that might benefit minority groups.

In this article, we take up the question of the Tea Party's emergence and common Tea Party attitudes in the age of Obama. We argue that the Tea Party represents a right-wing movement distinct from mainstream conservatism, that has reacted with great anxiety to the social and demographic changes in America over the past few decades. Through a comprehensive review of original data, including a series of qualitative interviews with Tea Party supporters, and extensive content analysis of official Tea Party websites, we show that Tea Party sympathizers hold strong out-group resentment, in particular towards Blacks, immigrants, and gays and lesbians. We then assess quantitative survey data to determine if the findings can be generalized to the population of Tea Party sympathizers at large.

Contemporary observers and Tea Party events gesture towards concerns that transcend limited government and fiscal conservatism. Recently, for instance, the NAACP has charged the Tea Party with promoting racism, and Tea Party Express leader Mark Williams has been chastised by other Tea Party leaders for penning an overtly racist letter

poking fun at the NAACP. Their activists were a driving force behind the Arizona state statute SB1070, which many said would result in the targeting of Latinos for racial profiling. They may be best known for their many caricatures of President Obama, often depicting him as a primate, African "witch doctor," and modern-day Hitler, among other things. Consider, moreover, the constant references to President Obama as a socialist. In fact, a recent study issued by Democracy Corps reports that 90% of Tea Party supporters believe President Obama to be a socialist; as such, they view him as the "defining and motivating threat to the country and its well-being."[6] Perhaps the fact that the movement harbors members of white nationalist groups helps to explain the apparent intolerance of the movement.[7] However, beyond a perception of intolerance, we think there is something deeper in the emergence of the Tea Party that is more in line with studies of paranoia, conspiratorial beliefs, and out-group suspicion.

THE TEA PARTY AND PRESIDENT OBAMA

The roots of this movement can be traced to the December 2007 anniversary of the Boston Tea Party, when Ron Paul supporters held a "money bomb" to raise funds for Paul's 2008 presidential run.[8] Paul, while campaigning for the Republican nomination, was not considered a mainstream Republican based on his Libertarian beliefs, and the money bomb reflected this. Organized by a 37 year-old rock promoter, the money bomb relied on the enthusiasm and donations of online supporters, many of whom were first time donors. Paul's Campaign for Liberty (CFL) went on to play a significant role in the growth of the Tea Party, according to a recent NAACP report, though there is little crossover in membership.[9] Paul himself has embraced the Tea Party, speaking at a number of rallies around the country since the birth of the movement.

Though Paul's candidacy may have provided some of the initial impetus, the Tea Party itself did not emerge during the 2008 campaign, rather it was following the election of Barack Obama that the term "Tea Party" began to be used to describe a political movement. The Libertarian Party of Illinois formed the Boston Tea Party Chicago in December of 2008 to protest for lower taxes and reduced government spending. Its founder Dave Brady later claimed he gave Rick Santelli the idea for the Tax Day Tea Parties that marked the real explosion of the movement onto the national political scene.[10] Santelli, a CNBC on-air editor, delivered a speech from the floor of the Chicago stock exchange on February 19, 2009 that was largely credited with popularizing the concept of the Tax Day Tea Parties.[11] Following Santelli's broadcast, the character of the Tea Party movement shifted toward something more organized.

Crucial in the transition of the movement from localized anti-tax, anti-stimulus protests to something more organized and national in character was Brenden Steinhauser and the D.C. lobby and training organization Freedomworks. After Santelli's on-air diatribe, Steinhauser wrote a ten step program for holding your own Tea Party and posted it to his website. Shortly after the program was posted, Steinhauser's website saw a significant increase in traffic.[12] Freedomworks, founded by former Congressman Dick Armey, quickly became involved, calling supporters across the country and asking them to organize their own Tea Parties and announcing a nationwide tour. On February 27th, 2009 the first "official" Tea Party was held, organized by Freedomworks, the free market oriented Sam Adams Alliance, and Americans for Prosperity.

Freedomworks was just one of six national Tea Party factions that arose in February of 2009. Along with Freedomworks, ResistNet and Our Country Deserves Better PAC had existed prior to Santelli's speech, and three more formed in its wake: 1776 Tea Party, Tea Party Patriots, and Tea Party Nation. The September 12, 2009 rally hosted by Freedomworks in Washington, D.C. marked the first large-scale, national rally and the emergence of the Tea Party as a national movement.

While Tea Party organizations have tried to portray the movement as one made up of small donors and driven by grass-roots organizing, the truth is much more complicated. Freedomworks receives 15-20 percent of its funding from corporations, according to an NPR article, while Americans for Prosperity is financed by David and Charles Koch, two long time-libertarians whose opposition to nearly all Obama Administration policies earned their ideological network the nickname "the Kochtopus".[13] Freedomworks and Americans for Prosperity have largely been credited for the bulk of the public relations and logistical work behind Tea Party protests, despite claims that these were spontaneous and organized at the grassroots level.[14]

While the Tea Party operated on the fringes of U.S. politics for much of 2009, they became a nationally recognizable movement following President Obama's signing of the Affordable Care Act on March 30, 2010. The so-called "Tea Party Patriots" led protests across the country, and allegations were made that Tea Partiers spit on members of Congress, shouted racial epithets, and threw bricks through windows of Congress members[15]. By now, Tea Party sympathizers had perceived the increased influence of African Americans, Hispanics and gays in national politics, accompanied by significant growth in the minority and immigrant populations[16]. The health care bill was called a socialist takeover of America on most Tea Party websites. Indeed, following the passage of health care reform, the Tea Party was visibly positioned as a counter movement in American politics and began to loudly proclaim, "I want my country back."

Many years ago, the noted historian, Richard Hofstadter, made what many of his contemporaries viewed as a hyperbolic claim. In his seminal essay, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*, he believed the far right wing to practice a style of politics consistent with paranoia. For him, there was no other way to explain the "heated exaggeration, suspiciousness, and the conspiratorial fantasy" associated with the Goldwater movement.[17] He is careful to distinguish paranoid politics, or the *paranoid style,* from the clinical version. However, he cites important similarities between political and clinical paranoia in that "both tend to be overheated, over-suspicious, overaggressive, grandiose, and apocalyptic in expression."[18] The key difference, as he sees it, is that the clinical paranoid perceives *himself* the object of the conspiracy. The paranoid politico, on the other hand, perceives the conspiracy to be "directed against a nation, a culture, a way of life whose fate affects not himself but millions of others….His sense that his political passions are unselfish and patriotic, in fact, goes far to intensify his feeling of righteousness and his moral indignation."[19]

Hofstadter also outlined a belief system on which the paranoid style rests: pseudo conservatism. Before we embark upon Hofstadter's account of the pseudo-conservative, though, we first identify a social-scientific path so that we may arrive at our destination. Conceptually, we can do so through what some have come to call paranoid social cognitions. The distrust and suspicion that are at the root of paranoid social cognition are generated by one's location in a social system.[20] Stanford social psychologist Roderick Kramer argues that people with paranoid social cognition are trying "to make sense of, and cope with, threatening social environments….these ordinary…forms of paranoid cognition can be viewed as…responses to disturbing situations rather than manifestations of disturbed individuals [that are paranoid in a clinical sense]."[21] Part of the coping mechanism for dealing with alien situations among individuals prone to such psychological discomfort includes what Kramer identifies as a "hypervigilant and ruminative mode of information processing that contributes…to a variety of paranoid-like forms of social misperception and judgment."[22]

Kramer's work suggests that, among other factors, paranoid social cognitions emerge from one's uncertainty about their social standing. One of the ways that paranoid social cognition is produced, as we understand it, is when a newcomer enters a new social environment in which the existing group has been intact for sometime. The long-tenured members of the group are, understandably, more secure, more certain of their status in the group. However, amidst rapid social and demographic change, does the dominant group question their position and standing in society?

As we touch upon below, it is not hard to imagine that members of the dominant group are introduced to a new social order in which

some perceive their dominant position threatened. It is possible that some in the dominant group may think themselves unjustly under siege, something that results in what's known as "poor me" paranoia.[23] With this type of paranoia, people believe they are "innocent victim[s] while condemning others for their persecution…where the individual maintains high self-esteem and views the persecutor as bad as inferior."[24] Combining "poor me" paranoia with the framework of paranoid social cognition permits us to transition to the belief system associated with the paranoid style.

Returning to Hofstadter, we learn that the pseudo-conservative is a person who is quick to use the *rhetoric* of conservatism, a belief system that prizes traditions and institutions and has an appreciation for the history of both. Yet, according to Hofstadter, the pseudo-conservative fails to behave like a conservative in that "in the name of upholding traditional American values and institutions and defending them against more or less fictitious dangers, consciously or unconsciously [he] aims at their abolition."[25] Furthermore, the pseudo-conservative "believes himself to be living in a world in which he is spied upon, plotted against, betrayed, and very likely destined for ruin."[26] This state of mind pushes him to attack a way of life and institutions he purports to revere, pressing his representatives to insist upon a rash of Constitutional amendments, including abolishing the income tax, cutting spending on welfare, and charging with treason people who try to weaken the government.

Hofstadter believes such a person is attempting to get a fix on his position in the rapidly changing social system in which members of this group believe their material and/or cultural status to be in decline. Moreover, as Hofstadter suggests, they no longer have something to which they may anchor their American identity. Indeed, the pseudo-conservative has lost his bearings amidst a raft of social changes, much as someone suffering from paranoid social cognition does upon induction into a new social order—be it at school, in a neighborhood, or new job. In this environment, the pseudo-conservative in the paranoid style is simply trying to maintain their social status.

We argue that the Tea Party bears an uncanny likeness to the extreme right-wing groups that are its forbearers. Drawing on content analysis and public opinion data, we show that the Tea Party movement is, in fact, full of pseudo-conservatism, in part, marked by suspicion and resentment of out-groups. This paper unfolds as follows. First, we briefly review right-wing extremism in American history. We then turn to the content analysis of Tea Party websites to illustrate the point that Tea Party discourse is in fact far beyond that which one may credibly call conservative. We then turn to public opinion data, both qualitative and quantitative, evidence that allows us to further test our claims that support for the Tea Party is associated with pseudo-conservatism. We close with a discussion of the implications.

A Brief History of Right-Wing Extremism and the Tea Party

Right-wing extremism and paranoid politics are well established parts of the American political landscape. While these phenomena have their roots before the 20th century, focusing exclusively on this period provides ample examples of the two in action. While right-wing extremism, by definition, can only exist within right-wing movements, the paranoid style that births them is a tendency that exists across the political spectrum. Consider the Populist and Progressive movements around the turn of the 20th century. Populists were concerned with protecting agrarian economic interests and a rural way of life from the ever-encroaching influences of urbanization and industrialization. In contrast, the Progressive movement was rooted in the city and was primarily interested in protecting the urban masses from the vicissitudes of newly industrialized life. Among other things, Progressives were concerned with social welfare and consumer protection. Both movements were undertaken with different constituencies in mind—one rural, the other urban, respectively. While neither maps perfectly into a contemporary left/right dichotomy, both contained strong leftist elements. Both movements were also marked by a paranoid style of politics. The former's paranoia was directed primarily towards immigrants; the latter's was towards Catholics.[27]

      The Second Ku Klux Klan, whose principal goal was the preservation of traditional Protestant morality, provides a third example of paranoid politics. In addition to enforcing law and order consistent with these values, they sought to counter the perceived threat from Catholic immigrants and Jews. Unlike the previous two movements, its paranoid style helped to lead to right wing extremism.

      Although McCarthyism was more mood than movement, it was a reaction to America's perceived decline on the world stage and dominated policy formation and political discussion at midcentury. It is yet another example of paranoid politics merging with right-wing extremism. Joseph McCarthy and his followers identified Communism as the alien presence—similar to immigrants, Catholics, Blacks and Jews of the aforementioned periods—that would ultimately infect, corrupt, and destroy the American state. This logic meant that those who were opposed to McCarthyism or perceived as susceptible to communist influence were additional targets for censure.

      Robert Welch and the John Birch Society institutionalized McCarthyism by using a relatively small cadre of mainly wealthy business leaders to advance their program. Birchers also eventually argued that the conspiracy predated the rise of Communism. The candidacies of Barry Goldwater and George Wallace would witness the combination of paranoid racial politics with the emerging New Right. Race, paranoid politics, and right-wing extremism all united in these

campaigns. These latter mobilizations were, at least in part, fueled by whites' anxiety over Blacks' increasing assertiveness and increasing civil rights success during the latter stages of insurgency. These campaigns also promised to enforce law and order, similar to the Klan of bygone years.[28]

History suggests that right-wing movements have at least five things in common. First, these movements typically follow on the heels of major social and economic change that threatens to dislodge dominant groups from positions of influence and privilege to which they've become accustomed. Religious Fundamentalism, second, is another important feature of right-wing extremism. Christian fundamentalism generally centers on a literal interpretation of the Bible. A product of the 20th century, many fundamentalists support Biblical exegesis that calls for the maintenance of the nuclear family and traditional gender roles. This serves as the cultural touchstone of the right wing. Third, the movements frequently construct the world in morally absolute terms. These good-versus-evil narratives justify a crusade against the violation of the aforementioned order and can continue despite logical inconsistencies. Fourth, as a logical extension, many movement adherents prefer to maintain social arrangements that support their dominance. They invoke a bygone past during which their economic and/or social comfort went unchallenged.[29] Fifth, conspiracies are central to right-wing extremism insofar as the displaced group requires a target on which to pin its decline. For the Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s, Jews, Catholics and immigrants "conspired to undermine" the morals of white Protestants; members of the John Birch Society and followers of McCarthy feared some American elites had sold out the country for Communism.

This summary is not intended to be exhaustive. Instead, we offer this is a mere illustration of the most *general* tendencies we've observed over time. We believe the Tea Party conforms to this framework for a few reasons. Current conditions are ripe for a right-wing movement that employs paranoid politics. The near collapse of the financial system, with its attendant un- and underemployment, along with a continued rise in immigration from Latin American and Asia, court victories for gay rights, and the election of the nation's first Black president all represent the rapid social change that has often inspired such movements. The Tea Party movement is also relatively prone to conspiratorial discourse, and much of its literature frames opponents as folk devils.[30] Fundamentalism, both religious and secular, governs the aforementioned second, third, and fourth points. It is relevant to the Tea Party inasmuch as Tea Partiers are both against abortion and gay marriage, two positions that support traditional family relationships.[31] The zealousness with which the movement attacks Obama, variously depicting him as Hitler, a socialist and communist is evidence of a secular moral absolutism so

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often linked to right-wing extremism. Repeated cries by movement leaders, such as Sarah Palin to "take back our country," as well as references to the "real America" in which "hardworking, patriotic" Americans reside touches upon a different type of fundamentalism. These declarations resonate most in small towns, in the Midwest and South, which are predominantly white and, for the most part, working class. Perhaps this can be attributed to a more social fundamentalism, one on which the prototypical American rests.[32]

The Tea Party is not the only place within contemporary American politics where we see some of the elements of paranoid politics. The paranoid style of politics is a mode of politics that has deep roots within American history, and it is not uncommon for movements across the political spectrum to use one or more of the elements we have highlighted. What is unique about the Tea Party, however, is the extent to which it combines the aforementioned elements of paranoid politics with those of right-wing extremism. As such, it provides a case study *par excellence* of the role that paranoid politics and right wing extremism play in a changing America.

A changing America and the emergence of the Tea Party

We think it likely that the election of Barack Obama, as the first Black president, and the change it symbolizes, represents a clear threat to the social, economic, political and social hegemony to which supporters of the Tea Party had become accustomed. More to the point, his ascendance to the White House triggered anxiety, fear, and anger among those who support the Tea Party. It is hard to argue with this assessment considering the fact that Obama's predecessor, George Bush, exploded the deficit, and it was his watch on which TARP was hatched. Yet the Tea Party was nowhere to be found. With this in mind, it should be uncontroversial to assert that the election of Obama is at the root of the growth of the Tea Party. These emotional responses, we believe, ultimately resulted in the present day "heated exaggeration, suspiciousness, and conspiratorial fantasy" that characterize the Tea Party movement.

However, it was not only conservative Republicans who expressed these feelings, even as feelings of anxiety among poor and working class whites were quickly swept up by the Tea Party. Scholars have recently highlighted Democrats' failure to gain the political support of poor and working class whites, and, at times, progressive politicians have even added to their discontent. In fact, many white Democrats felt under attack when Barack Obama suggested that bitter working class Americans cling to their guns and religion during the 2008 Democratic primary elections.[34] The lack of attention poor and working class whites received from Democrats became central to Howard Dean's 50-state

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strategy that attempted to garner the support of all Americans, across many different walks of life.[36] However, in many cases Democrats left the door open for Republicans, and subsequently the Tea Party, to court poor and working class whites despite the fact that many Republican policy stances go against poor and working class whites' economic interests. Poor and working class whites are swayed by conservative stances on "moral" social policies, de-prioritizing economic self-interest as noted by Frank[37] and Bageant[38]. The need for a political base alongside Democrats' inability to relate to poor and working class whites sends them elsewhere to express their anxieties.

However, it was not just the election of Obama that triggered the Tea Party, but also the changing demographics and political debates in America over the past 40 years. In 1970, 83% of the U.S. population was White, non-Hispanic, and in 2010 63% was White – a 20 percentage point decline in one generation. Accompanying this change has been an increase in the Black, Hispanic, and Asian populations in the United States and a vigorous debate about civil rights and immigration. At the same time, strides have been made in rights for gays and lesbians from the election of Harvey Milk in 1977 through the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell in 2010. Across all these groups – Blacks, immigrants, and gays – the Tea Party has seemingly taken an oppositional stance to the expansion of rights and projects to aid minorities.

Racial Resentment

For many, the election of the Nation's first African American President is evidence of the end of racism in America. Yet, the emergence of the Tea Party in the months following the inauguration of Barack Obama, and the propensity of racially charged antics exposed at many of the group's events and rallies, warrants a closer look at the immediacy of racism in America today. As research has shown, racism and racial resentment play an important role in determining not only support for Obama, but also support for black candidates in general (Kinder and Sears, 1981, Parker et al., 2009; Tesler and Sears, 2010). The influence of modern day racism is most known for its place in opposition towards affirmative action and other race-conscious programs (Bobo and Kluegel, 1993; Bobo, 2000; Sidanius et al., 2000; Feldman and Huddy, 2005). The racism that commonly guides contemporary white attitudes has been coined *racial resentment* and relies upon anti-black affect, or a "pre-existing negative attitude toward blacks" (Feldman and Huddy, 2005, pg. 169). In other words, racial resentment is fueled by the gains and growing demands of black Americans (Kinder and Sanders, 1996), a resentment that has a new level of fuel with the country led by an African American President for this first time in its history.

Old-fashioned racism, based on biological differences between blacks and whites, is no longer acceptable in society today and a new,

subtler, racism works to predict attitudes and behaviors (Parker et al, 2009; Sears and Henry, 2003). This new form of racism relies on stereotypes surrounding African Americans; stereotypes that put blacks in opposition to treasured American values such as hard work, honesty and lawfulness (Kinder and Sanders, 1996; McConahay et al., 1982; Sears, 1993). In addition, ascribing these stereotypes to blacks allows for whites to continue justifying their privileged position in society (Bobo and Kluegel, 1997). The centrality of American values in racial resentment links the "language of American individualism" to expressions of prejudice (Feldman and Huddy, 2005, pg. 169). The attributes (or stereotypes) assigned to blacks - laziness, preference for welfare, predisposition to crime – place them in opposition to the values American society rests upon, isolating and alienating blacks from the ideals that go hand in hand with being a good citizen in America.

The timing behind the emergence of the Tea Party in American politics begs for a further examination of a group that is determined to "take back" their country and fight against a government absorbed by socialism. The Tea Party movement's emphasis on American values and individualism places many of their policy stances and positions in opposition to minority policies, such as an increase in social programs, including spending for the poor and health care reform. Also, the rhetoric of the Tea Party places its members in opposition to minority groups in America as well as the new leadership of the country.

The Tea Party's focus on individualism and American values alone are not enough to validate claims of racial resentment. In addition, accusations of racism within the Tea Party have existed since its beginning. A 2010 report by the Institute for Research and Education on Human Rights (IREHR) chronicles the involvement of white supremacy groups in the Tea Party since the movement's first events on April 15, 2009 and, if nothing more, speaks to the Tea Party's availability as a vehicle for white supremacist recruitment and thought. Other watchdog agencies, such as *teapartytracker.org*, have made it a point to highlight acts of racism and extremism within the Tea Party and at their rallies and events. Beyond the consistent chronicling of individual acts of racism and bigotry, much of the resentment in the Tea Party boiled over at the height of the health care debate. As congressmen and women came together to vote on the proposed health care bill in March of 2010, a Tea Party protest boiled over as racial epithets were launched at Rep. John Lewis, a Democrat from Georgia, and Rep. Emanuel Cleaver, a Democrat from Missouri, was spit upon while trying to make it through the crowd at Capitol Hill (Douglass, 2010).

These instances, among others, led to the denunciation of racism and bigotry in the Tea Party movement on a national stage. Namely, in July of 2010 the NAACP unanimously passed a resolution to "condemn extremist elements within the Tea Party", which asked the movement's

leaders to "repudiate those in their ranks who use racist language" (NAACP, 2010). Although making it clear that the NAACP was not condemning the entire Tea Party as racist, the following reaction from one of the movement's prominent leaders brought racial resentment to the forefront. Mark Williams, a leader of the Tea Party at the time, released a satirical commentary in response to the NAACP resolution. The response was a letter to President Lincoln from "colored people" and insinuated not only ignorance on the part of blacks in America, but also reinforced many of the stereotypes central to racial resentment. The opening statement of the response is a blatant attack on African Americans:

> "We Colored People have taken a vote and decided that we don't cotton to that whole emancipation thing. Freedom means having to work for real, think for ourselves, and take consequences along with the rewards."

Williams' commentary continues to challenge the work ethic of blacks and characterize African Americans as lazy and unwilling to compete in an American society centered on individual accomplishment:

> "The racist tea parties also demand that the government "stop the out of control spending." Again, they directly target Colored People. That means we Colored People would have to compete for jobs like everybody else and that is just not right."

The final passage of Mark William's response renders African Americans subordinate and inferior as he writes that blacks "had a great gig" during slavery when they were afforded "Three squares, room and board, all [their] decisions made by the massa in the house."[39] To be fair, the response by Mark Williams cannot be used as a generalizable measure of the sentiments of the Tea Party in the wake of the NAACP resolution, especially when considering the racially charged past of the leader himself; however, a better measure is the lack of immediate response from the Tea Party leadership across the nation. Even as Mark Williams' Tea Party organization was expelled from the larger organization, there was little mention of his racist remarks in the process and other Tea Party leaders still denied allegations of racism in their ranks, let alone their followers (Burghart and Zeskind, 2010, pg. 65-66).

Even as the evidence consistently finds the Tea Party rampant with racial resentment and extremism, the movements members argue that they are following their conservative principles centered on small government and limited spending - stances that do not favor minorities or people of color by their political nature. This position, though, is not new as ideological conservatism is habitually argued to avoid

accusations of racism (Glazer, 1975; Jacoby, 1994; Sowell, 1984).

Scholars have worked hard to separate the influence of conservative principles from racial resentment. Whites' disapproval for affirmative action and social welfare programs has been justified through a violation of norms central to conservative principles, such as hard work and self-relaince. The *group dominance approach* stands in opposition to principled conservatism, explaining that groups will use ideology and political symbols to "legitimize" each group's claims over resources (Sidanius et al., 1996). Furthermore, scholars have shown that racism not only works in conjunction with the individual values associated with principled conservatism – Kinder and Mendelberg (2000) tell us that individualism becomes part of racism – but racism goes beyond conservative individualism to predict negative attitudes towards race-conscious policy and politicians of color (Feldman and Huddy, 2005; Sidanius et al, 1996; Tesler and Sears, 2010). When specifically examining negative attitudes towards President Obama, racism plays a major role regardless of ideological preference (Parker et al. 2009). The recent emergence of the Tea Party allows for a closer examination of the racial attitudes held by this unique group of Americans emphasizing the principles of individualism over all else.

Anti-Immigrant Attitudes

The passage of Arizona's SB1070 marked the return of immigration to center stage in American politics after a brief period out of the limelight. The law, which will allow for the racial profiling of Latinos based on the suspicion that they could be undocumented immigrants, was defended by Arizona Governor Jan Brewer by charging that the federal government was not doing its job to control undocumented immigration and that the state had the right to take steps to do so. This argument was strongly backed by state's rights advocates and a large proportion of the Tea Party Movement, the latter of which made immigration restriction one of its central issues in the 2010 election.

Statements about immigration from Tea Party politicians and groups largely portrayed immigration as a threat to Americans or American culture. One glaring example of this is Sharon Angle's 2010 campaign ad "Best Friend", which features a voice-over that ominously states, "Illegals sneaking across our borders putting Americans' jobs and safety at risk", while showing video of dark-skinned actors sneaking around a chain link fence.[40] Angle was a darling of the Tea Party movement in Nevada and attacked Harry Reid on immigration in both the "Best Friend" ad, as well as a second ad called "At Your Expense" that charged that Reid supported special college tuition rates for undocumented immigrants, which would be paid for by Nevada taxpayers.[41] Both ads juxtaposed the dark-skinned actors portraying

illegal immigrants with white Americans working or with their families on the same screen. The implicit racism in Angle's ad was reminiscent of the now notorious "White Hands" ad of Jesse Helms and the "Willie Horton" campaign ad run by George W. Bush in 1988.

Sharon Angle was not the only Tea Party candidate who tried to use the threat of Latino immigration to capture votes in the 2010 election. In Arizona, J.D. Hayworth, John McCain's Republican primary challenger similarly made immigration one of the central planks of his campaign. Hayworth had actually written a whole book on the subject of undocumented immigration in 2005 called *Whatever It Takes,* in which he argued in favor of increased immigration enforcement and notes that while immigration is clearly good for the country, the proportion of immigrants coming from Mexico is too high because it could lead to American becoming a bicultural nation. In Hayworth's own words, "Bicultural societies are among the least stable in the world".[42] Hayworth was a strong supporter of Arizona's SB1070 but believed that even more steps had to be taken against undocumented immigrants, stating at a 2010 rally in Mesa, Arizona, that, "There is a whole new term: birth tourism. In the jet age there are people who time their gestation period so they give birth on American soil".[43] To prevent this, Hayworth argued that the state of Arizona should stop birthright citizenship, a view echoed by Russell Pearce, a state senator from Arizona and the architect of SB1070.

Tea Party organizations also sought to portray immigration as a threat to America in the lead up to the 2010 general election. The Tea Party Nation emailed its roughly 35,000 members in August and asked them to post stories highlighting the victimization of Americans by illegal immigrants. The group specifically asked for stories about undocumented immigrants taking the jobs of members, committing crimes, or undermining business by providing cheap labor to competitors.[44] The Americans for Legal Immigration PAC (ALIPAC) assisted two Tea Party groups, Voice of the People USA and Tea Party Patriots Live, in coordinating rallies in support of Arizona's SB1070. The ALIPAC mission statement points out that, "Our state and federal budgets are being overwhelmed. Schools, hospitals, law enforcement, and public services are being strained while the taxpayers incur more costs and more debt. Our nation's very survival and identity are being threatened along with our national security".[45] ALIPAC is supported by the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), a group designated a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center because of its links to white supremacist organizations.[46]

The Tea Party, while disavowing that its anti-immigrant rhetoric was based on racism, has continued to portray immigration in starkly threatening terms, which while not explicitly racist has strong undercurrents of implicit racism, with Sharon Angle's campaign videos being the most obvious example of this. A New York Times/CBS News

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poll released in August of 2010 unsurprisingly found that 82 percent of self-identified Tea Party supporters believed illegal immigration was a "serious problem".[47] Perceived threats from immigrant groups have been shown to be a powerful predictor for immigration restriction and anti-immigrant attitudes in the sociology, psychology and political science literatures.

Group position theory, pioneered by the sociologist Herbert Blumer, argues that prejudice is composed of four feelings: a sense of superiority, a feeling that the subordinate group is in some way intrinsically different or alien, a feeling of entitlement to certain privileges or advantages, and finally a suspicion that the subordinate group poses a threat to these privileges or advantages.[48] Perceived threat is necessary for prejudice with Blumer stating that "the feeling essential to race prejudice is a fear or apprehension that the subordinate racial group is threatening, or will threaten, the position of the dominant group".[49] Blumer never stated that the threat had to be a realistic one, and thus a subordinate group could be perceived as a threat even if there was no real evidence that they truly were one. A body of literature on group threat theory grew out of the work by Blumer but emphasized the role of threat over the other aspects of group position theory. Both Hubert Blalock and Lawrence Bobo extended Blumer's original concept of the role of threats to group position, with Blalock explaining competition between minority groups through group threat and Bobo arguing that realistic threats are the best predictors of opposition to policies benefiting minorities (Blalock, 1957; Bobo, 1983, 1988; Bobo and Hutchings, 1996).

There is a good deal of support for group threat theory. For example, Zarate et al. (2004) found that people reported more prejudice when they were induced to identify differences between their group and Mexican immigrants on interpersonal traits. When immigrants were seen as differing from the norm they were believed to pose a threat to the social fabric of the country and were subsequently evaluated in a more negative fashion.[50] Sniderman et al. (2004) similarly found that perceived threats to the national culture was the strongest predictor of hostility toward immigrants in the Netherlands, as well as support for the role of economic threat perceptions. This latter finding was supported by Espenshade and Hempstead (1996), who found that those who believed that the U.S. economy was worsening had more negative attitudes toward immigrants. Examining both realistic and symbolic threats, Stephan et al. (1999) found evidence for the role of both threat types in prejudice against immigrants. Symbolic threats were conceptualized as threats to national culture or values, while realistic threats, drawing on the work of Lawrence Bobo (1983,1988), were threats to the economic, social or political resources of whites.

Thomas Wilson provides further evidence confirming the impact of group threat on immigration attitudes in his 2001 study on American views toward immigration policy. He notes that, "native-born Americans' opposition to policies benefiting immigrants is based in large part on their perceptions that immigrants pose a direct threat to their interest…".[51] Interviews with Tea Party supporters suggested these attitudes were real.

When asked how immigrants made them feel, one respondent said, "I don't know really, but maybe nervous. I see what they have done. Here they come, they have no insurance. They are draining state governments. We have to provide for them because they are here." Other respondents conflated illegal immigrants, immigrants, and Hispanics while explaining their cultural deficiencies, "Nevada has grown to be heavily Hispanic in the last 15 years. And Good Lord, education reflects that. You know, the education standards they are just plummeting because – yeah, I mean, the Hispanic children – everybody needs to be educated, but if they weren't here illegally, our kids would be in better shape. It's wrong for the American people." Still others suggested an actual criminal threat from immigrants, saying "They make me nervous. I have relatives down in Tucson; one is a law enforcement officer. You never know if they are going to get killed."

Homophobia and the Tea Party

Many supporters have denied that social issues, including rights for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people (LGBT), have played a large role in the Tea Party movement. The movement, they claim, is fundamentally built on principled conservatism, limited government, and lower taxes. Others have claimed that gay men and lesbians should flock to the Tea Party because its libertarianism will result in greater political freedom for GLBT people. The campaign websites of two major 2010 Tea Party candidates, Rand Paul and Christine O'Donnell, do not mention lesbian or gay issues at all, while Sharron Angle, mentions opposition to same-sex marriage only in passing.

Despite the limited mention of sexuality on the front pages of the Tea Party movement, subsequent campaigning frequently took on anti-gay tones in these three major campaigns. In addition to opposing same-sex marriage, Angle took stands against adoption by lesbians and gay men as well as extending anti-discrimination laws to cover sexual orientation and gender expression[52]. She also declared in a candidate questionnaire that she would not take campaign money from any group that supported homosexuality[53]. Previous comments about gays and lesbians were some of the many soundclips that plagued O'Donnell during election season. She had claimed that being gay was "an identity disorder" and also worked with ex-gay ministries, which claim to change sexual orientation, and with the Concerned Women for America, which

espouses very conservative views regarding sexuality[54]. In stating his disapproval of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, Rand Paul signaled that he would disapprove of similar proposed legislation, including the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), which would prohibit workplace discrimination against lesbians and gay men.

Libertarianism and these anti-gay, socially conservative impulses create great tension in the Tea Party, and this tension is evident both in the above examples from campaign websites and Tea Party message boards. The tension further reveals itself in qualitative interviews with Tea Party supporters, who frequently claim nominal tolerance of gay men or lesbians while categorically defining them as non-normative and beyond the pale of full inclusion in the US polity. A Tea Party supporter from our 2010 MSSRP study best encapsulates this tension. "I think they've got a right to exist," he explains, "but I don't particularly want them around me."

These tensions –between libertarianism, and grudging acceptance on the one hand and social conservatism and condemnation on the other- illustrate a site of contestation within the Tea Party Movement. Who is a "real" American? From whom are they "taking back" the country? Who are the folk devils? Are lesbians and gay men a part of "real" America, or not?

We believe that racial resentment provides a framework for understanding this ambivalent position regarding GLBT people. Several factors lead us to believe that this comparison is valid (Feldman and Huddy, 2005; Kinder and Sanders, 1996; Morrison and Morrison 1999; Morrison and Morrison 2002). Key facets of racial resentment appear when discussants talk about non-racial groups, specifically gender and the role of gender discrimination and affirmative action programs for women (Swim et al. 1995). Questions of whether or not gay Americans are believe in and live by the "American Creed," e.g. a belief in hard work, self-reliance, and individualism, are key elements of the debate over the role of gay men and lesbians; place in public life. It would not be surprising for people who hold racially resentful attitudes to transfer those attitudes onto other emergent minority groups, as they have with gender.

Overall, qualitative interviews seem to confirm that many Tea Party members' anti-gay attitudes can be classified as more resentful than old fashioned, or "traditional heteronormative" (Massey 2009; Morrison and Morrison 1999; Morrison and Morrison 2002). These Tea Party supporters protest gay men and lesbians' inability or unwillingness to adopt community norms by "flaunting" their sexuality publically. They tend to not express anti-gay sentiment violently, and few claim to want to arrest or physically harm members of the GLBT community. Some do express anti-gay sentiments in terms of "old fashioned"

heterosexism and the language of sin, such as the North Carolina respondent who said:

"I just pity them … because I know where they are going at the end of time."

Just as most white Americans express racist views in terms of racial resentment, many anti-gay views will be expressed in more subtle ways that clearly mark gay men and lesbians' subordinate role in American public life.

Respondents voice this subtler, "resentful" homophobia, which has parallels to racial resentment, by expressing tolerance towards gay men and lesbians so long as they are secondary citizens. Few will deny the right of queer people to exist in the abstract, and many, will oppose policies that actively seek out gay men and lesbians for punishment, such as military policies prior to Don't Ask; Don't Tell by using the logic of limited government. This does not mean that respondents view lesbians and gay men as equal members of the polity. Indeed, the logic of Don't Ask, Don't Tell appears to guide many members' beliefs of the normative role for lesbians and gay men in American life. The ideal gay or lesbian citizen is one who never "flaunts" her sexuality. Practically speaking, this is difficult to for any individual gay man or lesbian to attain because the respondents expansively define "sexuality." Many actions whose sexuality is erased for heterosexuals are defined as explicitly sexual for homosexuals. These can include holding hands with a partner, discussing a relationship, otherwise visibly embodying gender difference. Membership in political movements and groups that protest for gay rights also have the potential to end nominal Tea Party support for lesbians and gay men. By both denying that systemic discrimination against sexual minorities exists (Massey 2009) and by claiming any governmental remedy for discrimination is reverse discrimination or "special rights" (Dugan 2005), this rhetoric denies political action to gay men and lesbians.

Ultimately, the rhetoric of Tea Party members follows this logic, dichtomizing gay men and lesbians. A good, or "respectable," gay man believes in the American Creed and avoids the identity politics of the mainstream gay rights movement. His demeanor is assimilated to heterosexual norms, and he does not challenge anyone's "right to disagree" with his lifestyle. On the contrary, a bad, or unacceptable, lesbian is one who has politicized her sexual orientation, either by challenging the "right to disagree" or by pushing for legislation such as DADT or ENDA. She may also reject heteronormativity and dress in a way that defies gendered norms or is "flamboyant". A respondent from California best sums up this distinction "I have it in my family; and as individuals, I feel positive. As a group, I feel negative, because I think that when your child is being taught by a teacher … you're going to be very unhappy when they're teaching a five-year-old child how to be a

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good little lesbian or homosexual."   Likewise, a respondent from Nevada distinguished between not caring "what they [gay men and lesbians] do amongst themselves" and being negative "if they try to push marriage." This characterization is not unique to sexual minorities. Similar shifts in public opinion have been observed either between favorability of Black Americans in general compared to Black nationalists on the ANES (Black and Black 1989[55]).

Some preliminary findings from a 2010 pilot study

Despite such similarities with right-wing extremism, some who are sympathetic to the Tea Party think it's squarely in the mainstream[56] or insist that the Tea Party is simply more conservative.[57] We gathered evidence to determine if this is true.

The data in the ensuing analysis were from the Multi-State Survey of Race and Politics research project, a non-partisan academic project conducted by the Center for Survey Research at the University of Washington. The 2010 MSSRP survey is drawn from a probability sample of 1006 cases, stratified by state. The Multi-State Survey of Race and Politics included seven states, six of which were battleground states in 2008. It includes Georgia, Michigan, Missouri, Nevada, North Carolina, and Ohio as the battleground states. For its diversity and its status as an uncontested state, California was also included for comparative purposes. In addition, follow-up phone interviews were conducted for a number of the respondents who participated in the 2010 MSSRP survey. The qualitative interviews were randomly drawn from respondents who participated in the 2010 Multi-State Survey on Race and Politics, and were stratified by the same states in the original survey. The survey conducted open-ended follow-up interviews with 35 respondents, asking them to expand on their attitudes towards the Nation and different groups in America.[58]

To get a sense of Tea Party dialogue, we examine content from over thirty major Tea Party websites. The data for the analysis on Tea Party websites was collected from five states identified as top tea party venues by a Rasmussen report[59] as well as from six more battle ground states that match our individual level survey data. In total, 1,079 articles and postings from 31 official Tea Party websites were examined, dating back no further than 2009. Only official Tea Party websites that represent a particular state in its entirety, such as the Colorado Tea Party, or websites from a major city or region of the state, were included in our analysis. The content from these websites was randomly sampled in order to accurately represent all of the content within the website over time. Websites and blogs that did not represent the state, major city or region within the state, blogs that did not have official domain names, and the comments on blog posts and articles were not part of the

analysis. By limiting our examination to these official Tea Party-sanctioned websites, we are focusing on a section of the elite dialogue taking place online between the communication leaders within the tea party. If anything, our results present a conservative estimate of the online content circulated and discussed by tea party supporters, as we are not analyzing the comments by members of the websites, but only the official blog posts.

In addition, content from the National Review Online, a major conservative commentary, is compared to content from the Tea Party websites. If the Tea Party is a reflection of mainstream conservatism, the content from their online websites should be similar to the content from the National Review Online. The content for the National Review online consisted of 754 articles from the online website that were sampled by examining every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday throughout 2009 to achieve a representative sample of the entire year. Content was coded by identifying the main topic of each blog post or news story for the official Tea Party websites or the NRO. Thus, there are a total of 1079 coded posts for the Tea Party and 754 coded posts for the NRO, and each post is categorized for its main theme or topic. Finally, content from the Glenn Beck show, a less traditional conservative talk show is also compared to the Tea Party websites. The Glenn Beck show content was examined by analyzing transcripts from 844 segments on 170 different shows randomly selected throughout 2009 and 2010. The content analysis had a final inter-coder reliability of .84.

Throughout 2010, we tracked entries on official Tea Party websites, and systematically coded the content of each. As a point of comparison, we also coded entries from the National Review, considered by many the gold standard of conservative intellectual thought in America.[60] If the Tea Party was truly a conservative movement, we should see the content of the Tea Party websites mirror that of the National Review. If, as we suspected, that the Tea Party is more about pseudo-conservatism than conservatism, we should see content centering upon conspiratorial discourse of some kind. Table 1 contains the results.

Table 1: Content analysis of competing conservative voices in 2010

Primary Topic of Content	Tea Party Websites	National Review Online	Glenn Beck Show
Race/Immigration/GLBT	10%	8%	6%
Personal Attacks on Obama	8%	2%	8%
Conspiracy/Socialism	23%	6%	19%
Take our country back	10%	2%	11%
Complaints about media bias	15%	2%	4%
Govt too big/States rights	14%	39%	23%
Foreign policy/Homeland security	18%	38%	20%
Non-topical / Not categorized	2%	3%	9%
Total N (total pieces coded)	1,079	754	844

If the Tea Party movement were really about conservatism, i.e., particularly concerned with the size of government—the content of its websites would mirror that of the National Review. This failed to materialize. For instance, the National Review's content focused primarily on core conservative issues: the size of government and national security. Indeed, these issues constitute more than 75% of the content on the National Review Online. Only 15% of its content centered upon conspiracy theories, attacks on Obama, or attacks on gays, lesbians, or immigrants.

If their official websites are any indication, the Tea Party's priorities are quite a bit different. Only 32% of the content found on their websites confronts core conservative issues of government spending, states rights, and foreign policy. Rather, over 50% is devoted to conspiracies, attacks on the president, gay men and lesbians, and immigrants, and calls to "take our country back". Perhaps most important, almost one-in-four of the issues addressed on their websites entertains conspiracies that the president is a communist, socialist, or the that the policies sought by the government Obama leads will ultimately result in the demise of America.

What we've presented so far validates our claim that the Tea Party—at least many of its elites—is brimming with right-wing extremists insofar as a good portion of its discourse skews away from traditional conservatism, and toward conspiracies and the derogation of perceived "others." In addition to collecting more than a year's worth of content analysis in 2010, we also analyzed mass opinion.

First, we wish to show that people in the mass public who sympathize with the Tea Party (true believers) differ in their attitudes and behavior from the public at-large. Second, we wish to control for competing explanations of why Tea Party sympathizers retain the intolerant attitudes they so often display, including conservatism.[61] The data from 2010 are important because they provide one of the earliest comprehensive views of Tea Party supporters and opponents, and establish a baseline of attitudes to which scholars can compare into the future.

Our preliminary analysis suggests that Whites who support the Tea Party are statistically more likely to hold negative attitudes towards Blacks, towards immigrants, gays, and relatively more likely to violate due process for persons the authorities deem suspicious. Further, we find that Tea Party sympathizers are much less supportive of civil rights and liberties, and instead favor surveillance, profiling, and detention of "suspicious persons." Not surprisingly, they are also more likely to be politically aware and politically active. Even after accounting for ideology, partisanship, authoritarianism, and ethnocentrism, in a variety of regression models, the results hold.

We begin with racial attitudes. In measuring racial attitudes towards Blacks, we find a statistically significant increase in anti-Black attitudes among Tea Party supporters. Even after controlling for well-known covariates and competing theories such as ideology, authoritarianism, and ethnocentrism,[62] we find moving from low to high approval of the Tea Party, on its own, produces a large increase in anti-Black animus (see appendix for full regression table). That is, racially conservative view points among Whites result not just from ideology or ethnocentric world views (which have their own statistically significant effect), but rather the additional independent contribution of Tea Party mentality. Again, we want to be clear: beyond ideology, ethnocentrism, or authoritarianism, supporting the Tea Party leads Whites to increase animosity towards Blacks. In the example in figure 1, we demonstrate that Tea Party supporters are considerably more likely to believe Blacks need to "try harder" in order to gain equality with Whites.

Likewise, we find a very similar result for attitudes towards immigrants. While an estimated 44% of Tea Party opponents believe immigrants take jobs from Americans, a much higher 88% of Tea Party supporters are estimated to agree that immigrants are taking jobs away. In our full analysis, we find that this rate of anti-immigrant attitudes is surpassed only by the most strident White ethnocentrists. The same trends hold for other immigration variables such as the belief that state and local agencies should be enforcing immigration laws and checking immigration status, where we find Tea Party approvers are significantly more likely to hold strict anti-immigrant positions after accounting for ideology. This should come as no surprise as the Tea Party has mobilized thousands of supporters in the state of Arizona to promote and defend the controversial SB1070, which required police to check illegal immigrant status of any suspicious offender, and went further in supporting a second bill in Arizona that banned the teaching of Latino ethnic-studies or history in public schools, and prevented people with Spanish accents from teaching public school.

Another potential out-group in America today consists of gays and lesbians. Despite their reported small government and states rights claims, we wondered if Tea Party supporters would favor government limits into the lives of gays and lesbians. Across a variety of topic areas, we find true believers of the Tea Party are statistically less likely to support equality for gays and lesbians in terms of marriage, military service, adoption and more. Even after controlling for items such as ideology, religiosity, and moral traditionalism there is an additional and sizable effect for Tea Party support and anti-gay attitudes. While 55% of all Whites support gay adoption, only 36% of Tea Partiers do.

Finally, we asked respondents a battery of questions that tap their views on civil liberties, including whether or not it's appropriate for the government to detain people without a trial, something prohibited by the

U.S. Constitution. However, during current war on terrorism, Tea Party supporters are statistically less likely to support these liberties, including the right to a trial as reported in figure 1 below. Although the 6th amendment states "the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial" almost 40% of Tea Party supporters strongly agree that the government should be able to detain terror suspects as long as they wish without putting them on trial. While just 7% of those who disapprove of the Tea Party agree with suspending trials, 39.5% of Tea Party supporters agree with unlimited detentions. On other civil liberties topics such as profiling, phone taps, and police searches, our pilot study finds Tea Party supporters are consistently willing to give the federal government more authority to intervene in people's lives.

Figure 1: Public support for Tea Party and out-group attitudes
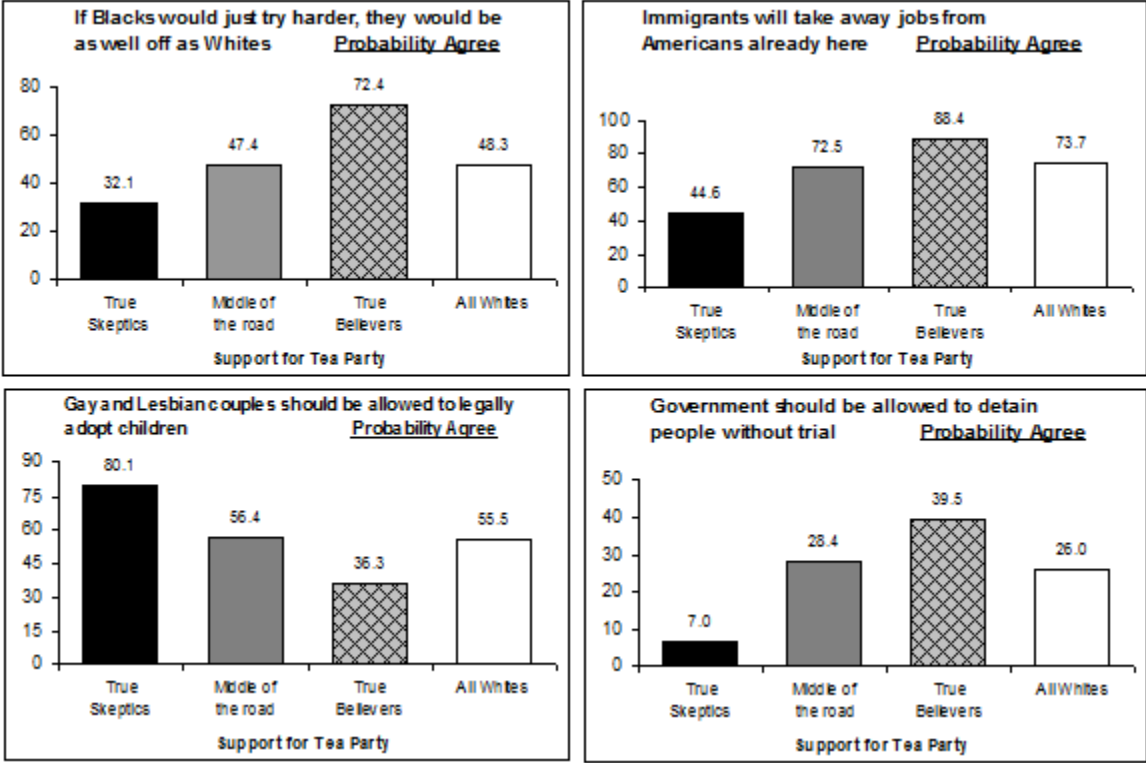
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Over the past few decades America has experienced many social, demographic, and political changes. In particular, the minority and immigrant population has grown dramatically, and this has culminated in the election of many prominent African American, Latino, and Asian American candidates to office. At the same time, minority groups have continued to promote equal rights, especially civil rights, for a range of groups including racial/ethnic minorities, but also women, gays and lesbians. To an extent, the shock of these social changes to the dominant in-group was absorbed by the previous eight years of the Republican presidency of George W. Bush. Even as society and demographics changed, calling into question the perceived social order of yesteryear, political control of the country rested in the hands of a Republican administration. In 2008 everything changed, with the election of Barack Obama as the first African American president in America's history. While this alone was not the sole inspiration of the Tea Party movement, the election of Obama provided an opening for his staunchest critics to reach out to those disaffected by the social change in America, and to perhaps question, "what happened to my country?" Not only did the social and demographic landscape of America look different in 2008 than it did a generation before, but so too did the President of the United States.

In this article, we set out to assess the extent to which Richard Hofstadter's pseudo-conservative framework fit with the Tea Party. Ultimately, we observed a fairly snug fit. The Tea Party, as the contemporary representation of the extreme right, is pretty consistent with its predecessors, sharing with them the major tenets of right-wing extremism. All share an aversion to social change, and tend to transform the manifestly political into a crusade of good versus evil, often White heterosexual versus Other. These groups also share a preference for maintaining the status quo, and tend to subscribe to conspiratorial thinking, demonizing their "enemies." Though many pundits describe the Tea Party as the conservative wing of the Republican Party, we find that conservatism alone is not driving the Tea Party. At a much deeper level, Tea Party sympathizers are concerned with the distribution of goods and rights in a changing America. While spending on Social Security is something that must be protected at all costs, spending on public education, English as a second language, or health care for all must be avoided at all costs.

With the analyses, insofar as it's possible to do so, we sought to explore the contours of pseudo-conservatism. If, as many sympathetic to the Tea Party claim, they're really simply die-hard conservatives, and not extremists, this should've evident in the content analysis. Yet, as we

make plain, the discourse taking place on the Tea Party websites, in their official posts, are at sharp variance with the principal organ of conservative thought, the National Review. Further, our in-depth interviews with Tea Party sympathizers suggest a connection to the rhetoric used online. Those who strongly supported the Tea Party avoided any explicit racist language, but clearly stated a general disdain for minority groups and questioned whether groups like immigrants or gays should have equal opportunity in America. Taken a step further, our quantitative analysis of a large public opinion survey finds very clearly that Tea Party supporters hold statistically distinct attitudes towards minority groups. After parsing out the effects of ideology, partisanship, and authoritarianism, we find a lasting effect for Tea Party support, in which support for the Tea Party is statistically associated with negative attitudes towards Blacks, immigrants, and gays and lesbians.

Our hypothesis that the support for the Tea Party is commensurate with pseudo-conservatism received support from the models we estimated. Specifically, we reasoned that if support for the Tea Party continued to predict attitudes and behavior, after accounting for conservatism, it's a good bet that the Tea Party and pseudo-conservatism are related. This is exactly what we found.

Appendix: Multivariate Ordered Logit Regression Results

Independent Variable	Blacks should try harder Coef. (SE)	Immigrants take jobs away Coef. (SE)	Gays should not adopt Coef. (SE)	Govt can Detain indef. Coef. (SE)
Tea Party support	0.8098 *** (.1362)	0.3550 ** (.1214)	0.3835 * (.1790)	0.6339 *** (.1491)
Age	-0.0158 * (.0071)	0.0104 (.0067)	-0.0287 ** (.0104)	-0.0131 † (.0078)
Education	-0.0761 (.0721)	-0.1058 (.0656)	0.1724 † (.1005)	-0.0922 (.0734)
Income	0.0068 (.0759)	0.0093 (.0739)	-0.2442 * (.1141)	0.2076 * (.0872)
Male	-0.2477 (.2242)	-0.3133 (.216)	-1.1482 *** (.3418)	-0.3669 (.2475)
Republican	-0.2566 (.4051)	-0.0708 (.3991)	1.0452 * (.5492)	-0.8862 * (.4481)
Independent	-0.3395 (.3004)	0.1710 (.3011)	0.2905 (.4562)	-0.0168 (.3629)
Ideology	0.0135 (.092)	0.2486 ** (.0840)	0.6151 *** (.1311)	0.3950 *** (.0959)
Federal Govt Therm	0.0404 (.0515)	0.0459 (.0471)	-0.0268 (.0715)	0.0284 (.0554)
Church attendance	-0.0219 (.0809)	-0.1383 † (.0775)	-0.0794 (.1117)	-0.2110 * (.0909)
Born again	0.5732 * (.2826)	0.1484 (.2699)	0.6596 † (.3671)	0.4086 (.3072)
Ethnocentrism	0.0359 † (.0214)	0.0354 * (.0168)	-0.0074 (.023)	0.0067 (.0184)
Authoritarianism	0.4847 *** (.0932)	0.1282 (.0861)	0.4814 *** (.1279)	0.3202 *** (.0991)
Rural geography	0.1842 (.2566)	0.0503 (.2559)	-0.4238 (.3768)	-0.6316 * (.2892)
Ohio	0.2820 (.3255)	0.4132 (.3217)	0.9042 * (.4713)	0.2681 (.3635)
Georgia	-0.2888 (.403)	1.2464 *** (.3831)	1.6833 ** (.5713)	0.6954 † (.4219)
Michigan	0.8706 ** (.3423)	0.5791 † (.3417)	1.1276 * (.5159)	-0.0215 (.3858)
Missouri	0.2996 (.4167)	0.6338 (.3954)	1.3325 * (.5784)	0.3017 (.4459)
Nevada	0.9933 (.6418)	0.7756 (.6015)	0.2615 (.9501)	-0.2029 (.7180)
Carolina	0.0756 (.4016)	0.4750 (.3895)	2.4521 *** (.6037)	-0.0745 (.4425)
Cut1	-30.976 (14.041)	20.118 (13.139)	-48.940 (20.402)	21.332 (15.197)
Cut2	-30.093 (14.039)	21.794 (13.143)	-48.669 (20.399)	22.157 (15.201)
Cut3 A	-29.572 (14.036)	23.045 (13.150)		23.062 (15.205)
Cut4	-27.927 (14.027)			
N	340	319	324	303
Pseudo R-sq	.2854	.1036	.3834	.1413

† p <.100　* p <.050　** p <.010　*** p <.001

END NOTES

[1] Author names are listed alphabetically, authorship is equal. The authors wish to thank Eduardo Bonilla-Silva for his thoughtful review and suggestions. We also received helpful feedback from Devin Burghart, Luis Fraga, Mark Sawyer, Loren Collingwood, and Marcela Garcia-Castañon. Research for this article was supported by the Washington Institute for the Study of Ethnicity and Race (WISER), and the University of Washington Research Royalty Fund.

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[59] Rasmussen Reports. "Where is the Tea Party Strongest?" June 18, 2010 http://www.rasmussenreports.com/public_content/most_recent_videos/2010_06/where_is_the_tea_party_strongest

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[61] In February-March 2010, we fielded an original public opinion survey called the Multi-State Survey on Race and Politics (MSSRP) to examine what Americans thought about issues of race, public policy, national politics, and President Obama, exactly one year after the inauguration of the first African American president. The survey was drawn from a probability sample of 60,000 household records, stratified by state and resulted in 1,006 completed interviews. The completed

sample included 505 White non-Hispanics, 312 African Americans, 99 Latinos, and 90 of "other" race. Throughout this article, we focus especially on the attitudes of Whites. Our study included seven states, six of which were politically competitive states in 2008, including Georgia, Michigan, Missouri, Nevada, North Carolina, and Ohio. For its diversity and its status as an uncontested state, California was also included for comparative purposes. The study, using live telephone callers, averaged about 40 minutes in length and was in the field February 8 – March 15, 2010. Overall, AAPOR cooperation rate-4 was 47.3, the margin of error is plus or minus 3.1 percent for the full sample, and plus or minus 4.4 percent when examining the White and non-White samples independently.

[62] The full regression model includes: Tea Party approval; age; education; income; gender; partisanship; ideology; federal government thermometer; religiosity; authoritarianism, ethnocentrism, and state and region controls and are found in the appendix.