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American Anti-Welfare Right-Wing Populism:
The Case of Bucktown

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in
Sociology

by

Matt S. Landry

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Abstract

Is there support for voluntary sterilization incentives in the U.S.? Nine semi-structured interviews were conducted with a snowball sample of four families spanning three generations in Bucktown, a 95% white, middle-class neighborhood which sent David Duke, former Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan, to the Louisiana House of Representatives in 1989. Interviews explain support and opposition to current Louisiana State Representative John LaBruzzo's policy suggestion to "end generational welfare" by offering citizens \$1000 in exchange for having their fallopian tubes tied or receiving vasectomies. Most respondents expressed that the sterilization proposal was targeted at low-income blacks. Although work ethic deficiency was used to frame poverty and welfare-dependency, support and opposition for the proposal was ultimately divided along racial ideological lines. Although Bucktonians have disassociated themselves from Duke and are upwardly mobile socio-economically, right-wing populist ideology remains salient.

Key Words: right-wing populism, producerism, racial ideology, welfare attitudes, Bucktown

Introduction

In February 1989, Louisiana Legislative District 81 gained national notoriety for electing David Duke, a former Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan and Nazi sympathizer. Duke, a right-wing populist running on a campaign of anti-government-interventionism and white rights, drew strong support in the precincts comprising Bucktown, a former fishing village. District 81 remained outside of the national spotlight until September 2008, when District 81 Representative John LaBruzzo suggested paying low-income, less educated people \$1,000 to have vasectomies and tubal ligations, as well as subsidize fertility amongst more affluent, more educated citizens. This provoked formal and informal censure from Catholic Archbishop Schultze, Republican and Democratic colleagues, Governor Bobby Jindal and many constituents. Many opponents interpreted the sterilization incentive as a eugenicist attack on low-income blacks who are overrepresented among the poor. Proponents and opponents alike interpreted it as an attack on the current state of the welfare system.

This study investigates John LaBruzzo's anachronistic proposal to trim welfare costs and to halt the cycle of generational welfare-dependency by incentivizing decreased fertility among welfare recipients. Because public sterilization incentives for welfare recipients are not frequently offered in contemporary America, previous studies have not addressed attitudes towards them. Plenty of studies, however, address Americans' attitudes towards means-tested welfare (Feldman 1982; Hasenfeld and Rafferty 1989; Groskind 1994; Schneider and Jacoby 2005; Gainouss 2008, and many others). These studies assert that attitudes toward means-tested welfare are a function of political ideology, attitudes toward welfare recipients, racial attitudes, race of respondent and self-interest. Taking guidance from these studies of attitudes toward means-tested welfare, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a snowball sample of nine

Bucktonians from four families, spanning three generations, to determine whether support exists for Rep. LaBruzzo's sterilization proposal and why such support exists.

More central to this study is the examination of theories of American right-wing populism (Federici 1991; Berlet and Lyons 2000) through the case of support and opposition to John LaBruzzo's sterilization incentive in Bucktown. Respondents' explanations for welfare-dependency were ideological, rather than factual. Findings suggest that a combination of individualism (Federici 1991), work ethic ideology (Berlet and Lyons 2000) and color-blind racial ideology (Bonilla-Silva 2003) create an environment for LaBruzzo's generational welfare-dependency frame to resonate. Although Rep. LaBruzzo's generational welfare-dependency frame resonated with the respondents' right-wing populist ideology, support and opposition for the proposal was divided along racial ideological lines. Thus, where theories of American right-wing populism leave us, Bonilla Silva's (2003) color-blind racial frames pick us up. Those who were more likely to support the proposal perceived it as presenting a choice for the recipients, viewed the proposal as reasonable rather than racist, used cultural racial frames to explain poverty, and interpreted equality of opportunity through the lens of formal equality.

In addition to examining theories of American right-wing populism (Federici 1991; Berlet and Lyons 2000) by applying them to the case of Bucktown, this study aims to contribute to literature on American right-wing populism by giving a voice to the people rather than just examining the rhetoric of right-wing populist leaders or accounts of historic events.

This study is particularly relevant at this moment in American history when Republicans are searching for frames that resonate. Louisiana had the highest voting percentage of any state for John McCain in the 2008 presidential election. Bucktown, a suburban Louisiana neighborhood, presents an ideal setting to examine right-wing populist responses to a

government that conservatives like Rep. John LaBruzzo believe is “going socialist...under Barack Obama” and the Democratic Supermajority.

In the next sections, the concepts of ideology and frames are clarified. Then, literature on American right-wing populism and color-blind racial frames are discussed. Next, methods are explained. Afterwards, Bucktown is placed within a socio-historical context. Finally, findings are discussed and conclusions are drawn.

Ideology

The term “ideology” is used in numerous different ways to explain social and political phenomena. I make three points of clarification before I refer to “ideology” throughout this study of American anti-welfare right-wing populism.

First, ideologies are operating group realities posing as absolute truths (Mannheim 1936). What is true at one time and place is not necessarily true during another time and place in history. Because of the difficulty of knowing what is true in every place at every time, people cling to their understandings of social phenomena although they are constantly in flux. Thus, beliefs exist that transcend the current social reality. Most groups will not admit that their beliefs are ideological; rather, they operate on the unconscious level¹.

Second, ideologies provide explanations for groups to understand social reality in a manner that serves their interests and/or are congruent their values. These situationally transcendent beliefs have the ability to withstand competing authoritative, logical and empirical explanations for social reality because of their social functions beyond simply specifying cause and effect relationships (Mannheim 1936; Campbell 2000; Van Dijk 2006). By combining “assertions and theories about the nature of social life with values and norms relevant to promoting or resisting social change” (Oliver and Johnston 2000:43), ideology functions to promote or challenge the status quo. Studying beliefs as ideology uncovers the implicit value judgments underpinning all seemingly value-free interpretations of social reality. Hence the negative sanctions for those who express beliefs that contradict those of ideological communities.

Third, different socialization and education will result in the diffusion of varying ideas, thus yielding disparate ideologies. Ideologies are gradually acquired and gradually disintegrated

through exposure to various discourses throughout one's life (Van Dijk 2006). Ideologies are fluid, socially shared, core beliefs that inform peripheral beliefs (Jost 2006; Van Dijk 2006). Oliver and Johnston (2000) suggest that if we shed more light on how ideologies and *frames* are connected, it will improve our understanding of political culture.

End Notes

1 The unconscious mind refers to memories that may not be remembered in the present, but are nevertheless accessible to consciousness at a later time.

Frames

Frames are discursive structures that describe what social reality is and ought to be by suggesting the essence of an issue (Nelson and Kinder 1996). They originate from and also affect ideologies (Oliver and Johnston 2000). In this section, I will draw upon social movement, political communication and social psychological scholars to briefly explain framing theory (Snow 1988; Nelson and Kinder 1996; Nelson, Oxley, Clawson 1997; Benford and Snow 2000; Oliver and Johnston 2000; Druckman 2001; Snow and Benford 2005).

Benford and Snow (2000) outline two core features of framing that affect policy debates – framing tasks and frame resonance. Framing tasks include (a) diagnosis, (b) prognosis and (c) motivation (Snow 1988; Wilson 1973). Diagnostic framing identifies the problem. Prognostic framing articulates a proposed solution and asserts a “strategy for carrying out a plan” (Benford and Snow 2000: 617). Motivational framing provides a “rationale for engaging in ameliorative collective action” (Benford and Snow 2000: 617).

Frames often take the form of *strategic* discursive structures, that is, they are used by social movement organizations (SMOs) or elites to help people see things their way. Elites and social movement organizations use framing, as well as priming and persuasion, to serve their interests. *Priming* refers to repeated exposure to an idea, often through the media. *Persuasion* tries to get people to think of a policy as good instead of bad, whereas *framing* aims to get people to emphasize a different aspect of a policy, regardless of whether they think it is good or bad (Nelson, Oxley and Clawson 1997). This is done by diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational framing in a matter receptive to an ideological community or, sometimes, in a manner that transforms an ideology. *Frame resonance* is the effectiveness of a frame to tap into an ideological community.

When the correct diagnosis, prognosis and motivation for a social problem are heavily contested, frames have a greater ability to exert effects by suggesting what the essence of an issue is (Nelson and Kinder 1996). Thus, “frames provide direction for temporarily resolving the uncertainty in opinion born of ambivalence by dispensing guidance about the relevance and importance of these clashing considerations” (Nelson and Kinder 1996). The more often ideological communities are *primed* with these frames through repeated exposure (Nelson, Oxley, Clawson 1997: 223), the more likely the frame’s ability to exert effects.

Variation in degree of frame resonance is accounted for by two factors: credibility and relative salience (Benford and Snow 2000). Two important forms of credibility are empirical credibility and the credibility of frame articulators (Benford and Snow 2000). To be empirically credible, the frame need not be scientifically tested; rather, the frames must be believable. Believability is largely a function of ideology - the mixture of interests, social theories, norms and values groups hold. Furthermore, frames resonate when statements are attributed to a credible source; frames fail to resonate when the same statements are attributed to a non-credible source (Druckman 2001).

Relative salience is a function of centrality, experiential commensurability and narrative fidelity (Benford and Snow 2000). Centrality refers to “how essential the beliefs, values, and ideas associated with movement frames are to the lives of the targets of mobilization” (621). Experiential commensurability refers to the match between a frame and the everyday experiences of frame receivers. Finally, narrative fidelity has to do with how a frame matches the narratives that people tell to make sense of their lives.

American Right-Wing Populism

“The reality of the current system is that it constitutes an unholy alliance of ‘corporate liberal’ Big Business and media elites, who, through big government, have privileged and caused to rise up a parasitic Underclass, who, among them, are looting and oppressing the bulk of the middle and working classes in America.”

-Murray N. Rothbard, 1992

Studies of American right-wing populism (Federici 1991; Berlet and Lyons 2000) converge on three key themes. The first shared finding of these studies is that American right-wing populism arises as a response to social, economic and political changes in the U.S. (Lipset and Raab 1970; Federici 1991; Berlet and Lyons 2000). Second, American right-wing populists are skeptical of elites (Canovan 1982; Federici 1991; Berlet and Lyons 2000). Third, right-wing populism includes some sort of appeal to the “people” (Canovan 1982; Federici 1991; Berlet and Lyons 2000). Beyond this point, their stories diverge.

Federici’s (1991) political philosophic typology identifies American right-wing populism as a collective “desire to change the structure of the U.S government in order to eliminate checks on the popular will” (125). Federici (1991) anchors American right-wing populism in plebiscitary democracy, which is held in contradistinction to constitutional democracy. The two socio-political philosophies differ on how they conceive the fundamental capacity and tendency of people to act in the best interest of the political community. Constitutional democracy holds the constitution sacrosanct because of the checks it places on the peoples’ propensity to act undemocratically. Proponents of plebiscitary democracy contend that plebiscitary democracy has more faith in the ability of the people to figure out what are their best interests. The socio-political theory of plebiscitary democracy asserts

...people are naturally good. Their passion and interests are instinctively good. It is society and conventions that corrupt

people...Government...should reflect the desires and interests of the momentary numerical majority (Federici 1991: 8).

According to plebiscitary democratic socio-political theory, government subverts the good natured free-will of the people.

As a result of these fundamental assumptions the two theories differ on their views of the sovereign majority. Plebiscitary democracy, with faith in the free-natured good will of the people to make correct decisions, supports the momentary numerical majority. That is, what the majority of the people want now takes precedent over how elites constructed the constitution in the past. Constitutional democracy, on the other hand, “considers the majority to be legitimate when it results from an elaborate system of checks and balance, through which the will of the majority is shaped over a period of time” (Federici 1991: 9). Skeptical of elite checks on the popular will through constitutional democracy, populists prefer the will of the momentary numerical majority to reign supreme.

In its purest sense, the plebiscitary democratic understanding of interests assumes that the interests of people of various social strata are both *compatible* and *knowable*. However, the pursuit of interests for some groups necessarily contradicts the pursuit of others’ interests. By allowing the momentary numerical majority to determine public policy, the interests of the momentary numerical *minority* are overlooked.

The plebiscitary democratic construction of interests, furthermore, assumes that objective interests are knowable. This assumption relies on a requisite assumption of an a priori social order. Under modern liberalism, the pursuit of rationally maximizing self-interest is the dominant, operating, a priori social order. Under this ideology, actors are assumed to know their objective interests because interests can be determined deductively by ruling out that which is impossible given the natural order of things. For example, because a welfare opponent “knows”

that people rationally seek to maximize their self-interest, he/she therefore “knows” that given the chance to avoid work, the welfare recipient will not work; thus providing funds to the poor will inevitably result in dependence on taxpayer dollars rather than self-sufficiency. The result is the reification of the self-interested welfare recipient with no desire to produce. Therefore, in order to safeguard his/her income as well as not reward the unproductive at the expense of the productive, the self-interested productive member of society believes he/she must oppose welfare.

Knowledge of what has happened and knowledge of how we know what has happened actively creates what will happen in the future. The common failure to recognize the social construction of the past, present and future results in ideological, rather than empirical bases of political engagement. These beliefs serve as guiding principals for interaction in the political process, that is, in advocating interests that preserve or challenge the status quo through various social institutions. Plebiscitary democracy is best understood as plebiscitary democratic *ideology*. The social theory is that people are fundamentally good. Government subverts the good nature of the people. The main value is freedom of the popular will. The normative behaviors are voting for political candidates and supporting social movements in favor of freedom of the popular will.

American right-wing populist elites tap the plebiscitary democratic ideology by framing policy debates in terms of their effects on the good natured free will of the hard working taxpayers. These framing strategies are enlisted in the service of right-wing policies, such as slashing taxes, judicial reform, or bankruptcy law reform. For example, the supply-side economic movement was framed as a means to right the wrong of a growing government bureaucracy that lines its member’s pockets with taxpayer dollars (Federici 1991). Furthermore,

judicial activism – interpreting the constitution in a way that is perceived to be not what the framers intended - is a label attached to judges who subvert the will of the people by short-circuiting representation through elected officials (Federici 1991).

Federici's (1991) typology of American right-wing populism explores elites, their ideologies and the policy debates in which they engage; however, what is sorely lacking is a sociological examination of right-wing populists. In other words there is insufficient attention paid to “the people” who make these movements possible and those adversely affected by tactics used to make these movements successful. An examination of elite discourse and theoretical debates cannot fully capture 21st century American right-wing populism. By labeling right-wing populism as a form of resentment against the government in power, Federici (1991) glosses over groups that are marginalized, dehumanized, demonized and scapegoated by attempts to unleash the “good-natured popular will.”

The second major study in American right-wing populism, Berlet and Lyons' (2000) *Right-Wing Populism in America*, connects an ideology with the processes which make right-wing populist movements successful. Berlet and Lyons' (2000) comparative-historical analysis conceptualizes right-wing populism as a repressive ideology.

[Repressive populist movements] combine anti-elite scapegoating...with efforts to maintain or intensify systems of social privilege and power. Repressive populist movements are fueled in large part by people's grievances against their own oppression but they deflect popular discontent away from positive social change by targeting only small sections of the elite or groups falsely identified with the elite, and especially by channeling most anger against oppressed or marginalized groups that offer more vulnerable targets (Berlet and Lyons 2000:5)

People in the middle – the working class and middle class - feel squeezed by elites and the “parasitic underclass” because either their status or material conditions have declined. Right-

wing populists resent that their hard work is squandered² on unproductive members of society. The government is a key agent in this process.

In addition to plebiscitary democratic ideology, at the core of American right-wing populism lies the work ethic ideology - the belief in the intrinsic value gained from a hard days work; the propensity to stigmatize those who do not conform to this value system and behave accordingly; and the theoretical assumption that the problems of individuals and the problems of society can be fixed if we all just work harder. Producerism gives a narrative to the work ethic ideology by “champion[ing] the so-called producers in society against both ‘unproductive elites’ and subordinate groups defined as lazy or immoral” (Berlet and Lyons 2000: 6). The result of the moralist separation between the productive and unproductive is demonization and scapegoating of the unproductive by the productive. The productive serve their interests by discrediting the unproductive.

Ideological beliefs function as guiding principles for interpreting social reality. This occurs through making sense out of complex social phenomena, which results in situationally transcendent beliefs about the “nature” of reality. The work-ethic ideology is no exception. Situationally transcendent beliefs become a threat to democracy when they are coupled with moralism – the tendency to see the world in terms of the struggle between good and evil (Lipset and Raab 1970). Right-wing populists use demonization and scapegoating to weed out the good from the bad and to assign blame to the “bad” people for all the “good” people’s problems. Demonization occurs when marginalized groups or individuals are excluded from the “circle of wholesome mainstream society” (Berlet and Lyons 2000: 7) for engaging in behaviors that transcend what is reasonable, virtuous and acceptable. With American right-right wing populism, the demonized are the bad guys who suck the tax dollars (embodied labor of the producers) and

crush the freedom (good natured free will of the people) of the good guys. The simplistic account of social reality embodied in moralism, where the bad guys cause all the good guys' problems, engenders scapegoating, which is the "social process whereby the hostility and grievances of an angry, frustrated group are directed away from the real causes of a social problem onto a target group demonized as malevolent wrongdoers" (Berlet and Lyons 2000: 8). These malevolent wrongdoers threaten the good natured (individualistic) free will of the people by not being productive.

End Notes

1. In *The Republic*, Plato lays out the ideal form of government wherein absolute power remains in the hands of a benevolent dictator.
2. Money operates socially not only as purchasing power by convention – we agree that owning money is owning value – but also as the symbolic embodiment of labor. Right-wing opposition to downward distribution of wealth is more clearly understood when tax dollars are recognized as such.

Color Blind Racial Frames

In *Racism Without Racists* (2003), Eduardo Bonilla-Silva outlines four dominant frames used to deny white racial privilege in service of preserving the racial status quo. *Naturalization* is a “frame that allows whites to explain away racial phenomena by suggesting that they are natural occurrences” (Bonilla-Silva 2003: 28). For example, a Bucktonian respondent described segregation as a natural result of people who choose to live among those who are most like them. *Minimization* is “a frame that suggests discrimination is no longer a central factor affecting minorities’ life chances” (Bonilla-Silva 2003: 29). Because racial discrimination does not exist to the same degree it existed before Civil Rights, given Barack Obama’s black presidential administration, adherents of color-blind racial ideology do not consider discrimination a legitimate force affecting life chances for minorities. Bonilla-Silva refers to the use of stereotypes as *cultural racism*, a frame that “relies on culturally based arguments...to explain the status of minorities in society” (Bonilla-Silva 2003: 29). For example, a Bucktonian respondent was certain that John LaBruzzo’s sterilization incentive was targeted at blacks because “black people are always having babies and staying home and not doing shit.” Adherents of color-blind racial ideology use the *abstract liberalism* frame when they use the language of political liberalism to explain racial issues. For example, appealing to equality of opportunity is a way to discount affirmative action programs aimed at counteracting the disproportionately small share of minorities in high status occupations. Because the current laws on the books say that everyone is equal, adherents of color-blind racial ideology argue, we are all equal.

Theory

To be right-wing means to “support the state in its capacity as *enforcer* of order and...oppose the state as *distributor* of wealth and power downward and more equitably in society” (Diamond 1995: 9). Right-wing populists oppose downward distribution of wealth through principled opposition to taking from the productive and giving to the unproductive (Berlet and Lyons 2000). An ideology of individualism informs right-wing populists that their success is solely a function of what they worked for and that social problems can be fixed if people just work harder. They neglect the history of discrimination against minorities as they justify the racial order through producerist frames that extol the virtues of hard work and condemn work ethic deficiencies. By neglecting the role race plays in determining life chances, they attribute poverty among able-bodied adults to individual rather than structural factors.

By using color-blind racial frames, right-wing populists are able to deflect demonization by mainstream society by placing their views within the realm of reasonable and acceptable human discourse (Bonilla-Silva 2003). By asserting that racial segregation is natural, stereotyping minorities and minimizing the affect of discrimination through appeals to abstract liberal principles, such as equality of opportunity, they maintain the racial order (Bonilla-Silva 2003).

Anti-welfare right-wing populists see liberal political elites and lower class minorities engaged in a continual exchange wherein taxpayer dollars are traded for lower class minority votes. Right-wing populists argue that this exchange oppresses hard working tax paying whites. Right-wing populists contend that this exchange results in generational welfare-dependency, which perpetuates social problems in the low income black community that ultimately threaten

middle-class whites. The result has been support for sterilization incentives that appear to target laziness yet implicitly target low-income blacks.

Although Bucktown has made socio-economic strides over the past two decades, right-wing populist ideology remains. This environment has resulted in a sterilization proposal targeted at welfare recipients not much different than one proposed nearly twenty years earlier by David Duke.

Methods

The Qualitative Research Paradigm

Although this study utilizes statistics and historical data, the overarching research paradigm is qualitative. Creswell (2009) differentiates between quantitative and qualitative research by pointing out the following characteristics of qualitative research: (1) qualitative researchers study their participants in a natural setting rather than in a lab; (2) qualitative researchers themselves are considered the main intermediary between responses and data reporting, whereas quantitative research uses an instrument, such as a survey or questionnaire ordinarily intervenes; (3) qualitative researchers gather multiple forms of data and pull out themes from throughout the data; (4) qualitative research originates from a theoretical lens; (5) qualitative data analysis generally follows an inductive path, “from the bottom up” (p. 175); (6) qualitative research is interpretive and places emphasis on meanings constructed by participants; (7) qualitative research has an “emergent design,” necessitating flexibility in research plans; and, (8) qualitative research gives a holistic account (p.175-176).

The Case Study Research Design

A case study is “the intensive study of a single case for the purpose of understanding a larger class of single units,” (Gerring 2007: 211) where a case is defined as “a spatially and temporally delimited phenomenon observed at a single point in time or over some period in time” (Gerring 2007: 211). In case studies, researchers employ a variety of data collection procedures, rely on multiple sources of information and a purposeful sampling strategy (Cresswell 1998). In addition to the nine Bucktonian interviews, the following data were gathered: an interview with Rep. LaBruzzo, Census data on socio-economic indicators by region, comparative election statistics for David Duke and John LaBruzzo, Department of Social

Services statistics on TANF reciprocity, Bureau of Labor Statistics data on unemployment, as well as historical data from newspapers.

The case study method was chosen for two reasons: the criticalness of the case and the knowledge I have of the case. Bucktown provides an exceptional place to examine right-wing populist attitudes for several reasons. First, Bucktown is in Louisiana, which had highest voting percentage for 2008 Republican Presidential candidate John McCain. Second, Bucktown is located within Louisiana District 81, which elected right-wing populist David Duke, despite mainstream Republican opposition to his candidacy. Of all voting precincts in District 81, the three precincts that comprise Bucktown accounted for the second and fourth highest percentage of votes. Third, Bucktown's current state representative recently made a right-wing populist policy suggestion. Fourth, overt displays of racial prejudice such as a "KKK" burning have been documented recently in Bucktown (See Figure 3).

In fact, the "KKK" burning occurred around the corner from my childhood home. My knowledge, familiarity, and comfort in the neighborhood and with the people obviated the need for a strategic entrée and prevented the defensiveness often associated with "data extractors." In other words, people in Bucktown welcomed me as a local pursuing his Master's thesis, rather than as an outsider. Furthermore, my familiarity with the Bucktonian ethos granted me greater sensitivity to the nuanced experiences, beliefs, attitudes, and ideology of its people.

The Researcher's Role

Having prior experience with the object of study presents a challenge and opportunity in the form of bias and depth, respectively. Thus, it is important that I present experiences that could potentially bias my interpretations. From 1983 to 2007 I was a resident of Bucktown. I attended a Catholic grammar school in Bucktown from 1987 to 1996 and have sustained

relationships with other graduates. Although I no longer reside in Bucktown, most of my immediate family, a portion of my extended family, and a few close friends still reside in Bucktown. In addition, I am a white male from a middle-class background.

Bounding the Study

Setting

The interviews took place in the participants' homes, and in one case, the workplace of these Bucktown residents. Bucktown is located in Louisiana, at the northeastern border of Metairie, inside Jefferson Parish, along the border of New Orleans. Bucktown is a 95% white neighborhood with a population of 3,844 (see Table 7).

Participants

Participants were purposefully selected through a snowball sampling process. Because I grew up in the area, I began with acquaintances. I talked to a number of people to find multi-generational families who have a history in Bucktown. Participants were contacted first by phone.

The respondents in this study included nine white Bucktonians from four families and from three different generations as well as Louisiana State Representative John LaBruzzo. Because the purpose of this study is to examine white, conservative attitudes towards incentivizing sterilization of welfare recipients, the sample consisted of white conservatives. Because I used snowball sampling, I was able to gather basic information regarding political ideology prior to contacting respondents. Political ideologies of each respondent are not identical but they do occupy various positions along the right wing of the political spectrum. While some participants are more moderate conservatives, others are more extreme. Seven are

Catholic and two are Protestant. Respondent ages range from 20s to 80s and included three women and seven men. I describe each participant in detail below.

Carl is an eighty-something retired professional. After moving around numerous times throughout the New Orleans Metropolitan Region, he finally settled down and bought a house in Bucktown in the early 1950s where he became only the "third or fourth house on the whole block." Carl is a self-described member of the middle-class. Politically, he identifies as an independent. He describes Bucktown as a good, hard-working, fisherman's village with a mixture of people – middle-class, working class and a few well-to-do people. Carl is optimistic about the future. He cites technological advances such as the fact that his many grandchildren have cellular phones, the increasing knowledge held by professionals in his field, like his grandson, and the increased aid to the poor as signs of benign progress. He does state one caveat to progress, world war.

Carl's son Frank is in his fifties and is a manager in a small business. He was born and raised in Bucktown. He has no college education, choosing instead to serve in the military. He is a self-described member of the middle-class. Politically, he identifies as a Republican. Unlike his father and his son, Carl is quite reserved. Carl likes the security and convenience of Bucktown.

Frank's son Andrew is a graduate student in his late 20s. Like his father, he was born and raised in Bucktown. He now rents a house near his family in Bucktown. Andrew is a self-described member of the middle class. Politically, he identifies as a Republican. He recognizes that he has had some advantages that others have not. He feels he has had everything he has ever needed. Andrew likes that he can feel safe in Bucktown, where he "wouldn't in ninety percent of other neighborhoods."

Minnie is in her fifties and is not yet retired from her job as a service worker. She does not have any education past high school and has worked since she was fifteen, although she is proud that her step-children are successful professionals. Minnie is a self-described member of the middle class. Politically, she identifies as a Democrat. Her family's home was wiped out by the 1947 Hurricane. She grew up on the water and has seen "everything" change in Bucktown to the point where "it's not Bucktown anymore." With her roots deep in Bucktown culture, Minnie does not consider Bucktown a geographical area. Rather, to her, Bucktonians are a dying group of people who are struggling to make it because it's too hard to make a living fishing out of Lake Pontchartrain anymore. The Bucktonians she refers to are being forced to sell their houses. She's frustrated that people are "tearing down all the little historical houses and building up "all of these two story monster homes." Minnie's Bucktown pride stands second to no other interviewee when she asserts, "Bucktown has been my world. I mean, that's my roots. I'm a Bucktonian through and through." Like Andrew, Minnie is concerned about the decline in safety in Bucktown. She doesn't think it is safe anywhere anymore.

Minnie's sister-in-law Michelle is nearing fifty and works as a salesperson and previously as a sales manager. She is a self-described member of the middle-class. Politically, she identifies as a Democrat, although she often votes for Republicans. Unlike the other respondents, Michelle married into a Bucktown family. She grew up across the 17th St. Canal from Bucktown and fell in love with a Bucktown boy. She enjoys fishing and shrimping in the boats her husband builds. She's a little concerned about safety in Bucktown post-Katrina, but for the most part likes living there. She is a woman of great thrift and is proud of the sacrifices she has made in her life to provide for her family.

Michelle's son Luke is a laborer in his early twenties. He has no education past high school. Luke worked all through high school. He was recently laid off and is frustrated that he does not have steady work. When asked what class he belongs to, he said he considers himself about average, "but right below average just to be safe." Luke identifies as not political. He has plenty of relatives in Bucktown. He says "till this day, I'm still meeting cousins" in Bucktown. The only real change Luke says he has seen in Bucktown is some bigger houses being built.

Paul is in his sixties and still works a few days a week as a salesperson. Paul identifies as a member of the middle class. Politically, he identifies as a conservative. Both Paul and his daughter, Lucy, are Protestant. Paul's family moved to Bucktown from Uptown New Orleans when he was a child, because of they couldn't afford a house in the city. They bought a lot in Bucktown for \$800 and built a house themselves. They raised cows, chickens and horses. He liked that back in those days, "you could have anything you wanted as long as you didn't aggravate anyone with it." Paul moved away from Bucktown as an adult but moved back in the 1990s.

Paul's daughter Lucy is in her forties and works as a salesperson. She has some college education, but does not plan to continue her education. She identifies as a member of the lower middle class, but asserts she wants the same things as everyone else. Politically, she identifies as an independent, although she frequently votes for Republican candidates. Although she did not grow up in Bucktown, she was raised by a Bucktonian and moved there as an adult. Among other reasons, she likes the convenience afforded by living in Bucktown, the accessibility to various locations throughout the metropolitan region. Also, she has more than one family member residing in Bucktown.

Don is in his seventies. Don was born and raised in Bucktown. His upbringing was a life of hard work – working days as a laborer and at night in the seafood industry in Bucktown. Although he has less than a middle-school education, he has a successful small business. His children and grandchildren received college educations and are in professional and technical occupations. Don identifies as middle-class. He identifies as non-political and admits to not paying much attention to politics, although he is concerned about the rise in drug use among young people today and related crimes.

Ethical Considerations

Informed consent was obtained from each respondent through adherence to Institutional Review Board standards. An application for conducting research on human subjects was filed with the University of New Orleans Institutional Review Board. Every respondent signed an approved consent form. Furthermore, harm to respondents was prevented by keeping their identities confidential. Respondent's names were changed to conceal their identities. In addition, personal and organizational names mentioned were altered. No information that respondents did not want published is included in this thesis. For example, when a respondent made a comment and then said not to include it in the thesis, I made notes and excluded it from the presentation of findings.

Data Collection

Interview data were collected between November 2008 and March 2009. Each participant was interviewed once during this period. The interviews varied from twenty minutes to two hours. Data were electronically recorded and later transcribed. Some handwritten were taken during the interviews which were placed in the same files as their corresponding

interviews. All interviews were face-to-face and one-on-one. The interview locations were chosen by the interviewees, with the only condition that the interview location provided privacy.

Among the benefits of qualitative interviews are the researcher's control of the line of questioning and the opportunity to gather historical and demographic information from the participants (Creswell 2009: 179). Although I had a set of questions to probe the respondents' beliefs and attitudes (see Appendix A), several times my questions were answered without asking the questions specifically. For example, asking what respondents thought about Rep. LaBruzzo's sterilization incentive often elicited responses about what they thought about welfare and poverty in general.

Data Analysis Procedures

This study is driven by two theoretical propositions. The primary proposition is that support for repressive policies is rooted in right-wing populist ideology, particularly the producerist framework which pits the productive members of society against the unproductive members of society. The secondary proposition is the idea that socioeconomic change will affect ideological change. The primary proposition is analyzed with interviews. The secondary proposition is analyzed with statistical Census data from 1990 and 2000. The analysis of both propositions is supported by the development of the case description through historical data

Interview data were analyzed through pattern-matching, comparing "an empirically based pattern with a predicted one" (Trochim 1989, cited in Yin 1994). Analysis followed an iterative, explanation building process, ultimately developing ideas for future study rather than drawing grand conclusions (Yin 1994: 110). Primarily, the predicted proposition that a producerist framework explains support for repressive policies was compared with interview data.

To this end, interview data were coded and organized thematically into general categories. The coding procedure used was categorical aggregation - using a collection of instances from the data to find issue-relevant meanings (Stake 1995, cited in Creswell 1998). Twenty-three preliminary themes emerged from responses with multiple instances found. Themes deemed not central to the study's propositions were excluded from further analysis. The remaining themes were re-conceptualized as sub-themes underneath larger, more comprehensive themes. The higher level themes included the following: producerism, racial ideology, and welfare knowledge.

Verification

Reliability in qualitative studies refers to making sure "the researcher's approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects" (Gibbs 2007, cited in Creswell 2009: 190). Two strategies were employed to increase reliability. First, transcripts were double-checked to make sure that obvious mistakes were not made during transcription. Second, drifts in the definition of codes were guarded against by taking notes about the codes and returning to these notes throughout the coding process.

The following strategies were used to ensure validity: triangulation of data sources, bias clarification and peer debriefing. Triangulation refers to using multiple data sources. Triangulation adds to validity when multiple sources are used to establish themes (Creswell 2009). Themes from the interviews were not entirely emergent. Most themes linked up with existing historical data. For example, historical data suggests a reverse discrimination frame is salient in District 81 politics. Participant responses converged with this theme. Creswell (2009) asserts that "good qualitative research contains comments by the researchers about how their interpretations are shaped by their background" (Creswell 2009:192). To this end, I state my

background above. Furthermore, Creswell (2009) states that peer debriefing involves “locating a person (a peer debriefer) who reviews and asks questions about the qualitative study so that the account will resonate with people other than the researcher” (192). Because this study was in partial fulfillment of a Master’s Degree, progress was constantly monitored by my thesis committee.

Context: Bucktown

Bucktonians dispute the exact size of their neighborhood. The neighborhood of Bucktown, which is located in the Northeast corner of Metairie, Jefferson Parish's most populous area¹, abuts the Northwest border of New Orleans (see Figures 1, 2). "In its most exclusive parameters, [Bucktown] is but a narrow roadway located on a strip of land about one and a half blocks long, and forty five feet wide" (Accardo 1989). "True" Bucktonians, those who trace their lineage to fishermen who lived within these exclusive parameters, will remind you of what Bucktown once was: a small fishing community bordered by the 17th St. Canal and Lake Pontchartrain. Colloquial boundaries refer to developments outside of the original village as "Buck Vista," a play on combining the names of the neighboring Lake Vista with Bucktown. Bucktown has grown from a one and a half square-block area to a 3 by 19 block area. Those who identify as Bucktonians are not simply confined to the small strip of land where the fishing boats once docked. Eager to self-identify with Bucktown, those who reside between West Esplanade and Lake Pontchartrain longitudinally and Bonnabel Boulevard and the 17th Street Canal latitudinally do not refer to themselves as simply Metairian. Like most people from historic urban neighborhoods, they present themselves as members of a specific neighborhood with distinct cultural imagery. They present themselves as Bucktonians. In fact, those who reside south and west of Bucktown (the wider definition), in the areas where the houses have been historically larger, often consider their neighborhood part of "Uptown Bucktown." There is a sense of pride in self-identification with Bucktown. For this study, Bucktown will refer to the larger parameters – the 3x19 square block area between Lake Pontchartrain and W. Esplanade, north to south, and Bonnabel Blvd. and the 17th St. Canal, west to east.

Regardless of what area one considers Bucktown and what area one considers “just Metairie,” no one disputes that Bucktown is not what it used to be. Over the past 150 years, Bucktown has grown from a community of 25 “squatting” families” (Accardo 1989: 20) to neighborhood of 3,444 people, with 1,800 households (see Table 1). The wilderness that once lay between the Bucktown Peninsula (East End) and the flat land at Bonnabel Blvd. (the new western edge of Bucktown) and Lake Pontchartrain has been developed into a mostly middle class neighborhood. Bucktown now has two schools, several seafood restaurants, a couple bars, both Catholic and Lutheran churches, several modest apartment complexes, a multi-story office building, two posh condominiums, a Coast Guard station and, since Hurricane Katrina, a massive pumping station.

The Evolution of Bucktown

In the mid 19th century, the people of Bucktown “made their living from fishing, crabbing, hunting, and trapping and also from the rental of rooms and boats and the sale of fishing tackle and bait to vacationers” (Swanson 1975:133). During the latter half of the 19th Century, the East End of Metairie and the West End of New Orleans were better known collectively as Lakeport, a place where you could find fishing camps, hotels, restaurant, and other amusement places (Swanson 1975).

During the week, Bucktown was a sleepy fishing village, providing local merchants with shrimp, hard- and soft-shell crabs, speckled trout, croakers, flounders, and other seafood delights... But on the weekends, that all changed. The influx of city folk turned Bucktown into a boom town. On a typical weekend the Bucktown Five Band could be heard playing at any one of a number of fishing camps... Such tunes as “Bucktown Bounce” by Johnny Wiggs and “Bucktown Blues” by Jelly Roll Morton recall the strains of early New Orleans jazz that blared from the camps and pavilions while revelers danced the famed ‘two-step’ until exhaustion overwhelmed them (Accardo 1989: 25)

During the late 19th century and early 20th century, “Bucktown considered itself an autonomous political unit outside the governmental jurisdiction of both Jefferson Parish ... and the city of New Orleans” (Accardo 1989: 39). Consequently its “mayor,” Captain John Bruining, built a two-cell jail to keep visitors in line and also started the Bucktown Volunteer Fire Department (Accardo 1989: 40). Bucktown’s hey day as an entertainment hot spot outside the jurisdiction of Orleans Parish did not last forever.

After the repeal of prohibition, bootlegging was no longer a viable source of additional income. Gambling flourished in the bars and restaurants well past World War I, but the resorts and the lakeshore amusements failed to survive World War II, the Great Depression, and the early twentieth century residential and commercial development of the lakefront” Accardo 1989: 40-41)

It was the beginning of the end for what was once Bucktown.

After World War II, in order to meet the housing demand from New Orleans’ overflowing population, real estate developers dredged in sand to fill in the swamps and marshes that was once the land south and west of the Bucktown peninsula (Accardo 1989: 50). After the 1947 Hurricane wreaked havoc on Bucktown and surrounding Orleans and Jefferson Parish, sand was dredged to construct a levee along Lake Pontchartrain, providing the appearance of safety from flooding. Additionally, in response to the burgeoning civil rights movement and Brown vs. the Board of education (1954), white flight led to the outpouring of New Orleanians into Jefferson Parish. Middle and working-class white families moved away from the cities and into the suburbs. When they moved to Bucktown, the larger market created increased demand for seafood, thus providing an economic stimulus for the fishermen.

Although the economic stimulation brought modern amenities such as sidewalks, subsequent developments emanating from the increased demand for nearby land left Bucktown with only seven of its original homes and resulted in fisherman paying slip fees to dock their

boats along the 17th Street Canal (Accardo 1989). Then, in the early 1990's, the Bucktown community was threatened by a proposal to construct a marina. The Bucktown Civic Association was formed to oppose the marina's construction. They were successful, however, less than a decade later a Coast Guard station was built at the proposed sight of the marina. After Hurricane Katrina hit in 2005, disputing slip fees has become a moot point, because the point of intersection between the 17th St. Canal and Lake Pontchartrain, where Bucktown was founded and where the fishermen docked their boats, is now home to New Orleans' newest pumping station. Some view this as the last nail in Bucktown's coffin, since the local fishermen can no longer dock their boats along the 17th St. canal. Moreover, the pumping station - the ugliest piece of necessary infrastructure - blocks the entry to Lake Pontchartrian.

Some descendants of the old "squatter" families still remain in Bucktown, although they are not as geographically condensed. They now often live among post-World War II Bucktonians. Over the past two decades, a new trend has emerged in Bucktown: the post World War II houses are being marketed as tear-downs, often yielding prime land for middle-class families to build their multi-story dream houses.

There are three waves of Bucktown families. The first² have resided in Bucktown for several generations. These are the families that will not let you forget the old Bucktown parameters north of Hammond Highway. They are descendants of fishermen and those who took advantage of the business from "city dwellers flocking to the lakeshore" during the Lakeport days when Bucktown was a local vacation destination (Accardo 1989: 66). Their families pass down knowledge of when all the land between Old Bucktown and the Bonnabel Boat Launch was nothing but wilderness. The Bucktonians who have been there for three or more generations give the community its fisherman charm. The second wave has been there for two or three

generations. They came after World War II when contractors could not build prefabricated houses with slab foundations fast enough to meet demand. Their arrival in Bucktown coincided with white flight from New Orleans. These families often came from Uptown New Orleans to become part of the mixed middle- and working-class neighborhood of Bucktown. The third wave³ of Bucktonians emerged over the past two decades, coinciding with the real estate boom of the late 1990s and early 2000s. They bought tear-down houses and constructed two-story and, in a few cases, three-story houses worthy of their middle- and upper-middle class salaries.

Socioeconomic Status in Transition

Bucktown maintained a blue-collar, working-class appearance until the 1990s. Over the past two decades the influx of third wave Bucktonians has changed the landscape and the socioeconomic status of the neighborhood. While the second wave influx in the 1950s and 1960s brought sidewalks to Bucktown, the third wave has been accompanied by two new high rise buildings. From the early 1990s to 2009, Bucktown has transitioned from a place where “there [were] more pickup trucks than average” (Wildgen 1995) to a community that is approaching the appearance of more affluent areas in District 81. Census data from 1990 and 2000 on income, education and occupation offer a glimpse into the socioeconomic transition underway in Bucktown. Ultimately these statistics suggest that Bucktown is now a mostly middle-class neighborhood.

Income

Bucktown’s mean household income is roughly \$8,000 less per year than the U.S. average; however, this may be largely due to the disparity between the standard of living in Southern states and other, more affluent regions of the country. Nonetheless, Bucktown’s mean household income has grown at over one and one half times the rate of the United States’ mean

household income (see Table 1, 2). From 1989 to 1999, Bucktown's mean household income increased 17% to \$65,560 (in 2008 dollars), while the U.S. mean household income rose 10% to \$73,609. Additionally, Bucktown's rate of mean household income growth surpasses that of Louisiana (13%) and Jefferson Parish (11%).

Education

Perhaps the most notable area in which Bucktown is outpacing the United States as a whole is in education (see Table 3, 4). The percent of Bucktonians with graduate degrees (11%) has increased by 42% since 1990, which is nearly twice as much than that of the U.S. (9%). Nineteen percent of Bucktonians hold bachelors degrees, whereas only 13% of the U.S. holds a bachelors degree. Moreover, the 25% decline in the percentage of Bucktonians having only a high school diploma is five times higher than that of the United States (5%). Furthermore, over 61% of Bucktonians have at least some post-secondary education, whereas only 52% of Americans have attended school beyond the 12th grade. Thus, the number of high status degrees in Bucktown is rising, while lower status degrees are declining.

Occupation

The meaning of changes in occupation of residents in Bucktown and the United States is not as obvious as the changes in education (see Table 5, 6). Bucktonians have a much smaller percentage of service sector and blue-collar jobs –operator and crafts – (30%), than the U.S., (39%). Likewise, Bucktown has a higher percentage of white collar jobs, 70%, than the U.S., 61%. However, the percent increase in white collar jobs and percent decrease in blue-collar jobs from 1990 to 2000 was greater for Americans in general than among Bucktonians, while the percent increase in service sector jobs was greater for Bucktonians. To interpret trends in

occupational composition, it is necessary to look into varying trends within these white-collar, blue-collar, and service sector categories.

In Bucktown, the proportion of white collar jobs with high autonomy grew relative to the proportion of low autonomy white collar jobs, while the proportion of low skill blue-collar jobs grew relative to the proportion of high skill blue-collar jobs. The percentage of high autonomy white collar jobs – managerial and professional - increased more from 1990-2000 in Bucktown, 6% and 60% respectively, than in the U.S., 9% and 43% respectively; the percentage of less autonomous white collar jobs in technical, sales and administrative support decreased twice as much in Bucktown (32%) than in the U.S. as a whole (16%). Service occupations increased four times as much in Bucktown (58%) than in the U.S (12.4%). Higher skilled blue-collar jobs – precision production, craft and repair - decreased 42%, compared to 17% in the U.S.; operators and laborers increased substantially in Bucktown, 62%, while they declined by 1% in the U.S.

Although the average Bucktonian job status is higher than the U.S. average, job autonomy among Bucktown residents is becoming more stratified than in the U.S. This analysis highlights the problems entailed in labeling an entire neighborhood as middle or working-class. It also demonstrates the widening class gap in Bucktown that began with 2nd wave of Bucktonians moving into three bedroom, one story houses and continued in recent years as 3rd wave Bucktonians purchase these “tear down” houses and develop two (and some times three-) story houses. Bucktown is a mixed-class neighborhood with white working- and middle-class families living side-by-side; however, if we were forced to box the neighborhood today into a socioeconomic category, the snugest fit for the once blue-collar fishing village is middle-class. The high educational attainment, sharply rising mean income and the relatively high proportion of high autonomy white-collar workers does not warrant a working-class stamp. The economic

reality of Bucktown is that the average person inhabiting the neighborhood in 2000 has statistically better life chances than the average Bucktonians residing there in 1990. Bucktown has become an upwardly mobile community. Given the socioeconomic transition underway in Bucktown, one might assume the political culture to be changing as well.

Political Culture in Bucktown

In this next section I attempt to outline the political culture of Bucktown by highlighting significant recent events in Bucktown history. First, I situate Bucktown within its Louisiana legislative district. Then, I briefly recap the infamous 1989 election of David Duke, former Grand Wizard of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. Finally I draw comparisons between David Duke's welfare mitigation strategies and the welfare mitigation strategies of current 81st District's state representative, John LaBruzzo's.

District 81

The District known for sending David Duke to the halls of Louisiana state political power in Baton Rouge received considerable attention from scholars (Powell 1992; Widgen 1995) in the early 1990's. Those interested in District 81 as a piece of the Duke phenomenon have constructed a socio-economic spectrum confluent with geographical location to describe those residing in the 81st District. On the northern end, by Lake Pontchartrain, there is the blue collar, working class fishing village of Bucktown. On the southern end, approaching the Mississippi River, there is the more affluent neighborhood of Old Metairie. And, "in between sprawls a crazy-quilt pattern of apartment complexes for young singles, clapboard bungalows owned by skilled craft workers, and the Levittownish Creole cottages (in brick, not cypress) of salesmen, technicians, and lower-level administrators" (Powell 1992). It seems this characterization of District 81 holds true today, with two exceptions. The first of which has been discussed above -

the socioeconomic transition in Bucktown. It appears that a similar transition is underway in the area between Old-Metairie and Bucktown. The second exception is that in 2003 the District 81 boundaries were redrawn and expanded to include areas west of Bucktown. From 1981 to 2003, District 81 added roughly three census tracts. It appears the demographics of this area closely approach the demographics of the rest of District 81. In the annexed section of District 81, you will find some of the largest houses in District 81, several apartment complexes and a business corridor.

Duke Country

In 1989, District 81, gained national notoriety when they elected former Grand Wizard of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, David Duke as state representative. Bucktown was long removed from considering itself an autonomous political unit; however, its vote in the 1989 legislative election displayed residents' disregard for mainstream perceptions about equal rights and establishment politicians and in the process "determined the outcome of the most extraordinary legislative race in Louisiana history" (O'Byrne 1989: A-14).

Perhaps, more extraordinary than the former Nazi sympathizer's presence in the runoff is the widespread backlash Duke's candidacy provoked. His candidacy drew attention from more than his opponent, home-builder John Treen, whose brother was previously governor of Louisiana. Among his adversaries were "the Catholic Church, local and national Jewish activists, the governor, virtually the entire political establishment of New Orleans and Jefferson Parish, the money and expertise of the Republican National Committee and, ultimately, former President Reagan and [former] President [George H.W.] Bush" (O'Byrne 1989: A-14). Archbishop Phillip Hannan of New Orleans "risked papal censure by issuing a statement against Duke's candidacy" (Morgan 1991: 2). Also, Rev. James C. Carter, president of Loyola University of New Orleans

made a public statement against Duke. Rabbi Mordechai Levy, head of the Jewish Defense Organization, attempted to march through District 81 to oppose Duke, but was unable to obtain a permit. Perhaps even more extraordinary is the effect that the gross condemnation of the charismatic leader of the National Association for the Advancement of White People had on Mr. Treen's campaign. According to the Times Picayune's (1989) account, meddling by the "big boys" – President Bush's letter endorsing Treen and Ronald Reagan's radio endorsement of his "friend" John Treen - galvanized Duke's supporters.

Duke's victory defied conventional logic. Nazi sympathizers were not supposed to win elections, at least not in metropolitan areas in the late 20th century. This sort of reasoning is what made the smack of reality come as such a surprise to Duke's opponents when he won the 1989 election by 226 votes. While Duke's ties to the KKK and the photographs of David Duke in a Nazi uniform during his years of "youthful indiscretion" were enough to derail his runoff in the 1992 gubernatorial election against left-wing populist Edwin Edwards in 1992; however, Duke's polished message in 1989 could not be defeated by his past.

The major New Orleans daily newspaper, the Times Picayune, hired Multi-Quest International, a Metairie based market research firm, to figure out why people supported Duke during the "most extraordinary legislative race in Louisiana history" (O'Byrne 1989: A-14). The twenty interviews found that "almost universally, those who voted for Duke said they did so in spite of his past rather than because of it" (Rhoden 1989: A-15). What drew these Metairians to Duke was that they "wanted an elected official to stand up for what they see as the average, hard-working white American" (Rhoden 1989: A-15). In addition to Duke's charisma, aggressiveness and independence, people in District 81 believed firmly in Duke's "equal rights" stance, which condemned "affirmative action programs, minority set asides, racial quotas and other efforts on

behalf of blacks [that] have tilted the system against [whites]” (Rhoden 1989: A-15). When Duke moved to the state capital in Baton Rouge Baton Rouge, he attempted to do what he campaigned to do – level the playing field for whites.

Duke’s tenure as representative of District 81 was not a productive one. Racial issues were the target of almost all of Duke’s bills. The racially charged part of his legislative package included: (1) abolishing affirmative action programs; (2) increasing penalties for possession and sale of drugs in public housing projects; (3) cutting off welfare benefits to convicted drug offenders; and, (4) providing financial incentives for public assistance recipients to use contraceptives (Wildgen 1995). Duke was unsuccessful in passing this legislation. His only bill to become law during his three years in office was House Bill 1623, which prohibited jurors from profiting from their jury service (Wildgen 1995). Although Duke was unsuccessful in pushing his agenda, he did represent his constituents, or at least the simple majority of District 81 residents that voted for him (that is, assuming the 1989 Multi-quest International study accurately grasped the sentiments of District 81). Duke’s legislative package attempted to counteract “efforts on behalf of blacks [that] have tilted the system against [whites]” (Rhoden 1989: A-15). One of his efforts to do so was more creative than others.

House Bill 1584

One of the most striking items on Duke’s legislative agenda was a proposal framed to reduce welfare costs and the cycle of poverty. House Bill No. 1584 proposed providing cash payments for welfare recipients who consented to long-term surgically implanted contraceptives. Duke’s original plan was to give recipients of Aid for Dependent Children (AFDC), which was transformed into Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF) in the 1990s, \$100 a year for as long as they retained Norplant implants, which effectively sterilizes patients for five years or

until surgically removed (Hill and Wise 1991). Duke claimed that the goal of the bill was to reduce welfare costs and to break the cycle of poverty. A report on House Bill No. 1584, prepared by Lance Hill and Tim Wise (1991) of the Louisiana Coalition Against Racism and Nazism (LCARN), an organization formed to oppose David Duke, argues that the proposal was “a thinly veiled sterilization plan designed to reduce the black population” (p. 1). Hill and Wise (1991), armed with many of Duke’s own words, insist that House Bill No. 1584 has the same intentions and implications of Nazi eugenics. In 1986, two years before David Duke started his campaign for electoral office, he wrote the following in a letter to U.S. News and World Reports:

No one could ever deny that environment has a great impact. It does. Yet, its time to face up to the fact that heredity is at least equally important. Once that is admitted, it affords magnificent possibilities for mankind... There is no reason we shouldn’t give incentives to welfare recipients, criminals, and mentally defective to go childless. On the other hand, there is no good reason why we shouldn’t offer the gifted and successful incentives to have more children (Duke 1986: 3, cited in Hill and Wise 1991)

Hill and Wise (1991) present more of Duke’s words to reveal his preference for white genes:

There are plenty of ways to intelligently slow down the non-white birth rate... It is the idea that the racial make-up of America is vital to her well-being, that our genetic and cultural heritage must be preserved, and that the best elements in our people must be promoted and cultivated so our people can realize their promise in the stars (Duke 1983, cited in Hill and Wise 1991).

According to Hill and Wise (1991), House Bill No.1584 evolved from earlier racist, hereditary-selective suggestions, such as the ones discussed above. Eugenics is promoting valued genetic qualities and demoting less valued genetic qualities by selective breeding. David Duke made a qualitative judgment in population policy that favors one group of people over another.

When the bill came to the House committee, Duke moved to amend the bill to allow welfare recipients to use the \$100 for any form of birth control, including abstinence (Anderson and Frazier: 1991). Rather than the thirteen member committee settling on Duke's watered down sterilization bill, they stiffened the proposal, increasing the \$100 annual payment to \$100 monthly, effectively gutting the bill. House Bill No. 1584 did not pass the House.

One year after his election, David Duke ran an unsuccessful campaign for state senator. In 1992 he lost the governor's race⁴ to the left-wing populist and three time Louisiana governor (1971, 1975, 1983), Edwin Edwards, who had spent most of his third term in office under federal indictment for racketeering and is currently in jail for misdeeds during his fourth term. Although Duke lost the 1992 Louisiana gubernatorial election, he did get 55% of the white vote in Louisiana.

Duke left his seat in the state legislature because he could not run for his legislative seat and governor concurrently. In 1992 Duke was replaced by Rhodes Scholar David Vitter. Vitter did not draw his support from Duke's precincts (Wildgen 1995). In 1999 Vitter left District 81 for a seat in the U.S. Senate and was replaced by Jennifer Sneed, who left the office after being elected to the Jefferson Parish Council. In 2004 Sneed was replaced by John LaBruzzo, a local medical sales representative who ran on a platform of bringing business to Louisiana and instituting tuition tax credits. In 2008 John LaBruzzo, who resides in Bucktown, ran unopposed and remains District 81's representative. Since David Duke left office, the country lost interest in who was representing District 81. That was until John LaBruzzo stepped into the national media spotlight for making a proposal similar to Duke's House Bill No. 1584.

LaBruzzo's Proposal

In September 2008, John LaBruzzo publicly announced on a talk radio show that he was looking into providing low-income men and women with a \$1,000 incentive to undergo tubal ligations and vasectomies. Further, he stated that he was looking into creating tax incentives that would foster increased fertility among college-educated, affluent couples. According to Rep. LaBruzzo,

we're on a train headed to the future and there's a bridge out...and nobody wants to talk about it...what I'm really studying is any and all possibilities that we can reduce the number of people that are going from generational welfare to generational welfare (Waller 2008).

Rep. LaBruzzo's proposal was not well received and resulted in formal and informal sanctions just days after his announcement. Archbishop Alfred C. Hughes of New Orleans publicly condemned his idea for being "an egregious affront to those targeted and blatantly anti-life" (Times Picayune 2008) Rep. LaBruzzo also drew criticism from Republican Governor Bobby Jindal, as well as from the Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus and the Louisiana Democratic Caucus. Rep. Juan LaFonta, D-New Orleans, former Black Caucus chairman said, "LaBruzzo's an idiot...I think it's totally disrespectful to poor people in this country" (Moller 2008). Less than two weeks after his sterilization announcement, Rep. LaBruzzo lost his seat as Vice Chairman on the Louisiana House Health and Welfare Committee.

John LaBruzzo found himself in the national spotlight as he promulgated his proposal to sterilize welfare recipients. Back in Louisiana, speculation abounded as to why Rep. LaBruzzo made the suggestion. Many called him a racist and a eugenicist. Others, including his former fellow Jefferson Parish representative, Danny Martiny R-Kenner, think he is "well-intentioned, but there are times he doesn't give a lot of forethought to coming out with some of the

controversial things he says” (Moller 2008). Yet others perceive LaBruzzo’s sterilization proposal as a political maneuver, a way to pander to his constituents in an effort to make them forget about his support for doubling legislator’s salaries, which became political folly just months earlier. Like many of the pay raise bill’s supporters, LaBruzzo was staring down the barrel of a recall petition. Whether his proposal was an attempt at redemption, well thought out and sincere, or whether his proposal exemplified LaBruzzo’s off the cuff modus operandi, the fact that LaBruzzo could feel confident in offering \$1,000 to welfare recipients to get their tubes tied sparks curiosity about his constituency.

Speculation aside, the nation was reminded of just what District John LaBruzzo represents. The national and local media was eager to liken LaBruzzo to his notorious predecessor, David Duke – an association that does not sit well with Rep. LaBruzzo. I asked representative LaBruzzo what he thought about the association made by James Gill, a columnist for the local newspaper, the Times Picayune. He said

He wants to associate me with somebody who once held my seat when I was in high school, who belonged to some secret organization that wouldn’t even let Italians in, that would be opposed to me and my background and my heritage...I don’t appreciate anyone who thinks poorly on Italians, so I wouldn’t think much of them or James Gill. David Duke was against taxes, higher taxes. Does that mean everyone who is against higher taxes is like David Duke?

Although they both presented bills to incentivize sterilization among the poor in order to reduce generational welfare, they do not share the same history or voting base in District 81. Indeed, John LaBruzzo is no David Duke. John LaBruzzo has the untarnished image David Duke needed when he ran for governor in 1992. Although LaBruzzo, like David Duke, has been criticized for drawing unnecessary attention to himself in the legislature, he did not spend time on the soap box in Louisiana State University’s free speech alley in a Nazi uniform sympathizing with the

Nazi cause and starting nativist student organizations. John LaBruzzo did not head one of the largest and oldest hate groups in the United States (Knights of the Ku Klux Klan). John LaBruzzo did not start his own segregationist newsletter (National Association for the Advancement of White People). John LaBruzzo does not sell “Mein Kampf” out of his legislative office in Metairie (Rickey 1992).

The difference between LaBruzzo and Duke’s appeal shows in the disparity between their voting bases. First, LaBruzzo won his election against trial lawyer Mickey Landry more decisively than Duke beat homebuilder John Treen, capturing 55% of the 81st District votes compared to Duke’s narrow margin of 226 votes (51%-49%) (Louisiana Secretary of State 2008). The distinction between LaBruzzo and Duke’s support is most marked in the shady tree lined-streets in Old Metairie. In these more affluent precincts near Metairie’s only golf course, Duke drew 21% and 34% of the vote, whereas LaBruzzo received 65% and 51% respectively (Louisiana Secretary of State 2008). The three precincts where Duke received his 2nd (65%) and 4th (63%) highest percentage of votes are the three precincts that comprise Bucktown⁵ (Louisiana Secretary of State 2008). One would think that the three precincts that voted in the Klansman would reject LaBruzzo, the more affluent medical sales representative; however, voting patterns indicate that candidate biography and profession do not separate LaBruzzo and Duke Supporters. LaBruzzo collected 64%, 59% and 53% of the vote from the once overwhelmingly blue-collar Bucktown precincts (Louisiana Secretary of State 2008). Although the socioeconomic makeup has changed in Bucktown, the political culture seems to have remained the same.

Bucktown remains a critical case of right-wing populist ideology, as evidenced by the reappearance of a sterilization incentive to target the supposed unproductive underclass.

End Notes

1 Metairie is unincorporated as opposed to the incorporated Jefferson Parish city of Kenner

2 The first wave I refer to is considered two separate waves by Accardo (1989): the first wave referring to the original 25 squatter families and the second referring to those who moved to the area during Bucktown's "boom" days, when "city dwellers flock[ed] to the lake shore (Accardo 1989: 66).

3 Accardo (1989) does not consider this new wave, because this trend was just emerging as she was writing.

4 Sheriff of Jefferson Parish, Harry Lee, dubbed Duke's 1989 race with David Treen a competition between a "bigot and an asshole" (O'Byrne 1989). The governor's race between Duke and four-time governor Edwin Edwards in 1992, was well known as the race between the "crook and the klansman." Bumper stickers throughout the state reading, "Vote for the Crook. It's important" could be seen throughout the state.

5 One of these precincts actually includes 9 blocks (roughly one third of the precinct geographically) outside of Bucktown.

Findings

Right-wing populists oppose downward distribution of wealth through principled opposition to taking from the productive and giving to the unproductive (Berlet and Lyons 2000). Despite attributing their financial situation to individual hard work and sacrifice (Feldman 1982), they attribute poverty to both individual and structural factors. They find three structural causes - defects in minority sub-cultures, the incentive for welfare-dependency, and the culture of poverty that welfare-dependency creates. In addition, right-wing populists either minimize the affect race plays in determining life chances or assert that whites have worse life chances than blacks because of minority set-asides. Unlike left-wing populists, they view government as the cause, not the solution to their oppression. They scapegoat the exchange of taxpayers' dollars between liberal political elites and welfare recipients as the cause of their oppression. For the respondents, the most salient scapegoat of this oppression is low-income black welfare recipients. In addition to this social theory, right-wing populists have an ideological, rather than empirical understanding of the current state of the welfare system in America.

Despite socio-economic strides and changes in political representation, right-wing ideology remains in Bucktown. Support for Rep. LaBruzzo's voluntary sterilization policy suggestion exists in Bucktown.

This section presents findings from ten interviews with Bucktonians. First, individualistic attitudes that blame government as the cause rather than the solution to the taxpayers' problems are presented. Second, respondents' beliefs are presented about equality of opportunity and the disparity in life chances between whites and blacks. Third, frames used by the respondents to explain poverty and welfare – work ethic, generational welfare-dependency and deservingness – are discussed. Fourth, racial frames used by the respondents are presented – reverse

discrimination, white supremacy, cultural racism, political correctness. Fifth, support and opposition for John LaBruzzo's sterilization incentive are discussed. Sixth, respondents' ideological understanding of welfare programs and welfare recipients are presented. And finally, respondents' attitudes towards elites are examined.

Individualism

“If you read the constitution, you don’t see anywhere in there that we have an obligation to take care of other people who aren’t able to take care of themselves.”

-Rep. John LaBruzzo

Party identification proved an unreliable predictor of attitudes towards LaBruzzo’s proposal. Of the nine Bucktonians interviewed, three were Republicans, two were Democrats, two were independent (although one identified as conservative), and two considered themselves “not political.” Although all seven respondents who voted chose John McCain over Barack Obama in the 2009 presidential election, they all generally held a right-wing ideology, that is, for the most part, they “oppose the state as *distributor* of wealth and power downward and more equitably in society” (Diamond 1995: 9). For example, Andrew said, “I just don’t believe in a communistic type society where you take from the rich and give to the poor.”

Part of the reason that respondents oppose tax raises is their mistrust of government. For example, Luke, a laborer in his twenties, said, “the way you really have to look at it is the government is always fucking you. So the way I look at it is get whatever you can.” Luke asserts that people maximize their material interests in the face of an untrustworthy government. His belief in people rationally pursuing their self-interest appeared in his concern about a sterilization incentive. He expressed concern that women recipients might get pregnant first and *then* get their tubes tied in order to receive “more tax money” while still bearing a child.

The Bucktonian respondents expressed that hard work and sacrifice on the part of individuals, not a bloated government, will solve social problems. As Lucy, a middle-aged salesperson, said

I think everybody should take care of themselves. I don’t have kids because I can’t afford to take care of kids. That’s how I feel about

it. I think everybody that's able to work - and not because they have a drug problem or because they got an alcohol problem or some kind of dependency problem; if you have kids, you should take care of them

Lucy is unsympathetic to the plight of those that require government assistance. She's concerned with the "socialistic government" that she thinks liberals are looking for. In this regard, John LaBruzzo seems ideologically the ideal politician to represent her. Rep. LaBruzzo states,

I am a conservative, probably one of the more conservative Republicans in the state. And I don't apologize for that. I know you draw a lot of attention, negative or positive, for being a true conservative these days, but look where our country is. We're going socialist. We're going to the left under Barack Obama! I think we need people who are willing to stand up and be courageous and say "hey look. Enough is enough. This isn't what are country is founded upon." If you read the constitution, you don't see anywhere in there that we have an obligation to take care of other people who aren't able to take care of themselves. But we do. And since we do, it's only fair that we spend the tax-payers' dollars wisely. You have to remember that this isn't my money. This isn't the state's money. This is the p..., the tax-payers' dollar. So, I think we have a responsibility, a fiduciary responsibility to spend it wisely and make sure we're not giving it to people who are using it to buy drugs.

Rep. LaBruzzo frames individualism as an American legacy that has survived through adhering to the constitution. He praises the hero who battles the irresponsible left that doesn't know when to stop giving in to people who can't "take care of themselves." That hero must be a person of the people, the taxpayers. Indeed, modern right-wing populist rhetoric has replaced "the people" with the "taxpayers." He/she must guard the taxpayers' dollars, the symbolic representation of Americans' hard work. The ideal charismatic right-wing populist leader is the main character of LaBruzzo's narrative: the person who brings our country back to what it was founded on, self-sufficiency and individualism.

Equality of Opportunity

The respondents overwhelmingly interpreted equality of opportunity racially, although they differed on how much race affects life chances. Most respondents framed equality of opportunity in terms of formal equality - in terms of the current laws on the books - rather than substantive equality, which takes into account the effect of ascribed statuses. This distinction affects perception of equality of opportunity in 21st Century America. The Bucktonians interviewed fell into one of three categories. Either they believe equality of opportunity has not been achieved; has been basically achieved; or, has been lost because of racial quotas and other minority set-asides that disadvantage whites.

Andrew, a graduate student and soon to be professional in his twenties who opposes LaBruzzo's sterilization incentive, uses substantive equality to explain equality of opportunity.

He says,

most big corporations just - I think [in] the society we live in, minorities are not treated the same and not hired the same rate as everyone else. Women are about fifty percent, but still, you can't tell me that any CEO of a company, white male CEO of a company, is not going to be more prejudiced to a black person than a white person. I guess the hippie answer would be that "everybody is equal, whatever." Still, they don't think like that. You'll never convince me to think like that. Look at NCAA football coaches. What is it, 97 percent are white. And those are big paying jobs and it still has to do with prejudice in our society.

Andrew seems to hold no doubts about the persistence of racial discrimination in the U.S. despite laws that claim all citizens are equal. Andrew's beliefs about the effects of racial discrimination differ substantially from the other respondents. For example, his grandfather Carl, an elderly, retired professional believes America is a meritocracy. Carl believes "the person who has the most education is going to get the job," regardless of race. Both Carl and Andrew oppose Labruzzo's proposal.

The second group of Bucktonians minimizes racial discrimination, that is, they suggest “discrimination is no longer a central factor affecting minorities’ life chances” (Bonilla-Silva 2003: 29). They believe equality of opportunity has been basically realized. For example, Frank, a middle-aged manager believes, “you’re always going to have that certain percentage of assholes, but I think 97 percent. Yeah, there is equal opportunity for all Americans.” The assholes Frank is referring to are “bigots [and] racists.” He doesn’t believe “there are enough of them to interfere with anything. They may interfere with a few individual’s lives, but not society as a whole. They’re basically a small minority.” Frank attributes racial discrimination to a bygone era.

Likewise, Michelle believes equality of opportunity has basically been realized. Her response to whether or not equality of opportunity exists:

Um, I would say so. I think probably in some cases some people are kind of prejudiced or afraid to take in certain people [because] they might be lazier or they may sue them because...they might...say “well you were prejudiced, I’m going to sue you.” So maybe a few people are afraid...but mostly I think it’s equal. We’re coming a long way.

Michelle sympathizes with the plight of employers who have to fear the prejudice label when all they want to do, she claims, is cultivate a staff of hard workers. Equality, then, results in a situation where the best employees do not necessarily get the job. Michelle supports Rep. LaBruzzo’s sterilization incentive.

The fourth group of Bucktonians believe that equality of opportunity has been surpassed because minorities are unfairly advantaged through affirmative action programs. For example, Luke said, “they need to make all opportunity equal. Give everybody a chance.” Luke believes minorities have an unfair advantage. Luke supports John LaBruzzo’s sterilization incentive.

Likewise, Lucy believes “the most discriminated person now is a white male.” Lucy justifies how males make more money than females for doing the same jobs, how most CEO’s are white males, and how white family’ incomes are much higher than blacks. She asks,

Did those white families go to school? Did those white families go to college?...There was a law passed before either of us were born that every child is entitled to an education regardless of race, color or whatever. So what makes them any different than anybody else?

Lucy points to the current laws to indicate the existence of equality of opportunity. When you add affirmative action programs to the mix, the scale is tilted in favor of minorities.

Poverty, Welfare and the Work Ethic

Why should we keep paying for six and seven children when I'm struggling myself, living here alone with no husband, on a fixed income and not on welfare?

-Minnie from Bucktown

Although the respondents had varying views on equality of opportunity, they all used more than one of the following frames to explain poverty and welfare: poverty results from a lack of hard work, generational welfare-dependency, and deserving versus undeserving poor.

Poverty is a lack of hard work

Feldman's (1982) study of 1,119 Americans found that those who believe in economic individualism - that economic mobility can be gained through hard work - and the existence of equality of opportunity results in them *not* locating the cause of their financial well-being in the social structure.

The Bucktonian respondents view themselves as hard workers. In addition, more than half of the immediate families I spoke with were upwardly mobile. They attribute their success in life to hard work and thrift. For example, Don, a small business owner with less than a high school education, has two children who are professionals and a grandchild that is a professional. He explains how this occurred: "[I] never had the chance to go to school. [I] always had to work...I guess I could have went to school later on...but I wanted to see my kids get a good education." Don says he worked hard. Now his family is successful by American standards.

Andrew echoes Don's sentiments. Andrew talked about the most important life lesson he has learned. He said,

My dad always stressed that you only get what you work for and that hard work is the only option in life. And there's no getting around it. And if you want to be successful, that's the only way to get it. That was pretty much the main thing stressed to me

throughout my whole life – you're not going to get anywhere without hard work.

By all American standards, Andrew appears successful. He will soon be earning a six figure pay check. But, according to Andrew, this has not always been his life trajectory.

I could have easily just become a poor person by not going to school. I wasn't going anywhere in life and I probably would have a run of the mill, lower class job. Not that I'm going to be making much money or anything, but if I would not have made the right decision in my life and stop using drugs and move towards a positive direction, I wouldn't be not poor.

Andrew credits the success in his life to his work ethic and sacrifice, which he says were taught to him by his father.

Although the respondents use individualism to explain their financial situation, they attributed poverty to both individual and structural factors. When asked why people are poor, Andrew struggled to give a definitive answer, but eventually concluded,

I think what a lot of people probably feel too - that they don't have the drive and the will to do what others want to do...I think it has a lot to do with substance abuse. I think the majority of them are substance abusers. Is it because they are poor? Or is it the reason they're poor? I don't know. I guess you always have to look at the fact they probably grew up poor and they were comfortable with the way they live. So, if you're comfortable with way you live, you're comfortable with way you live so...

Although Andrew believes that discrimination denies equality of opportunity and recognizes the role of socialization, he ultimately suggests that the poor make a decision to remain poor.

Other respondents explained poverty structurally through generational welfare-dependency and the culture of poverty¹ that decreases life chances for those born into the underclass. According to Michelle, people are poor because

they won't get out and get their ass a job. They're lazy. Um, education. I tell you, nowadays you can go to Burger King and they're paying pretty good from the storm, huh? Get a job, that's

all I've got to say. It's an easy thing to do, if you want to work. But if you don't have to get a work and you still get a check, why go to work, huh?

Michelle locates the structural cause of poverty in the incentive for laziness created by welfare programs, particularly cash assistance.

Generational Welfare-dependency

The aim of Rep. LaBruzzo's sterilization incentive was to alleviate the culture of poverty, the perceived unwelcome side effect of generational welfare-dependency. The respondents overwhelmingly agreed that welfare-dependency weakens the work ethic. Because of the Bucktonians' lived experience of hard work leading to upward mobility, a change in welfare policy is tantamount to an attack on inducements to generational laziness. Minnie explained why people are poor:

I want to say [the] majority is the way they were raised. Their parents didn't better themselves, didn't try to better themselves. So, therefore the children don't try to better themselves. You know, they got seven kids, and they didn't use birth control! And therefore they had lots of children. They didn't know and they struggled to raise these children and then what did these children do but turn around and do the same thing and then their children did the same thing. Fortunately enough, there are some that overcome it and, you know, say "I'm gonna do better," I was poor, and I don't want to live that way. My parents didn't have anything and I don't want to go back there. I made sure my son, you know, had better than I had and he's trying to make sure his girls have better than he has. But you got to work at it. You can't be lazy.

Minnie credits the cause of poverty to structural factors – the lack of motivation and irresponsibility passed down from generation to generation. She accounts for the upward mobility of her family with generational diffusion of a strong work ethic. Her tone intensifies as she condemns the poor decisions these families make.

And a lot of it's drugs. I have to say that. A lot of it's drugs. So you don't want to work, [because] you're doing drugs all day. How

are you getting drugs? Well, you rob and steal or your parents are giving you money. They don't realize you're messed up. Also back to the poorness. In the city, they're not made to go to school, you know? There you go. So these kids are not educated. So they're taught to hate whites and you know, don't go to school. It isn't worth it you know and then they hang in the streets. So there, that's generations out the window. And there is exceptional ones that come out and say "I saw that lifestyle and chose that I wasn't going to live like that and I was going to better myself" and that's wonderful. But the majority of these children, they let them stay home from school and they don't teach them right. They let them talk bad, no manners, talk ugly to the police. So what do you expect a child to do when they're raised like that? There's no hope. I don't think New Orleans will ever straighten up, not New Orleans.

Rep. LaBruzzo's generational welfare-dependency frame resonates with Minnie's ideology, because of its experiential commensurability and centrality. Where Minnie seemingly differs from Rep. LaBruzzo is her racialized explanation of poverty. She talks about blacks' ignorant hatred of whites and the failure of their parents to teach them how to survive in American society - having manners; not "talking bad"; not "talking ugly to the police." For Minnie, the culture of poverty seems to be a defect in black culture.

In addition to framing poverty as a lack of hard work stemming from generational welfare-dependency, the respondents separate the deserving and undeserving poor as they make sense of the social problems engendered by generational welfare through an individualist lens.

Deserving vs. Undeserving Poor

The respondents made two distinctions between those who are deserving of welfare and those who are not: ableness versus disabledness and lazy parent versus potential productive child. According to the respondents, the disabled are worthy of the middle and working classes' symbolic labor (tax dollars), while those who are physically and mentally capable are considered undeserving. Frank tells me

If you describe the poor as having no income, then the government could help support them, but they should earn the money somehow. If they are at a medium income, they should work harder to make more money. I don't think the government should – just because you're poor- it depends on what your standard of poor is. If you're handicapped and poor, if you can't work physically and mentally, I think the government should help you. But, if you are physically and mentally able to work, I don't think the government should support you.

Frank invokes his own personal experience as an able-bodied, non-welfare receiving individual to explain his view.

As far as welfare, from the standpoint that someone's handicapped and can't work or anything, I agree with it. But, when a person can go out and work and make a living, I don't agree with giving the man money for doing nothing. So, I don't really agree with welfare. But I've never been in that position where I needed to accept welfare. So, I guess from that standpoint, I've never experienced it. If things turned out different in life and I needed welfare, then I might think different, but I've never needed it, but I don't agree with giving people money and them not earning it, so, or benefits without earning it somehow, unless they are unable to - physically, mentally, then I agree with it. Does that make sense to you?

Frank principally disagrees with welfare, with giving someone something for nothing. He recognizes that he may feel different if it were in his interest to support welfare programs; that is, if he were to receive welfare benefits, then he would support welfare. Ultimately, Frank has compassion for those who are physically or mentally unable to work. The disabled were not the only groups respondents considered deserving of welfare.

The Bucktonians interviewed also had compassion for the elderly and the children of lazy welfare recipients as well. Lucy says

...the government should help kids. The government shouldn't help adults who don't want to work. The government should take care of our elderly and kids that need it. I don't want to see any child go hungry and I don't want to see any lady like Mrs. [Jones] not have heat in her house or food on the table.

I reminded Lucy that the welfare funds would have to pass through the parents in order to reach the children in need that she had such compassion for. Her response was as follows:

I don't know. That's a dilemma, but I don't think any child should go hungry. I don't think any child should be deprived of an education or - and they don't in the pub school system. They have to give every child what they need. I don't know what the answer is to that. I know that I don't think we should support the mothers. They should go out and get a job. If they have 6 kids, they need to go out and support 6 kids. I don't know. I guess that's why they get food stamps and stuff like that, but I don't believe in helping them, because they can help themselves.

Like most Bucktonians interviewed, Lucy has some degree of ambivalence about how to deal with poverty. Studies suggest this ambivalence is a larger trend among conservatives. Gainouss's (2008) study of 500 Florida voters revealed that conservatives are generally more ambivalent than liberals in evaluating social welfare programs, especially programs that improve the standard of living for the poor. The most powerful explanation of ambivalence is conflicting attitudes towards perceived beneficiaries: blacks and the poor. Lucy believes that poverty is ultimately a result of irresponsibility on the part of parents and, therefore, welfare recipients who can work are undeserving of taxpayers' money. Nonetheless, she shows compassion for the children for whom the welfare payments are intended.

End Notes

1. The culture of poverty refers to the idea that the poor have a unique value system as a result of their material conditions. See Oscar Lewis's *Five Families: Mexican Case Studies in the Culture of Poverty* (1959) for further discussion.

Racial Ideology

“Well I don’t mind, you know, helping them get ahead just so long as we can get them off the welfare. If we finally get a pattern where we have you know a race that gets educated and they can continue to do that to their offspring, you know, that’d be wonderful...I just don’t want to...ride a mile from here and watch...Willy sitting on his porch...taking all of our money!...And we’re struggling. I’m buying, we’re buying, no-name shit at the store, excuse my French, so that he can stay at home on his porch and get the welfare. It’s just not right! It really isn’t right. We really need a change!”

-Michelle from Bucktown

Although the most consistent predictor of means-tested welfare attitudes is political ideology (Groskind 1994; Schneider and Jacoby 2005; Gainouss 2008), other variables explain attitudes towards welfare. Hasenfeld and Rafferty’s (1989) study of 919 housing units in Detroit found that race of respondent, age and income had a statistically significant affect on attitudes towards means-tested welfare. Hasenfeld and Rafferty (1989) conclude that because whites are less structurally disadvantaged, they are less likely to support means-tested welfare programs than blacks.

All of the Bucktonian respondents were white. In fact, 95% of all Bucktonians are white (see Table 7). This is a significantly higher percentage of whites than the nation as a whole (75%) or Louisiana (63%). In addition, blacks make up less than one percent of all Bucktonians. This is significantly less than the nation as a whole (12%) and Louisiana (33%), yet understandable because neighborhood racial segregation is quite common. Bucktown’s low percentage of minorities seems less a result of a natural tendency for people to flock to their own and more a result of concerted efforts on the part of whites to keep minorities out of Bucktown.

Minnie, a first-wave Bucktonian, shared a story of what Bucktown was like in the Jim Crow Era. According to Minnie, Buck Wooley, the “founder” of Bucktown and the former village’s namesake,

would stand at that bridge. And there were no blacks...[when] I was a little girl, we had to go get [Susie], the lady who worked [here], because they didn't walk the streets. You couldn't walk the streets, even though the people knew she was [Susie]. She was scared to walk the streets and to walk down Hammond Highway to catch the bus from Orpheum Avenue. They wouldn't do it. You had to go pick up your help, because they weren't allowed to come. They were scared for their life. They were always known to...not come in Bucktown, or that's it. You weren't going to make it out. And I'm not saying that was right...but that's how they were in those days. And that's changed, thank goodness, that, you know, everybody's supposed to be getting along. So, it is different out here now.

Thus, it appears Bucktown has remained white by protecting its borders through intimidation tactics.

Responses among other Bucktonians indicate that racial prejudice still remains. I asked Luke, a member of a first wave Bucktonian family, what he liked about Bucktown. He told me the following:

Bucktown, it's easy. They're ain't a lot of trash. Of course you're going to have your Bucktown hillbillies, but that's every so often. There's a lot of nice people around here. It's comfortable. Bucktown is home. [What do you mean when you say there's not a lot trash. So you mean like post-Katrina trash in the 9th Ward?] Well yeah, pretty much. They don't have a lot of coloreds. Bucktown is good for keeping a lot of that out, not to be racist or anything.

When I asked Luke about the post-Katrina trash in the 9th Ward, I was referring to the ubiquitous mounds of debris. What Luke was referring to was an inferior group of people.

Racial Preferences Are Natural

In May of 2008, a black family moved into Bucktown. Four days later they found that “KKK” had been burned in large, clear letters across one half of their lawn at 1500 Homestead Ave. In response, Catholic, Presbyterian, Episcopal, Methodist, Jewish, and Islamic church leaders as well as non-religious community leaders came together to “uproot hate, celebrate

freedom” and re-sod the family’s lawn where “KKK” was burned. Among those not attending were state representative John LaBruzzo and representatives of the local Catholic Church, St. Louis King of France, lending weight to the critique that John LaBruzzo’s proposal was an attempt to pander to his constituents as well as the suspicion that the KKK burning was not altogether unwelcome.

Lucy finds her neighbors’ attempt to “uproot hate” by planting new grass where “KKK” was burned inauthentic. She had the following to say:

No, all of our neighbors went out there and helped them plant the grass. And you can’t tell me that. I don’t buy that they were all apologetic. And why should we apologize for something somebody else did...[Sarah’s] husband or boyfriend went over there. He went and he works for Orleans Parish. He’s a fireman for Orleans. And most New Orleans firemen that are white, oh, they can’t stand them, because they’re getting reverse discrimination with the fire chief and all that B.S. I’ve got a good friend of mine...his dad’s a chief in Orleans and they don’t want him to retire because he’s the last white chief that’s left. Yeah, but I don’t think they did it as a, I don’t know why people did it, but, I mean, c’mon, you know? I don’t know why people did that, but I don’t think they should be living in this neighborhood because its not...I wouldn’t move in a black neighborhood. Would you move in a black neighborhood? C’mon, you’re the only white people, are you going to move over there?

Although she does not condone the “KKK” burning, the mention of the burning prompts a more abstract discussion of oppression of whites, namely reverse discrimination and the demonization of whites who choose to live segregated. She hypothesizes that the burning was youthful indiscretion among the fishermen children who had such discrimination “inbred to them by their parents.” She refers to an extreme reference point, the fishermen, to place her views within the realm of reasonable and acceptable discourse. She wonders why blacks don’t want to live among their own.

Reverse Discrimination

Although Bucktonians have disabused themselves of David Duke, they retain a similar white rights ideology. They use the same frames to explain racial inequality as David Duke supporters did when interviewed twenty years ago by Multi Quest International. For example, Lucy said,

the most discriminated person now is a white male. You're at the bottom of the list to get anything...[White males] have less of a chance now, especially now...that we have the new president. I'm sorry but I definitely think the white male is going to be the most discriminated person against now, especially in the South.

Lucy's interpretation of racial inequality in the post-Obama presidency era bears a striking resemblance to David Duke's interpretation nearly twenty years ago. The pro-white cause is linked with the "rights" master frame (which was more commonly used by structurally disadvantaged groups) to attack what many respondents see as the injustices of affirmative action and minority set asides. That is, to combat oppression of whites.

This ideology is passed down through generations. For example, consider the frames used by aunt and nephew, Minnie and Luke. Minnie says, "I'm tired of mostly all the blacks getting everything, the African-Americans getting everything and the Caucasian, white, the Caucasian-Americans aren't getting anything." Her nephew, Luke, tells me, "they need to make everybody equal, not have minorities and all that stuff." Although many of the respondents share the belief that reverse discrimination disadvantages whites, only one out of nine Bucktonians interviewed admitted to supporting David Duke.

Mild White Supremacy

The respondents distinguish their behavior from the aggressiveness and violence of the KKK. As a result, they do not see similarities between their ideology and David Duke's ideology. Carl, who rejected LaBruzzo's policy suggestion for religious reasons, states

I'm amazed that he got as many votes as he did, but he was getting votes from many people who thought like the KKK did. They were strictly anti-Negro. They were pro white supremacist. Americans shouldn't think like that. Most Americans don't think like that. Now I may think I'm a little better than a black person. Is that wrong? That's the way I feel.

Although Carl thinks he is "a little better than a black person," he does not advocate violence to maintain the racial order. He uses the symbols of KKK and David Duke as extreme reference points to place his views within the realm of reasonable, humane and acceptable beliefs and therefore escape demonization by mainstream society.

Carl's son Frank does not hold symbols of racial extremism in high regard either. He recalls what it was like growing up in Bucktown before David Duke had been discredited.

[W]hen I was growing up, he was kind of like, I don't know if you considered him a hero - not somebody I looked up to. We were, I was raised by a family that had a plantation and a lot of old timers in that area didn't like blacks in the neighborhood, and that was where I was raised at, so 50/50. I thought he was alright, but that's the way I was raised. Right now I think he was ridiculous. I'm not a racist. I don't hate blacks, but there was a lot of feeling around, disliking blacks in the neighborhood when we were growing up.

Although Frank does not refer to himself as better than a black person, he does admit to having Duke sympathies in his younger days. Like his father, and many Bucktonian respondents, Frank credits his racial ideology to the time and place he was raised. Carl grew up in the Jim Crow South. Everywhere he went, blacks and white were separated. Frank grew up in the waning days of Jim Crow and the early days of the Civil Rights era, which provided the impetus for white

rights activists like Duke to gain a foothold in political life. Frank spent most of his youth in Bucktown and the surrounding, white-dominated Metairie area. He only saw black people on trips to Mississippi and when he attended a Catholic school in New Orleans. Frank attributes such racial sentiment to bygone history. Like when he emphasizes that “right now, I think [Duke] was ridiculous.”

Three Techniques Used to Avoid the “Racist” Label

Those who discredit blacks still identify as non-racist by appealing to an extreme reference point. They discuss a relationship they have with a minority or redefine “racism” strictly as biological racism (Bonilla-Silva 2003). They do so in an effort to escape demonization by mainstream society, which appears to them to be racist hunting (Bonilla-Silva 2003).

Not all Bucktonians think David Duke is ridiculous. I asked Minnie what she thought about David Duke. She told me

I thought he, I think he’s great...But then that makes me prejudiced again. See? I think he had a lot of good ideas! But because of who he was...nobody wanted to listen to his ideas because he was prejudiced. They were good ideas, but he was prejudiced. Just like Labruzzo’s idea, it’s a good idea, but...you have to twirk it a little bit. Nobody is going to pass it.

Indeed, those who discredit blacks fear the “racist” label more than they shun racist beliefs. In this new racial discourse, the “racist” becomes another extreme reference point, much like David Duke or the KKK. These symbols function to place the beliefs of those who discredit blacks within the realm of reasonable, humane and acceptable beliefs. By defining racists as other than themselves, people that discredit blacks have developed a non-racist identity, such as when Minnie defends LaBruzzo’s proposal from the Duke stigma.

The second technique used to identify as non-racist while holding blacks discreditable is having a relationship with a black person and reminding people of it. Michelle uses this technique as she shares her thoughts on Barack Obama being elected president.

Well, I mean, why do we have to say this is our first black president. Why is there so much hype on him being black? I mean he's not all black. He's black and white. We're not credited for the white part of him, are we? We're always supposed to be ashamed of being white. We cannot be proud of our heritage...It's always about...the black history month; it's about this black college. We can't have just a white college...it's always about the blacks. [Why do you think that is?] Because of our past ancestors that screwed us over, making them slaves, that's why! But why should I, we have to pay for it? My son could probably be riding in the car and cut maybe, cut too close to one and he's going to blow his brains out because my son's ancestors had slaves, you know. That's what really makes me angry. Now I am, my niece is married to a black man and he's very nice. Their whole family's nice. I'm not prejudiced. But...enough is enough, let it go. Let's move on. Yeah, let's celebrate your history month about...but don't make us pay for it...Let's move on. It's time that we moved on...we really need to educate, extremely educate because this welfare is pulling us in a, like a big drain hole, giving it all to them.

Perceiving themselves as far removed from the normalized, gross racial injustices of past generations and the financial privileges afforded by it, some middle and working class white families have come to resent the special attention paid to blacks intended to offset such injustices. Michelle wants to forget about slavery and Jim Crow. She thinks that the focus needs to be placed on the social problems that what she sees as black privilege creates: laziness and violence in the black community. She demonizes low income blacks as impetuous violators whose anger is fed by something that happened 150 years ago. She scapegoats low-income blacks as a major cause of the devolution of society. In the same paragraph she asserts that she is not prejudiced. The reason: she has a nephew-in-law that is black. Her sister-in-law, who also

used the extreme reference point technique of racist label aversion, referred to her relationship with the same black man to deny her prejudice.

Minnie continued to express her discontent with the prejudice labels that have been placed on good whites who do not like minority set-asides. She does so without fear of being targeted as a racist by defining racism narrowly. This all came out as she further articulated her support for David Duke.

I thought [David Duke] had good ideas. Now did I want to see him hang people and all of that? No. I'm not a Ku Klux Klan person or anything but I thought David Duke... I voted for him, I definitely voted for him. And I mean it's a lot of people... I'm sure you know the history of Bucktown...Blacks weren't allowed in Bucktown...I'm sure you know about Mr. Buck standing at the 17th Street Canal Bridge and not letting any blacks in the city, into Bucktown. [If you were black], you did not walk in Bucktown. I mean five, ten years ago, if you were still walking out here and something happened in Bucktown and you were black and you walked the streets, you got jumped and asked what you were doing in this neighborhood. So it's kind of hard to sit here and say I'm not a prejudiced person when I was brought up in all of this. But, I still don't think I'm a prejudiced person. [A] prejudiced person, to me, hates blacks and doesn't want them to get ahead and you hate them for everything just like you hate a Yankee or the Southerners hate the south. I'm not that type of person...[I] try to give everybody a chance. But if you're on welfare after a year, the chance is over.

Indeed the fear of the “racist” stigma is an imminent threat to the identity of those who discredit blacks, whether conscious or not. For Minnie, racism is extreme - hating blacks for existing. For Minnie, racism is biological racism. Believing blacks are culturally inferior doesn't fit into the racist category.

Cultural Racial Frames

The reasons why one discredits minorities separates biological racism and color-blind racial ideology. Biological racists are like Lionel J.D. Jones D.D.S., a character in Vonnegut's

“Mother Night” (1966), who believes he can prove inferiority among blacks and Jews by examining their dental structures. Biological racism has run its course with the mainstream collective conscience¹, although these beliefs survive on the fringe among radical hate groups such as the Ku Klux Klan and White Power Skinheads. Color-blind racists, on the other hand, do not discredit minorities for existing; rather, they discredit minorities for their culture.

The respondents’ cultural racial frames were not used to explain a totalizing black culture; rather, they used cultural explanations to explain how *low-income* black culture is different in a way that decreases their life chances. However, they do not believe low-income blacks should be held to different standards, because they perceive the decreased life chances of low-income blacks through the lens of formal equality afforded by a meritocracy wherein status is more achieved than ascribed. They assert that low-income blacks are not given the tools to succeed in America, although they sometimes perceive this as a result of the structure of low-income black welfare culture, not the overall structure of American society; and other times, as the result of the overarching structure of American society via the exchange of tax dollars from political elites to low-income black welfare recipients.

For example, Lucy elaborated on the low-income black welfare culture as she explained why blacks would not accept John LaBruzzo’s sterilization proposal.

It’s just a way of life for them...to knock the white man or to say that they are trying to control us. So do I think that they would take the programs? Absolutely not. So, even though it might be a good program, for one thousand dollars, you’re going to have the black minister in the back telling them, “why are you going to take the thousand dollars one time, when you can get tens of thousands of dollars over x amount of period of time, because you have so many kids.” And that’s a way of increasing the number of black people in America. [Do you think to increase the number of black people in America is a goal of these black ministers?] Yeah, I think that’s part of it. [Why do you think that is?] Because they’re not encouraging people not to. They’re not taking any kind of steps to

teach kids to abstain, to show them what a life they could have if they wait. Not to never have kids, but to wait until they can go to college and support them. Everybody can go to college now. It's not like you can't. You know everybody can go. You can get Pell Grants, T.O.P.P.S. So no, do you think they're doing that?...I don't think they try hard enough. All they want to do is say, "no it's government" or "the white person."...They don't have an outlet for them to teach them better. If these kids didn't have kids at 16; if they waited to have kids until they could at least get out of high school; they'd, stand a better chance. Don't you think?

Lucy has empathy for the children of structurally disadvantaged blacks. According to Lucy's frame, blacks have not been educated properly but that has nothing to do with white discrimination; they have not been taught how to succeed.

This characterization of black culture results in an assimilationist racial ideology that informs adherents that blacks' life chances would increase if they just lived more like whites.

Often the cultural products – dress, hairstyle, etc. – signify bad blacks. Lucy said,

It's different up [North]. I was sitting at a restaurant in Pennsylvania somewhere and it was during football season and this guy had on an Eagles jersey...I'm more into college ball than I am pro ball and I was just asking him about the college teams...It was just like having a conversation like you and I are; but to do that here, you just couldn't here...I work with a couple black people...They are black to a point and then get them away from...a work environment and they're like strictly ghetto. I don't get that either. [You don't have any explanations?] I think they're trying to be something that they're not. [When are they pretending to be something that they're not?] Well, at work...because they come in with all kinds of earrings in and their grill and as soon as they come to work they take it off and put it all away. And when they leave, they put it all back on. [Why do you think that they're trying to be something different at work?] I guess to fit into the white society, but why can't it be one?...They have the job already. I don't know. I just think that you should be one way. Why pretend to be someone that you're not?

Lucy is clearly not a biological racist. She looks back favorably on her conversation with the northern black man who can afford to take plane trips. On the other hand, Lucy is frustrated by

the line her black coworker takes. She seems to wish he could be more like the man she drank a beer with in Pennsylvania and not so “ghetto.” It is in the separation of good blacks and bad blacks that the influence of class on racial ideology is most prominent. Put simply, good blacks have money and are more educated. As a result they have more in common with middle-class whites. She locates the cause of poverty in the individual, yet she demonizes low-income blacks in general for not maintaining consistency in self-presentation.

Political Correctness

In May of 2009, the black family who had “KKK” burned across their lawn in Bucktown, had “White Power” and a swastika painted on the road in front of their house (see Figure 3). The anniversary of the hate crime did not receive publicity.

Several respondents are tired of the politically correct culture that inconveniences the normal flow of interaction experienced by whites in the past. They are tired of having to be culturally sensitive to blacks and minorities. Although she does not condone the “KKK” burning and the “White Power” painting, Lucy is frustrated that her friend cannot use the abbreviation “KKK” to signify his three daughters whose names all begin with the letter “K.”

...he used to list them on the pool as “K.K.K.”, but he took them off now. Now, he just puts “the girls.” [Where?]...On my football pool. He used to have, his three girls all begin with “K”, so he had “KKK.” on there. Well the square next to him is one of the guys at my office and he’s black, so he took it off to be politically correct. Instead of putting “K.K.K.”, he put “the girls”; which I think is stupid, totally stupid... We have to be politically correct today and that’s just crazy. Certain things that used to mean absolutely nothing ten years ago mean, you can’t say them anymore... [Do you think he got a kick out of putting K.K.K. on there?] No, he did it completely innocent. Like I said, racism is alive and well in New Orleans, but if you’re fair and upfront with everybody and you don’t pull any side punches, I think most people will be fair and upfront with you, regardless of your color, in most cases... It’s just the person. It’s not the race. It’s the person... The guy shouldn’t have to not put “KKK.” He’s doing that because that’s his girls and

they all begin with “KKK,” but it can represent something else. You can’t put that. Is that fair to him? No, but does he really care? Does that really bother him? No, but he just did it so he didn’t have to hear anybody say anything.

Lucy’s narrative makes a man who wants to use “KKK” to signify his bet on a football pool into a victim. The aggressor is the politically correct culture of overly sensitive blacks and liberal whites. Lucy shrugs off the association between violent behavior and the symbol, “KKK,” with an appeal to equality of opportunity.

Only one interviewee identified as racist. He had the following to say about what he meant when he said he is a little racist:

I don’t like that they wrote KKK on the only black person’s lawn in the neighborhood around the corner. I think it’s, I think the people in this community are too racist for their own good, including my own father. I’m a little bit racist, but not to the fact where I hate a whole race of people... [What does that mean to you to say you are a bit racist?] Sometimes I think like, “fucking nigger.” I say it in my head. I don’t say it out loud. Then I’ll think five minutes later, “why’d I think like that? Why’d I act like that?” Sometimes it gets the best of me and it’s just engrained in me to think like that. It’s no excuse, but I definitely do feel that way sometimes. I definitely shouldn’t say it. I should just be saying “idiot” to the person, not the race. [You say it’s engrained in you. What do you mean?] Everyone in my family is racist...Any family function I go to... [“nigger” is] always going to be thrown around no matter wherever it is. It’s usually the men who throw it around, not the women. I think it’s predominately a male aggression type thing. [Why do you think that is?] Because it makes males feel cooler to talk down to people. And it’s like their rite of passage growing up in the South. You’re mean to people who are a different race than you and who are less fortunate than you because that’s what your daddy did and that’s what his daddy did and so on.

Andrew is hard on himself for having a racist moment, like when he sees a black person walking slowly across a busy cross street with a green light. He habitually associates what he sees as inconsiderate behavior to race, then upon introspection, recognizes the short-sightedness of his

reaction. He is aware of the lifelong socialization process that has made salient racial explanations for behavior he disagrees with.

End Notes

1 Ritzer (2008) describes Emile Durkheim's notion of the collective conscience as “the general structure of shared understandings, norms and beliefs” (79).

Support and Opposition for Rep. LaBruzzo's Sterilization Incentive

It is often forgotten that eugenics was considered a legitimate feature of the welfare state in early 20th century America. In the Deep South, “physicians blamed the ‘insane’ and the ‘feeble-minded’ for social problems.” As a result, these groups were statutorily sexually segregated in state institutions (Dikotter 1998). Additionally, until World War II, mental health hospitals practiced sterilization in the Deep South (Dikotter 1998). Since then, eugenics has fallen out of favor as a means of social engineering. Explicit biological eugenics has come to be associated with Adolf Hitler, the most nefarious character in the modern history of Western civilization.

Sterilization plans can be understood on two spectrums: status of targets and method of sterilization. On one pole of the status spectrum lies *ascribed status* groups. On the other lies *achieved status* groups. The status of members of ascribed status groups is in *no way* related to any choice they have made. Examples include race, gender and (dis)ability group. The status of members of achieved status groups, on the other hand, is dependent in some way upon agency. That is, the choices they make and the effort they put forth plays some role, *however minor*, in their status. Examples include class¹ and occupation. The other spectrum, target method of sterilization, features coercion on one end and incentives on the other. Coercion does not offer target groups a choice. Holding differences in agency among various groups constant, incentives present a choice to target groups.

Early 20th century eugenics explicitly sought, through coercion, to decrease the fertility rate among ascribed status groups, whereas David Duke's House Bill No.1584 and John LaBruzzo's sterilization plans *are framed as* targeted for achieved status groups through incentives. Nowadays, groups that positively value coercive approaches to decreasing the birth

rate among either ascribed or achieved status groups (i.e. welfare recipients) through *coercion* are only found on the fringes of society. Such groups are often labeled “hate groups.”

Interpreting Rep. LaBruzzo’s Sterilization Incentive Racially

Although Rep. LaBruzzo used a race neutral frame to diagnose generational welfare-dependency and prognose incentivizing sterilization, the respondents overwhelmingly agreed that the proposal was targeted at blacks. They view his sterilization incentive as targeted at ascribed rather than achieved status groups.

Luke, who likes that Bucktown is absolutely certain that LaBruzzo’s proposal was targeted directly at blacks. He said,

...he meant it for the black people. [You think so?] Oh yeah that’s exactly what he meant. People need to stop worrying about the black people... We really need to stop worrying about all the black people, because if you think about it, there’s more white people on welfare...[So why do you think he was definitely talking about black people when he said that?] Because black people are always having babies and staying home and not doing shit.

Luke uses the cultural racial frame that blacks are lazy to explain why blacks and the poor are almost interchangeable terms.

Like Luke, Andrew is certain that Rep. LaBruzzo was targeting black people. He had the following to say about Rep. Labruzzo:

I know he proposed something about some; he made some bigoted comment about blacks. Can you remind me about what he said again? [I’m not sure he said anything specifically, explicitly, about blacks. But he said that he wanted to give \$1000 dollars to low-income people to get their tubes tied. Also, to give money to higher income, more educated families to have kids, have more kids.]...He’s talking about minorities versus whites. Not just blacks, but minorities.

Andrew does not point to statistics to show the overrepresentation of minorities on the welfare rolls in Louisiana. Instead, his socially lived knowledge informs him that “people are racist.”

Determining that John LaBruzzo was targeting minorities is a matter of “common sense” for someone that at “any family function he go[es] to, [“nigger” is] always going to be thrown around no matter wherever it is.” Andrew is a strong opponent of the proposal. He uses a eugenics frame, that is, a coerced sterilization frame to oppose it.

Lucy agrees with Andrew in that she believes LaBruzzo’s bill intentionally targets minorities. She even has an explanation for why he put forth the proposal.

Oh I think he was definitely trying to be racist. [Why do you think?]...I think he was trying to be racist because he made such of an ass [of himself] because of that raise thing. He was trying to cover himself, but he made it ten times much worse. He was trying to get himself back in good graces with the white people who put him in office...And look what he did. Look what he did. No white person is going to come out and say...“yeah we’re for John LaBruzzo because he wants to do that.” They might vote for him...People in Bucktown are racist, quite racist. You know that. Look what they did to that guy’s lawn over there. Did you see that?

Lucy refers to the KKK lawn burning to explain racist sentiments in Bucktown. It seems like “common sense” to her that a local politician would push a sterilization proposal targeted at blacks to pander to his/her Bucktown constituents.

Although Lucy expressed that Rep. LaBruzzo is purposely targeting blacks with money to decrease their fertility and also that he was *trying* to be racist, she does not believe the proposal is *actually* racist.

I don’t think it’s a racist comment. I think that he is trying to say that hey, if you’re going to have kids you need to support them. So if you don’t think you’re going to support them, don’t have them. And here’s a thousand dollar incentive to do that. That’s what I think. But now, some people might misinterpret that as being racist. But there are a lot of white people who have kids that don’t support them. Here it’s all black because, or a lot of, a majority of it is black because we’re attached really close to a city that’s 50-90% black. I don’t even know what the rate is now. But the majority of the country, most white people are on welfare because it’s mostly white people that live in the United States...Of course

all the reverends and the black ministers are going to take it as a racial comment. But one of their own just got arrested for crack cocaine so I mean what makes them holier than...I don't know. That's just my opinion.

Lucy asserts that the Bucktown community is "racist." She admits that targeting blacks with incentivized sterilization is an attempt to appease "racists." But, she doesn't see the incentivized sterilization itself as racist. Lucy protects LaBruzzo's proposal from racist labeling by asserting that the essence of sterilization incentive issue is the choices made by welfare recipients. In other words, she places LaBruzzo's proposal within the realm of reason and acceptability by framing black poverty as individual failure rather than societal discrimination.

I asked Minnie why, although she agreed with the proposal, there was so much opposition to incentivizing sterilization? Her response was as follows:

I guess they, I don't know, I guess they think it's not ethical to stop someone from having children. I don't know if ethical would be the right word, but I heard there was a lot of opposition and I heard that people were in an uproar. But probably because the same thing everything is, because it's blacks...Labruzzo said most of them are white. So they can't turn around and say it's racial, but they will. They'll turn right around and say that he's doing this or someone else is doing this because it's racial. Everything's racial. [So you're saying everything's racial?] Toward the blacks...I don't mean it's racial. I mean the blacks say it is racial... "Oh, Labruzzo is doing it because he's white."...and "he's just doing it because most blacks are on welfare." But like they said, it isn't mostly blacks on welfare. It's mostly whites on welfare, but they're not going to believe that. They're going to believe it's just against [them]...It's back to that. That's the same thing. It's always back to that.

Minnie uses a cultural racial frame to explain opposition to LaBruzzo's sterilization incentive.

To Minnie, blacks are overly sensitive about race issues; they interpret non-racial issues racially.

Support for LaBruzzo's Sterilization Incentive

Although the respondents overwhelmingly interpreted the proposal racially, they all used producerist and color-blind racial frames to explain their support. For example, to support the

proposal, Luke appealed to the notion that there are too many people in the world. There was mixed support for the proposal among the nine Bucktonian interviewees. One respondent did not have an opinion on the matter. Of the other eight respondents, half (4/8) supported it and half (4/8) opposed it.

A major area of concern is whether or not there is a choice for the recipient. Those who support the proposal generally do so with some degree of ambivalence and uncertainty about whether they view the proposal as coerced government control. This proposal embodies two competing conservative appeals – the curbing of laziness and irresponsibility as well as the freedom for individuals to make their own decisions without government interference. The respondents were less ambivalent about this proposal's potential to reduce irresponsible births among unproductive members of society than they were about whether the sterilization incentive presents a choice rather than government control.

Michelle, a salesperson and former sales manager, typifies this ambivalence born of the two competing conservative impulses.

I don't think they have the right to make people get their tubes tied. I think that's a little crazy. It would be nice, you know, but I don't think you can take somebody's rights like that away. I mean, what do you do? How do you fix the situation where a lot of these people are pushing out kids...and you don't want them to have all of these kids? I would come up with a different program. Maybe the more kids they have the less money they get. There must be another way, you know...Because, what if you could stop them from having so many kids if you make some sort of other agreement and then this person ends a marriage and decides to go into another marriage, and government has made them tie their tubes so they can't have another child with someone else... What gives them the right to decide that? [I don't think they have to get their tubes tied; it's an incentive. So if you want to take the thousand dollars...] Well then I don't mind that at all. I don't mind that, because I'm sure a lot of them are going to jump on the bandwagon to get that money, don't you think?[I don't know.] I agree with that if they're going to offer it to them. I was thinking

that they didn't have a choice in the matter, that they were just going to say, "well you got three kids and this is what you gotta do." But, if they have a right, I agree.

Michelle invokes the "rights" frame to defend those whose freedom she perceives may be trampled on by the government. She agrees with LaBruzzo that something must be done about "these people" having an irresponsible amount of children, but she does not agree with the government coercing them to stop having children. Her opinion changes when I clarify for her that the proposal calls for incentivizing tubal ligations and vasectomies rather than coercing them.

...they have the right to choose you know whether they want the money or not, you know. It's kind of like when we have a lot of trouble with people trying to take "in God we trust" off our money you know it's something like that you know. Church doesn't want people to um, do things that they don't fully understand. Well they don't fully understand what happens when they have all these children too. So I agree that it's something pretty drastic is what he's talking about, but it's pretty drastic what they put us in, you know because we're making money and we're struggling, I mean we're working our tails off for what? You know, for Uncle Sam to take a lot of it to give it to the people that are just sitting on their front porches not doing anything. We're paying for them...and their children. That's not fair, but I don't want to see anybody starve, either. I wouldn't want to see a little kid starve because the parents were stupid.

When the criteria is met that government must not make decisions for individuals, she is free to support a proposal that reduces the birth rate among welfare recipients. At this point, her concern for a woman getting her tubes tied and then later wanting to have a child with a different father is inconsequential. There is no forced government control and irresponsibility is curbed. Thus, her support for LaBruzzo's proposal does not conflict with her ideology.

Minnie is unequivocal in her support for LaBruzzo's proposal.

They should have something to stop these people from having kids that we're paying for, all this welfare... It's a good idea. Once you

have two kids out of wedlock and they're on welfare, something should be done. But how can you do that legally? You can't force them to not have children. I can't believe they'd want them anyway after all these different men, but I guess the money's good.

Minnie alludes to the “perversity thesis of welfare” (Somers and Block 2005), which holds that welfare creates rather than alleviates or softens the blow of poverty. This narrative characterizes welfare programs as producers and enablers of a culture of poverty, rather than a form of social support to keep people afloat as they work toward economic independence. It follows that the poor must be set free from oppressive policies that strip them of the natural incentive to rise out of poverty. Strategies to reduce welfare are not only morally justified, in so far as they liberate the poor from the misguided, exploitive policies that function to keep them poor; they also serve the interests of the hard-working taxpayers. Thus, John LaBruzzo’s generational welfare-dependency frame has narrative fidelity for Minnie – it fits in seamlessly with the perversity narrative to make sense of complex social phenomena.

The effects of the perversity thesis do not come without empirical support. Groskind (1994) examined the General Social Survey’s random sample of 1,470 Americans who read ten vignettes describing various families with incomes below the poverty line. Respondents were then asked how much these families, who had between \$50-100 weekly incomes, should receive in financial support from the government. Those who believe welfare has negative effects on recipients supported \$1,000 dollars less per year than the average respondent.

Opposition to LaBruzzo’s Sterilization Incentive

Those disagreeing with the proposal framed the issue either in terms of religious beliefs, negative valuation of eugenics or the work ethic. For example, Carl, an elderly, retired professional, completely opposes the proposal for religious reasons.

I think it's utterly ridiculous and obscene because of my religion. This is what I was taught and this is what I believe. I'm anti-abortion. I'm anti tying tubes. I'm anti anything that's not natural. I'm really anti-birth control pills. I'm anti anything that's not natural. Natural would be people getting pregnant, people getting married, having babies - after, not before marriage.

Although John LaBruzzo's generational poverty frame resonates with Carl's work ethic ideology, Carl's strict Catholic pro-life values preclude his acceptance of LaBruzzo's proposal. Carl's views are the same as Archbishop Hughes "blatantly anti-life" frame.

That a Catholic would oppose a right-wing populist proposal does not come as a surprise, since Catholics have historically been the target of right-wing extremists. The 19th Century Know Nothings and other anti-catholic nativists demonized Catholics because they were said to be told how to think by local Catholic priests who took their orders from the Vatican, thus upsetting the political order (Berlet and Lyons 2000). However, being Catholic proved an unreliable predictor of attitudes towards LaBruzzo's proposal. Three out of seven Catholics supported LaBruzzo's proposal. For them, the Catholic pro-life frame was trumped by other more salient beliefs, such as the work ethic and democratic women's rights frame. For example, Minnie, a not yet retired service worker in her sixties says, "I'm a Catholic but I'm not anti-abortion. I believe every woman has a right to do what she wants to do with her body."

Of course, most people do not hold pro-life sentiments to the same degree as Carl. Other ideas account for their disapproval of the sterilization incentive. Paul, a salesman in his sixties disagrees with LaBruzzo's proposal because he perceives it as inconsiderate.

I don't think it's a good idea, because I think there would be some impulsive people who would just do it impulsively and be sorry for it later when you can't have it undone. I don't think we should pay for it anyway. I think people should be responsible enough to take care of these things themselves. Use birth control or something. I don't want my tax dollars going to that.

Paul finds more than one fault with LaBruzzo's proposal. First, there is a lack of consideration for the future. He is concerned that such a permanent decision may be made in haste by those who are presently in need of money. Paul's second critique stems from his individualistic, conservative values, his opposition to downward distribution of his tax dollars. Although other conservatives perceive LaBruzzo's proposal as a welfare cost mitigation strategy – a way to invest money now to save money and reduce social costs of welfare recipients in the long run – Paul principally rejects government playing the role of caretaker. He rejects LaBruzzo's pragmatic welfare cost mitigation strategy because of his libertarian ideals of principled self-reliance.

Another rejection was framed in eugenic terms. Andrew, a graduate student in his twenties, says

I think it's kind of ridiculous. I think it's borderline Nazism to try to eliminate a race or one quality of people and fund another. I guess literally, fund another race or quality or social group of people. I think he probably just ruined his political career by saying that and you can't take him seriously from now on. I'm sure he was 100% confident in what he said, believes everything he said, but I think he's a fucking idiot. I don't know if I ever voted for him before but I wouldn't vote for him again.

Andrew's devaluation of subsidizing fertility for some groups and subsidizing sterilization among others is most salient. The fact that recipients have the choice to accept or decline the tubal ligation or vasectomy funds does not factor in. He is principally opposed to eugenics. Andrew does not distinguish between coercive and incentivized sterilization methods, or between ascribed and achieved status targets. He simply calls this incentivized sterilization targeted at achieved status groups eugenics, in the same category of coercive sterilization targeted at ascribed status groups.

Support for Coerced Sterilization

Although four interviewees supported the incentive, only one believed it would be effective. Lucy says,

I don't think they should get the money until they prove they have the vasectomy or [tubal ligation]. That's what I think...I think that would work. I don't think people should be made to do it, but I think it would work; but I don't think you're going to get the people that he's trying to reform. They're not going to be the people that are willing to do it. I don't, I just don't think so...I think the black community, for the guys, that's a notch on their belt every time they have a kid. And who pays for that? We do. Because they tell them, because I heard that black guy at work [say], "you get money from the government."... So again, the white people would do it, but I don't think the black community would do it. So, it's a nice idea if it would work, but I don't think it's going to work; because I don't think you're going to get them to take the money; but even if they did, it's reversible. So, you'd never get a black guy to get a vasectomy, because they'd be too afraid to...The audience that they're trying to attract with that is not going to do that. [The audience being?] The black community. Or the lower income. That's the better word for that, because it's not just blacks that are on welfare; it's everybody. But you're not going to attract that audience, because that's a paycheck for them and free housing.

Lucy believes the sterilization incentive would work, but not the way it is intended to work. That is, it would not decrease fertility among black welfare recipients. Lucy uses the cultural racial frame that black males measure their virility by the amount of children they have to explain why they would avoid exchanging reproductive capability for \$1000. Furthermore, she asserts that in pursuing their self interest, black males would conclude that the welfare "paycheck" is worth more than the \$1000. Then, after explaining that the target recipients of the sterilization incentive are black male welfare recipients, she corrects herself and asserts that she means low-income people.

Although Lucy expressed concern that there should be a choice for recipients of the sterilization incentive, she later differentiated between those she believes should maybe undergo coerced sterilization and those who should not. She shared her thoughts on minors undergoing sterilization.

...do I think 16 year old kids should do that? I don't know. And a 16 year old child, male or female, who both come from good families and an accident just happened, I don't think that should be for them. But when you go to a 16 year old who lives in the projects, who has no family and it's just a cycle, then yeah I think it should be.

Lucy takes welfare resentment to the extreme.

End Notes

1. Labeling class an indicator of achieved status can be somewhat controversial, since many would argue that social mobility is more horizontal than vertical. However, America is not a pure caste system. It is possible to rise in class, *however rare this may be*. The purpose of delimiting achieved and ascribed status groups is to make clear that ascribed status groups have no agency whatsoever in changing the status thrust upon them at birth whereas achieved status groups have some agency in the status position they occupy.

Ideological Welfare Knowledge

The respondents hold inaccurate beliefs about the current state of the welfare system in America. They misunderstand the requirements and limitations placed upon receiving cash payments and misinterpret the racial composition of those receiving cash payments. This suggests their support for welfare reform is more ideological than empirical.

Overestimating the Welfare-dependency Incentive

Every interviewee used some version of the perversity thesis, which holds that welfare creates rather than alleviates poverty, to frame their opposition to welfare programs. For example, Carl said,

What I'm saying is that a lot of people get on welfare. They're just content to stay on welfare and they don't try to go out and find jobs and find work so they could get off of these welfare rolls. In other words, I think a lot of people need help, but it should really only be temporary help until they could find work, but most of them don't try to find work. They're content to stay on welfare.

Carl frames the welfare abuser as the rule rather than the exception. Paul has a similar understanding of welfare. He stated the following:

I think that there are genuinely some that need [welfare]. Ok. I think there are some that work the system, that don't want to work. I think the Great Society of Lyndon Johnson caused a lot of welfare recipients, caused a lot of crime. What you see today is caused by one parent families where she may have six children from six different men and she got paid for each one of them. So she was getting money for each child, plus free rent, plus food stamps. So she was living pretty good. These children [were] not being parented. So your getting, what you see today is probably the third generation of that because Johnson was in the '60s. You see the third generation of that - the grandmother, the mother and the kids. Okay. What you're seeing today is that two fifteen year olds killed this woman last weekend in the French Quarter. Uh, luckily their parents turned them in.

Paul connects the expansion of the welfare state – Johnson’s Great Society in the 1960’s – to the most frightening social problem in inner cities today – teenage black males murdering people apparently without cause. Furthermore, Paul believes, “you don’t have to have kids to get welfare. You just have to prove you need it. I mean a couple could get. You don’t necessarily have to be a woman with kids.”

The welfare program in place today is much different than Aid for Dependent Children (AFDC) instituted in 1935. In 1996, President Clinton signed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PROWRA) which changed the name and nature of the federal government’s major welfare program. The AFDC program in place in from 1935 to 1997 was transformed into Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). PROWRA decreased the period of time during which families are eligible to receive government assistance in the form of cash payments. Under TANF, recipients have a five year lifetime limit on receiving welfare funds during which time they can receive cash aid for no longer than two consecutive years. TANF gives block grants to states that must meet minimum requirements, but are then free to be creative with aiding needy families temporarily. Only families with dependent children receive cash aid in Louisiana. The goal has been to move recipients from welfare to work.

Although the true success of PROWRA is often debated, the number of Louisianans receiving cash assistance from the government has dropped from a monthly average of 280,177 people in fiscal 1990-1991 to 13,504 people in 2006-2007 (Waller 2008). The amount of cash aid welfare recipients during LaBruzzo’s time is *less than 5%* of what that number was during Duke’s time. The contrast in total spending on cash aid: \$187.2 million in 1990-1991 and \$16.5 million in 2006-2007 (Waller 2008). Although cash payments have been dramatically reduced in

Louisiana, food stamp payments have remained constant. On the other hand, Medicaid rolls have nearly doubled from 1997-1998 to 2006-2007, from 258,768 (\$3.25 billion) to more than 1.5 million (\$5.38 billion) (Waller 2008).

Under TANF, a single mother with two children receives \$240 per month. A single mother with six children receives \$402 per month. The average grant in Louisiana is \$200 per month (Louisiana Department of Social Services 2008). Thus, six children are worth \$24,120 over a seven year period (two years on, one year off, two years on, one year off, one year on). Two children are worth \$14,400 over a seven year period

Indeed, there are no lifetime limits on Food Stamps as long as one meets income and other requirements. If there is an incentive to have children, then, it would have to come from increased food stamp receipts. The maximum allotment for a single person household is \$200 per month (Louisiana Department of Social Services 2008). For a seven person household it is \$1052. Thus, by having six children, a mother can receive \$852 more per month, albeit she will have to feed her children. So, six children are worth \$12,624 per year in Food Stamps. In total, with six children, the most a single mother will receive is \$17,448 for five years and \$12,624 thereafter. She will not have all of this to spend however she likes because she must provide food for her children or else she will not receive a check. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2008), the average consumer unit (comparable to household) has 2.5 members and spends \$6,022 on food per year. If we extrapolate average food consumption expenditures for consumer units with 2.5 members to consumer units with 7 members, then we should expect that consumer units with 7 members should spend \$16,862 on food.

For the five years that a mother with six children receives TANF payments she will have \$586 dollars to spend however she chooses and the rest of the years that she has six dependents,

she will run a *deficit* of \$4,238, assuming she does not work. Thus, assuming the welfare mother is a rational actor seeking to maximize her interests (as anti-welfare right-wing populists do when they make the assumption that welfare incentivizes generational welfare-dependency), she will not have six children in order to prevent having to work to make up the \$4,238 deficit.

Misinterpreting Racial Composition of TANF Recipients

Beyond misunderstanding the lack of rationality behind the welfare-dependency incentive frame, the respondents confuse the meaning of the fact that there are more whites on welfare than blacks. For example, here is Paul's interpretation of Rep. LaBruzzo's sterilization incentive.

...and that other thing about welfare. Nobody had the guts to ever say that but it's true. There are more white people on welfare than there are blacks. And the blacks got offended. Did you know there are more whites on welfare than black people?

The fact that there are more whites on welfare than blacks nationally is used to counter any charges of racism associated with LaBruzzo's rationale for his sterilization incentive. While half of the respondents with an opinion on LaBruzzo's proposal (4/8) used the "more whites on welfare than blacks frame," none mentioned that whites make up 75% and African-Americans comprise 12% of all Americans (see Table 7).

Although black *families* comprise a slightly smaller percentage of TANF recipients nationally, they are disproportionately represented. From October 2005 to September 2006, African-Americans accounted for 35.7% of all families receiving TANF funds, although they comprise 12.2% of the total U.S. population (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2006; Table 7). White *families*, on the other hand, make up 33.4% of all TANF families while comprising 75.1% of the population (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2006;

Table 7). Regarding the total number of *individual* adult TANF recipients, 37.2% are African-American, while 37.9% are white (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2006).

In Louisiana, blacks make up a much higher percentage and are represented disproportionately among TANF recipients. In Louisiana, African-Americans, who make up 32.3% of the population, comprise 78.8% of all families receiving TANF funds; whereas Whites, who comprise 63.9% of the Louisiana population, account for 18.7% of TANF recipient families (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2006; Table 7).

The respondents kept LaBruzzo's proposal outside the "racist" category by asserting that blacks are a minority percentage on the welfare rolls. However, a look at membership on the welfare rolls by proportion of the population reveals overrepresentation among blacks and therefore, proportional overexposure to programs affecting TANF recipients in the U.S. and especially in Louisiana. Statistics that respondents did not use include the national unemployment rate for blacks – 11.4% compared to 5.5% for whites (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2009) and the proportion of blacks with incomes below the poverty line – 25% relative to 9% for whites (see Table 9).

Elites

“Look where our country is. We’re going socialist. We’re going to the left under Barack Obama! I think we need people who are willing to stand up and be courageous and say “hey look. Enough is enough. This isn’t what our country is founded upon.”

-Louisiana State Representative, John LaBruzzo

“Don’t spread my wealth. Spread my work ethic.”

-Tax Day Tea Party Protestor, Metairie, LA

Theories of American Right-Wing Populism (Lipset 1970; Berlet and Lyons 2000) posit that frustrated people in the middle - right-wing populists, target resentment towards those below – unproductive welfare dependents, and above – unproductive elites. The classic target of American populists, whether left-wing or right-wing has been Wall Street Bankers and corporate elites (Berlet and Lyons 2000). Given that the U.S. is experiencing the largest recession since the Great Depression, direct frustration with Wall Street Bankers and corporate elites was hypothesized; however, considerably less resentment with financial and corporate elites was found than expected. An example of what was hypothesized is Michelle’s disgust with Wall Street.

I think these big banks tell us how we’re supposed to run the country, like JP Morgan and Citibank and all of that. I think we all need to take it back instead of letting them run the country like we do. You know the Federal Reserve; it’s banks. There is no, the Federal Reserve is not the Federal government; it’s banks. So, we the people, for the people, who the people? The banks? I don’t know. I think things need to change and they will.

This is the classic populist explanation of the plight of the middle and working class: the financial and industrial corporate elites use their money to subvert politicians to serve their interests, rather than serving the interests of working men and women.

The interpretation of how and why this happens differs among left-wing and right-wing populists. Historically, left-wing populists such as Louisiana’s governors Huey P. Long, Earl K.

Long and Edwin Edwards conclude that the rich must be taxed for such atrocities and, symbolically put in their place. The rich must be taxed so the working men and women can have a decent standard of living. Historically, right-wing populists such as David Duke, on the other hand, either conclude that financial elites use the government to exploit the masses by redistributing wealth through welfare-dependency or just blame the government. As a result the mass of dependents do not question the subversion of the popular will because they receive a check every month. Political elites line their pockets, while financial elites prosper. Meanwhile, working men and women suffer.

Left-wing populists generally steer clear of cultural racism because of the large proportion of minorities among the poor and unemployed whose support they need to stay in office. On the other hand, cultural racial explanations are far from scant in right-wing populist rhetoric. For example, David Duke (2009) writes about the Jews' "incredible ability to influence Gentile politicians through both money and media. They have the power to bankroll a favorable politician or blackmail him by threatening to support his opponent."

This frame was not always salient among the respondents. While they blame the coalition of unproductive welfare parasites and left-wing elites for their high taxes, they do not necessarily connect this phenomenon to financial and corporate elites. Alternatively, the respondents explain the coalition among the liberal elites and welfare parasites through party politics. Michelle explains,

Democrats wanted to...tax everybody so that we could support the people that couldn't afford to work because they had so many children and stuff. And the Republicans didn't want to reward them. So it's always just been a big tug-of-war you know.

The most salient, elite target of the respondents is not Wall Street Bankers or corporate elites; rather, it is Liberal Democratic Party Elites. As Paul, who believes all the news channels are “very biased...except Fox” tells me,

Welfare was not meant to live on. Welfare was meant to help you get back on your feet. Okay. But people have made a way of life on it. It brings generations in the housing projects. Of course, the politicians that were in at the time would constantly give to these programs because most of these people were Democrats. And the Democrats, they were beholden to the Democrats. So they keep putting them back into the office to get their programs faster or whatever. So, some of that has to change.

Among the respondents, the Wall Street Bankers have, for the most part, been overshadowed in the producerist narrative by Democratic Party Elites – The Clintons, Barack Obama, etc.

Rather than blame Wall Street for the sub-prime lending crisis, the respondents with an opinion on the matter framed government regulation as the culprit. For example, Lucy tells me

And they can blame it on Bush all they want, but if you look back Bush is not the one who said, “hey, we have to mandate the banking industry.” They had the mandate to where they had to give people so many loans regardless of their credit and look where it got us in the banking industry...Clinton is the one that did that one.

Forcing banks to write mortgages for sub-prime lenders is widely considered *one* cause of the economic recession. Other reasons include deregulation such as the repeal of the Glass-Steagall Act, substandard regulation of mortgage underwriters which resulted in overrated mortgages, low interest rates and an economy overly dependent on consumption and under-reliant on production. With an ideology that holds freedom from government intrusion sacrosanct in addition to poverty as a result of laziness and poor decision-making, the respondents were apt to blame working-class first time homebuyers rather than policies emanating from their own ideology.

Conclusions

Support for enticing welfare recipients with incentives for voluntary sterilization is more ideological than empirical. In Louisiana, the number of cash assistance recipients has declined 95% since 1991 (Waller 2008). Although receiving food stamps and cash assistance, a welfare mother is left with less than \$600 to pay for other necessities throughout the year.

Notwithstanding these drastic changes, the respondents encourage a major reduction in the welfare system.

This encouragement exists despite changes in socio-economic status and political representation. Bucktown is now a mostly middle-class community above the national average on many indicators of socio-economic status. In addition, Bucktonians have, for the most part, disabused themselves of David Duke. Nowadays, their state representative is more business than Klan.

Despite some shortcomings, theories of right-wing populism (Federici 1991; Berlet and Lyons 2000) offer a convincing explanation for why ideological support for the voluntary sterilization incentive exists. First, little variation exists in individualist attitudes among the respondents – belief remains strong in an a priori social order featuring the rational pursuit of self-interest. The belief in the good-natured free-will of (white) individuals is prominent in Bucktonian frames. Government is viewed as the problem, not the solution, to poverty.

Second, All Bucktonians interviewed share a work ethic ideology, that is, they believe society's problems can be fixed if we all work harder. Hard work, self-sufficiency and determination were the most salient explanations for families' upward mobility. They all attributed poverty to laziness, lack of thrift, or poor decision-making among individuals. Nearly all respondents principally opposed giving able-bodied, mentally capable people something for

nothing. The centrality, experiential commensurability and narrative fidelity of Rep. LaBruzzo's generational welfare-dependency frame resonates with the work ethic ideology of all eight (8/9) Bucktonians with opinions on the matter.

Third, the respondents framed poverty and welfare through the producerist narrative, championing the productive against the unproductive to explain poverty and welfare, although a greater emphasis was placed upon the lack of productivity among the poor rather than elites. When respondents did express resentment toward elites, the salient target was government (i.e. liberal political elites) rather than financial and corporate elites. Perhaps they do not demonize financial and industrial corporate elites because they view them as hard-working Americans like themselves, just more successful. Nonetheless, the focus of downward resentment remains on unproductive minorities, especially lazy, impetuous, low-income, black welfare recipients.

Theories of right-wing populism (Federici 1991; Berlet and Lyons 2000) fall short of explaining the critical case of Bucktown in three areas. The first two are discussed above: the greater emphasis on downward resentment rather than upward resentment, as well as the focus of upward resentment on government elites rather than financial and corporate industrial elites. The third shortcoming arises when trying to explain opposition to Rep. LaBruzzo's policy suggestion. While all eight respondents with an opinion on the sterilization incentive appealed to producerism, opposed government economic intervention and demonized the poor for their lack of work ethic, half (4/8) did not support the sterilization incentive. The opponents invoked principles more salient than right-wing populism: religion (i.e. "I don't believe in birth control"), anti-fascism (i.e. "It reminds me of Hitler"), and libertarian conservatism (i.e. "I don't want my tax dollars going to that"). This suggests that right-wing populism in America, as characterized by Federici (1991) and Berlet and Lyons (2000), needs to be further specified if it is to

adequately explain the process through which middle and working-class whites come to support repressive policies. Because the focus of downward resentment is often towards ethnic minorities, drawing on theories of racism is one logical step forward. As the data suggest, there is more than just a logical basis for extending theories of right-wing populism into theories of racism.

Despite the existence of a right-wing populist frame to oppose the welfare system, the respondents drew varying conclusions regarding how ethical or principled they considered Rep. LaBruzzo's sterilization incentive. Supporters and opponents differed in four interrelated areas: perception of whether the sterilization proposal actually presents a choice for the recipients, the values they attached to their racial interpretation of the proposal, use of color-blind racial frames, and perception of equality of opportunity.

Indeed there is a choice – you either take the \$1000 dollars or you do not. What the respondents disagree about is to what degree people in different social locations have agency in deciding whether or not to accept \$1000 in exchange for their reproductive rights. On one hand, many respondents expressed that America is a meritocracy with formal equality and therefore perceived a great degree of choice. On the other hand, they acknowledged the influence of government and the culture of poverty in rendering welfare recipients pre-disposed to making decisions that were not independent of government. Ultimately, although supporters appealed to both agency and structure (i.e. government) throughout their discourse on the work ethic, welfare and poverty, they invoked their perception of choice when they expressed support for the sterilization incentive. Opponents generally accentuated structure to express opposition. Indeed, the rationale for the sterilization incentive is wrought with similar contradictions. On one hand, welfare recipients are viewed as oppressed by a government that keeps them poor and dependent,

as well as by a culture of poverty that keeps them unemployed. On the other hand, the argument goes, their individual failure keeps them on welfare and therefore dependent on tax payer dollars.

Although the respondents overwhelmingly interpreted LaBruzzo's proposal racially – they recognized that it was targeted at low-income blacks – they differ on whether or not they believe the proposal is “racist.” The respondents did not use statistical indicators to establish Rep. LaBruzzo's “racist” intentions; rather, they relied on their personal experiences living in a racially segregated area of the country to establish LaBruzzo's racial motivations. For example, Andrew, an opponent, equates LaBruzzo's “racist” proposal with Hitler's coerced eugenics. Alternatively, Lucy, a supporter, proclaims that LaBruzzo's proposal is not racist; rather, she asserts that the fact blacks would be disproportionately exposed is merely a function of blacks having lower incomes. Sometimes she frames their lower incomes as a lack of work ethic and other times as a function of cultural defects.

While supporters and opponents alike used minimization to downplay the disparity in life chances between whites and blacks, the three respondents that used the reverse discrimination frame to explain this disparity all supported the proposal. The only respondent to assert that equality of opportunity has not yet been realized was the most vehemently opposed to the proposal.

In addition to their perceptions of choice, racial interpretations of LaBruzzo's sterilization incentive, and views on equality opportunity, supporters and opponents were divided by their use of color-blind racial frames. Put simply, supporters were more likely to explain poverty through cultural racial frames, such as when Luke explained why he thinks LaBruzzo targeted blacks, because they “are always having babies and staying home and not doing shit.” Opponents, on the other hand, used non-racial explanations of poverty, namely a deficient work ethic.

Limitations

This study has two major limitations. First, the sample is small. Interviewing more participants could expose greater variation in attitudes towards welfare, poverty, blacks and sterilization incentives. Although the core competency of qualitative methods is the depth it provides as opposed to the generalizability of quantitative methods, an insufficient sample size limits breadth of analysis. For example, there may be a segment of the Bucktown population that believes equality of opportunity has not been realized, yet supports LaBruzzo's sterilization proposal. Also, a larger sample size would allow for the possibility of examining relationships between more variables.

Second, a more detailed examination of the social location of the respondents may help account for variation in respondent attitudes toward welfare, comparative life chances for whites and blacks, and sterilization incentives. This study is deficient in examining class, religion, age and gender. Although I was able to gather basic information about class and status through questions about upward mobility, a survey would better capture the degree of mobility of the respondents by obtaining income levels and perhaps, more detailed job descriptions. Also, I chose not to probe the respondents about religiosity unless they brought it up first. Probing the respondents further could reveal how religious beliefs coincide with or contradict their attitudes towards welfare, poverty and sterilization incentives. In addition, although the sample was stratified by generation, age may not have been given sufficient attention as an independent variable. Furthermore, a more critical investigation of gender may have explained why all three female respondents supported the proposal.

Suggestions for Future Research

This investigation of American anti-welfare right-wing populism is merely a starting point for a more comprehensive study. Future research should derive from this study a basic idea of what variables increase the likelihood of support for sterilization incentives. These include minimization of discrimination, the belief that equality of opportunity has been surpassed by minority set-asides, lack of reflexivity about one's racial ideology, the belief that programs that target the reproductive rights of those who are structurally disadvantaged are not racist, and the belief that sterilization incentives do not disproportionately target low-income blacks. Furthermore, such an investigation should in some way gauge respondents' knowledge of the current state of welfare programs to determine the degree to which this variable affects welfare attitudes.

Before progressing to a more comprehensive investigation, this study of anti-welfare right-wing populism should be further verified by interviewing more respondents. This expanded study of anti-welfare right-wing populism must have a more purposefully selected sample, specifically to examine class differences. Also, interview questions should probe respondents about religiosity and directly examine elite resentment, rather than just letting these issues bubble up in conversation.

Implications

The case has been made that Bucktown is not the "average" American suburban neighborhood; however, one of the most glaring unanswered questions throughout this investigation is where Bucktonians fit into mainstream American politics. Bucktonians who support Representative LaBruzzo's proposal seem to be members of the "Silent Majority" of white working-class swing-voters often referred to as "Reagan Democrats" (Teixiera and Rogers

2000). All but one supporter of the sterilization proposal has no more than a high school education and works in a non-managerial or professional job with lesser autonomy than middle-class counterparts who are more likely to have a college degree. In addition to the changing demographic make-up of their home town, they are experiencing the rise of ethnic minorities into the highest levels of government along with increased government expenditures. While dollars and cents arguments against the welfare state have lost legitimacy since 1996, right-wing populists cling to their producerist framework of social inequality. A central theme to their personal narratives is hard work. The respondents' pride was palpable as they expressed the sacrifices they have made to ensure a decent standard of living for their families.

In the 2008 Presidential Election, the majority was not completely silent. Sarah Palin was chosen to run for Vice President to appeal to Joe Six Pack and Joe the Plumber, despite Teixeira and Rogers' (2000) warning that the silent majority would more resemble Joe/Jane Serviceperson. Thus, it was no great surprise that the Bucktonian respondents did not strongly support Governor Palin. Indeed, respondents did not espouse strong loyalties to any politicians in the 2008 Presidential Election (except for one respondent who liked John Edwards because of his idea to reform welfare, until news spread of his marital infidelity). Because all respondents who identified as political voted for McCain, it is safe to assume that if Bucktonians alone were the swing vote, John McCain would be president today. The failure of John McCain's Presidential campaign despite Bucktonian support illuminates diversity within the "Silent Majority." Despite some respondents' socio-economic compatibility with "Reagan Democrats" demographics, Bucktonians should not be labeled swing voters.

It is quite clear that Republicans will need new frames to recapture the "Silent Majority" in future elections; however, Bucktonians do not make up a section of the population to capture.

Rather, they are a segment to maintain. Although producerists traditionally reject the Republican Party's connections to big business, Bucktonians were more concerned about the lack of production among the lower class. Their version of producerism is quite compatible with Republican interests, especially restricted government intervention in the economy. With a focus on the work ethic, pre-occupation with disparities in racial sub-cultures, and concern about the subversion of the popular will through government instead of through industrial corporate and financial interests, these Bucktonians seem quite likely to remain loyal Republicans in the coming years.

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Tables 1: Comparison of Income in the U.S., Louisiana, Jefferson Parish, and Bucktown

Table 1 Income In 2008 Dollars								
	<u>Region</u>							
	United States		Louisiana		Jefferson Parish		Bucktown ^e	
<u>Income</u>	1989	1999	1989	1999	1989	1999	1989	1999
Mean Household Income	\$66,985	\$73,609	\$51,464	\$58,324	\$59,513	\$65,872	\$56,160	\$65,560
Median Household Income	\$51,643	\$63,948	\$37,713	\$51,355	\$47,966	\$59,460	N/A	N/A
Households	91,993,582	105,539,122	1,498,371	1,657,107	166,255	176,424	1,842	1,800

- a. U.S. Bureau of the Census (1990)
- b. U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000a)
- c. U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000b)
- d. Sahr (2009); conversion from 1989 to 2008 U.S. dollars: 0.582; conversion from 1999 to 2008 U.S. dollars: 0.782
- e. Combination of Census Tract 201.01 and Census Block Group 2, 201.02 (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990, 2000)

Table 2: Comparison of Income in the U.S., Louisiana, Jefferson Parish, and Bucktown

Table 2 Percent Change in Income in 2008 Dollars				
	<u>Region</u>			
<u>Income</u>	United States	Louisiana	Jefferson Parish	Bucktown^e
Mean Household Income	9.9%	13.3%	10.7%	16.7%
Median Household Income	23.8%	36.2%	24.0%	N/A
Households	14.7%	10.6%	6.1%	-2.3%

- a. U.S. Bureau of the Census (1990)
- b. U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000a)
- c. U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000b)
- d. Sahr (2009); conversion from 1989 to 2008 U.S. dollars: 0.582; conversion from 1999 to 2008 U.S. dollars: 0.782
- e. Combination of Census Tract 201.01 and Census Block Group 2, 201.02 (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990, 2000)

Table 3: Comparison of Educational Attainment in the U.S., Louisiana, Jefferson Parish, and Bucktown

Table 3 Educational Attainment for the Population 25+
Region

<u>Educational Attainment</u>	United States		Louisiana		Jefferson Parish		Bucktown ^c	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Less than High school	24.76%	19.61%	31.69%	25.19%	24.01%	20.74%	16.2%	13.21%
High school graduate	29.99%	28.63%	31.66%	32.40%	31.87%	29.97%	33.6%	25.16%
Some College	18.74%	21.05%	17.25%	20.23%	20.80%	23.37%	22.7%	27.00%
Associates	6.16%	6.32%	3.27%	3.45%	4.55%	4.43%	5.0%	4.90%
Bachelors	13.11%	15.54%	10.53%	12.24%	12.76%	14.51%	14.9%	18.94%
Graduate Degree	7.22%	8.86%	5.60%	6.49%	6.00%	6.98%	7.6%	10.81%
N	158,868,436	182,211,639	2,536,994	2,775,468	283,003	298,761	3,001	2,878

a. Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (1990)

b. Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000a)

c. Combination of Census Tract 201.01 and Census Block Group 2, 201.02 (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990, 2000)

Table 4: Comparison of Educational Attainment in the U.S., Louisiana, Jefferson Parish, and Bucktown

Table 4 Change in Educational Attainment for the Population 25+
Region

<u>Educational Attainment</u>	United States	Louisiana	Jefferson Parish	Bucktown ^c
Less than High school	-20.82%	-20.50%	-13.63%	-18.26%
High school graduate	-4.53%	2.32%	-5.97%	-25.09%
Some College	12.30%	17.28%	12.35%	19.16%
Associates	2.54%	5.39%	-2.69%	-2.62%
Bachelors	18.51%	16.28%	13.68%	26.87%
Graduate Degree	22.64%	15.90%	16.40%	41.66%
N	14.69%	9.40%	5.57%	-4.10%

a. Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (1990)

b. Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000a)

c. Combination of Census Tract 201.01 and Census Block Group 2, 201.02 (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990, 2000)

Table 5: Comparison of Occupations in the U.S., Louisiana, Jefferson Parish, and Bucktown

Table 5 Occupation by Region for population 16+ 1990-2000

Occupation	Region							
	United States		Louisiana		Jefferson Parish		Bucktown^c	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Executive, administrative, and managerial	12.3%	13.5%	10.4%	10.8%	12.4%	12.8%	15.9%	16.9%
Professional specialty occupations	14.1%	20.2%	14.0%	19.1%	14.0%	19.7%	15.5%	24.8%
Technical, sales, and administrative support	31.7%	26.7%	31.5%	26.8%	38.4%	29.9%	40.7%	27.6%
Service occupations	13.2%	14.9%	14.2%	16.7%	11.9%	15.3%	9.3%	14.7%
Farming, forestry, and fishing occupations	2.5%	0.7%	2.5%	0.8%	1.0%	0.4%	0.8%	0.6%
Precision production, craft, and repair	11.3%	9.4%	12.5%	11.7%	11.1%	10.6%	12.9%	7.5%
Operators, fabricators, and laborers	14.9%	14.6%	14.8%	14.1%	11.2%	11.3%	4.8%	7.9%
N	191,829,271	217,168,077	3,119,293	3,394,546	340,939	354,056	3,433	3,242

a. Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (1990)

b. Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000a)

c. Combination of Census Tract 201.01 and Census Block Group 2, 201.02 (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990, 2000)

Table 6: Comparison of Occupations in the U.S., Louisiana, Jefferson Parish, and Bucktown

Table 6 Change in Occupation by Region for population 16+ 1990-2000

Occupation	Region			
	United States	Louisiana	Jefferson Parish	Bucktown^c
Executive, administrative, and managerial	9.4%	3.8%	2.6%	6.2%
Professional specialty occupations	43.3%	36.1%	40.7%	59.7%
Technical, sales, and administrative support	-15.9%	-15.0%	-22.0%	-32.1%
Service occupations	12.4%	17.2%	28.8%	58.0%
Farming, forestry, and fishing	-70.1%	-66.8%	-57.1%	-19.7%
Precision production, craft, and repair	-16.6%	-6.7%	-4.7%	-42.1%
Operators, fabricators, and laborers	-1.6%	-4.8%	0.7%	62.2%
N	13.2%	8.8%	3.8%	-5.6%

- a. Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (1990)
- b. Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000a)
- c. Combination of Census Tract 201.01 and Census Block Group 2, 201.02 (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990, 2000)

Table 7: Comparison of Racial and Ethnic Composition in the U.S., Louisiana, Jefferson Parish, and Bucktown

Table 7 Race and Ethnicity by Region

Race or Ethnicity	Region			
	United States	Louisiana	Jefferson Parish	Bucktown^b
White alone	211,353,725 75.10%	2,855,964 63.91%	317,948 69.81%	3670 95.47%
Black or African American alone	34,361,740 12.21%	1,444,566 32.32%	104,025 22.84%	36 0.94%
Asian alone	10,171,820 3.61%	55,492 1.24%	13,790 3.03%	74 1.93%
Other (includes two or more)	25,534,621 9.07%	112,954 2.53%	19,703 4.33%	64 1.66%
N	281,421,906	4,468,976	455,466	3,844
Hispanic or Latino^c	35,238,481 12.52%	107,854 2.41%	32,227 7.08%	119 3.10%

- a. Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000a)
- b. Combination of Census Tract 201.01 and Census Block Group 2, 201.02
- c. Combination of Census Tract 201.01 and Census Block Group 2, 201.02 (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990, 2000)

Table 8: Comparison of Public Assistance Income in the U.S., Louisiana, Jefferson Parish, and Bucktown

Table 8 Population Receiving Public Assistance Income

	<u>Region</u>							
	United States		Louisiana		Jefferson Parish		Bucktown ^b	
With public assistance income	3,629,732	3.4%	54,646	3.3%	4,535	2.6%	11	0.6%
No public assistance income	101,909,390	96.6%	1,602,461	96.7%	171,889	97.4%	1789	99.4%
N	105,539,122	100.0%	1,657,107	100.0%	176,424	100.0%	1800	100.0%

a. Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000a)

b. Combination of Census Tract 201.01 and Census Block Group 2, 201.02 (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990, 2000)

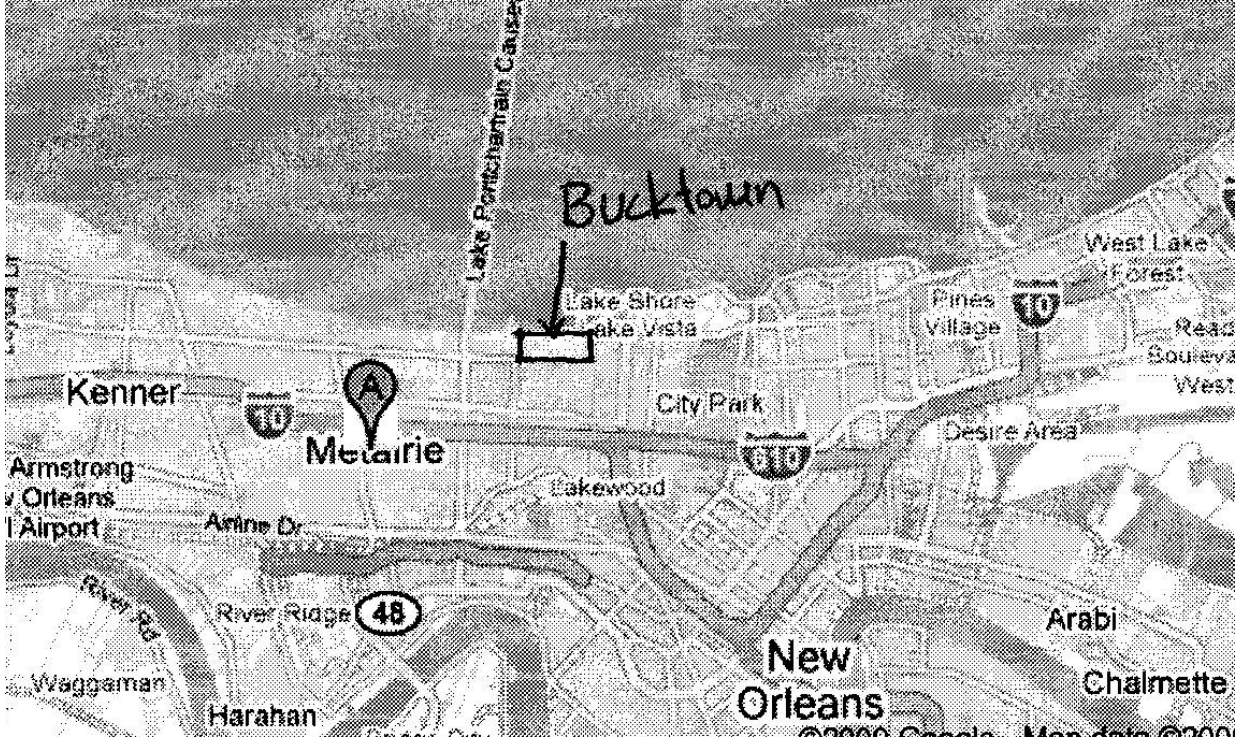
Table 9: Comparison of Poverty Status by Race and Ethnicity in the U.S., Louisiana, and Jefferson Parish

Table 9 Poverty Status by Race and Ethnicity by Region for the population 16+

Race	Region		
	United States	Louisiana	Jefferson Parish
White	9.14%	11.13%	8.45%
Black	24.90%	36.69%	29.48%
N	238,973,992	4,169,716	417,832

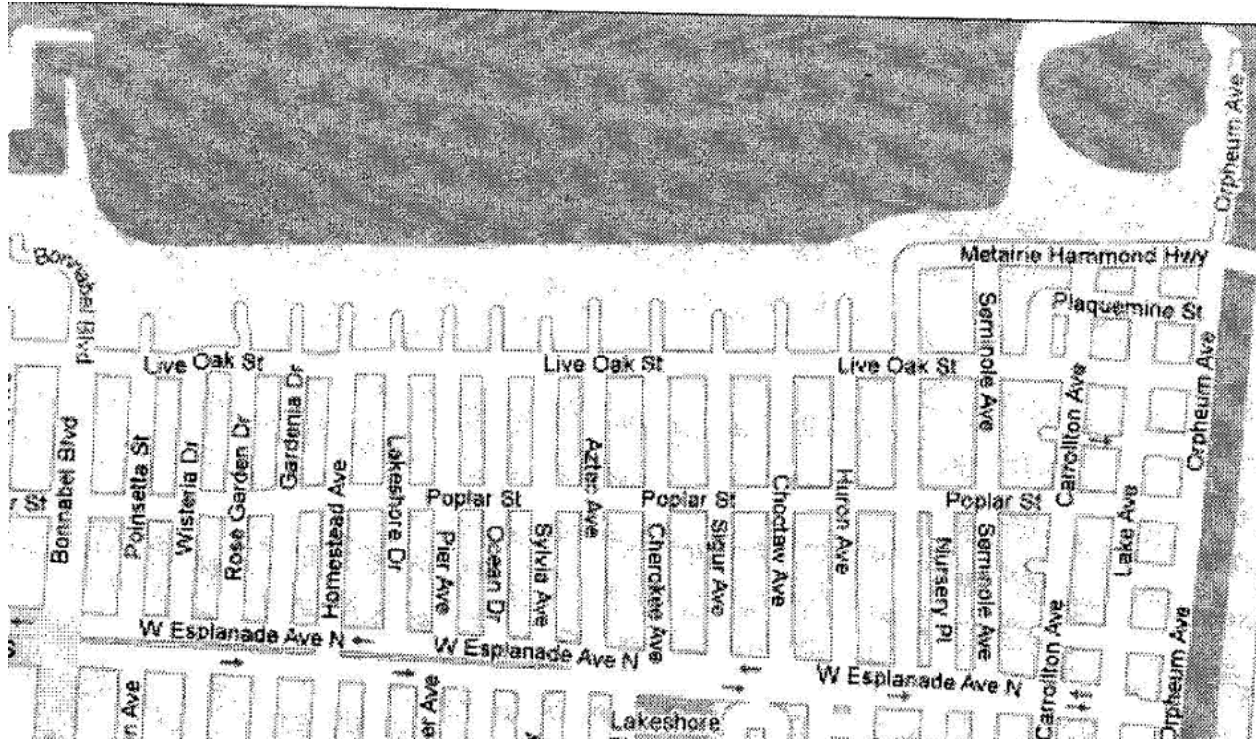
a. Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000a)

Figure 1: Map of Bucktown and surrounding area



a. Source: Google Maps 2009

Figure 2: Map of Bucktown



a. Source: Google Maps 2009

Figure 3: Photo of White Power and Swastika painted on the road in front of 1500 Homestead Ave. in May 2009



a. photo by Matt S. Landry 2009

Appendix A: Interview Guide

My name is Matt Landry. I grew up on Lakeshore Dr. for over twenty years. I am a graduate student in Sociology at the University of New Orleans. I am interviewing Bucktonians about their political beliefs for my thesis.

I Bucktown - General

- 1) How long have you lived in Bucktown?
 - a) What do you like about Bucktown? Why did you move here? (or why did you stay here?)
 - b) What do you dislike about Bucktown? Is there anything hard about living here?
 - c) Can you talk to me about how Bucktown has changed since you moved here?

II Labruzzo's Proposal

- 2) There's been a lot of talk about John Labruzzo in the media lately. Please tell me what you think about him.
- 3) Please tell me what you think about his public announcement about giving \$1,000 to low-income people to get their tubes tied and to give money to more affluent, more educated for having kids?

III Poverty and Welfare

- 4) In general, would you mind talking about your views on welfare?
-would you say welfare programs are effective? (only if necessary)
- 5) From your perspective, why are people poor?
- 6) When people are poor, what do you think the government should do?
- 7) Do you think there is equality of opportunity for all people?
- 8) Do you think programs like affirmative action take away from equality of opportunity?
- 9) Do you think there's a lot of reverse discrimination today?
- 10) Was there ever a time when you or your family needed help?
- 11) What did your parents or grandparents teach you about your responsibility to provide for your family?

12) Would you say that the way you look welfare has changed much throughout your life? If so, what circumstances changed the way you looked at welfare?

13) How did you come to know about how welfare programs work?

14) If your unmarried daughter/sister/granddaughter had a kid and didn't have money, what do you think she would get from the government?

IV 2008 Election

15) What candidate did you like in the 2008 presidential election?

16) Was there any candidate that you particularly disliked?

17) It seems that people had completely opposite views on Sarah Palin during the recent election season. What do you think about Sarah Palin?

18) It seems like there has been a lot of focus on race during the 2008 election leading up to President Obama's inauguration. What do you think about the media's emphasis on race during the election season and leading up to the inauguration?

V Elites

19) In your opinion, why do you think we are in a recession?

20) What do you think of the bailout?
particularly that people say we're giving money to banks in exchange for little to nothing?

VI Duke

21) I grew up in Bucktown and I remember a lot of controversy surrounding David Duke being elected into office. What did/do you think of David Duke and his policies?

22) Do you think David Duke spoke for many people in Bucktown?

VI Immigration

23) After Katrina, a lot of immigrants moved to New Orleans and Jefferson Parish. I talk to a lot of people who are frustrated about the Hispanic and Mexican immigrants moving here. What do you think of them?

24) There's been a lot of talk about immigration reform over the past few years. What do you think about the current immigrant situation in America today?

VII Globalism

25) It seems like the country is divided over what America's role should be abroad. For example, there was a lot of discrepancy about what whether America should invade Iraq. And now America is divided about whether we should leave Iraq or not. Do you think America should get involved in places like Iraq?

26) It seems that people are divided on what they think about the United Nations. What do you think about the United Nations?

VIII Ending Questions

27) What class would you say you belong to? Would you say that you have always been a member of that class? What class would you say most Bucktonians belong to?

28) Is there anything else you would like to mention about Bucktown and its politics?

29) Could you tell me about a life lesson that has been important to you?

Appendix B: Institutional Review Board Approval Form

University Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research

University of New Orleans

Campus Correspondence

Principal Investigator: Vern Baxter

Co-Investigator: Matt Landry

Date: December 9, 2008

Protocol Title: "Ideology Formation Among Bucktown Residents"

IRB#: 08Nov08

The IRB has deemed that the research and procedures are compliant with the University of New Orleans and federal guidelines. The above referenced human subjects protocol has been reviewed and approved using expedited procedures (under 45 CFR 46.116(a) categories 6&7).

Approval is only valid for one year from the approval date. Any changes to the procedures or protocols must be reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to implementation. Use the IRB number listed on this letter in all future correspondence regarding this proposal.

If an adverse, unforeseen event occurs (e.g., physical, social, or emotional harm), you are required to inform the IRB as soon as possible after the event.

Best wishes on your project!

Sincerely,

Robert D. Laird, Chair

UNO Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research

VITA

Matt Landry was born in Metairie, LA in 1983 and received his B.G.S. from the University of New Orleans in 2006. He will graduate with an M.A. in Sociology at the University of New Orleans in August 2009. His future plans include pursuing his Ph.D. at the University of Pittsburgh.