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Research Thesis

Replacement-Based Cultural Threat

and Immigration Attitudes

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

Abstract

With the influx of nonwhite migrants into white-majority states across the Global North, right-wing political actors have used populism to shape public perception of immigration and immigrants themselves. Warnings against the acceptance of outgroup populations can be traced back to the dawn of human social behavior, though a recent shift in rhetoric by xenophobic actors has taken place. Moving away from claims of impending security, economic or cultural threats of migrant populations, contemporary anti-immigrant rhetoric has shifted toward claims that migrant populations will *replace* existing western cultures altogether. Through both a survey experiment and an Immigration Threat Measurement Study, this thesis explores the novel *replacement threat*—a previously overlooked and distinct form of immigration threat. *Replacement threat*—based in the psychological framing of the impending minority status of a white majority—proves to be an innovative tool for identifying the socio-political consequences of replacement-based rhetoric on immigration attitudes.

Introduction

In recent years, immigration has become an increasingly politically charged issue in many western democracies, made salient by right-wing populist political actors seeking hardline policies against migrants and refugees. Right-wing actors favor a *triadic model of populism* that pits an underclass (e.g. "the everyday American") against an elite class (e.g. "the liberal elites in Washington, D.C.") who repeatedly favor the interests of an "undeserving" third group (e.g. "migrants") over the interests of the "deserving" underclass (Judis, 2017). With increasing migration into many western countries due to environmental change, war, famine and other push factors in the Global South, right-wing populist actors have alleged many threats from migrants, such as increased crime and economic stagnation. They have also pointed to the supposed threats that immigrants pose to the national culture and identity (Kaufmann, 2017).

This thesis proposes to investigate a new type of threat: *replacement threat*—the threat that the white racial/ethnic majority in the United States will soon become a minority group (i.e. less than half of the total population), and might perhaps continue to shrink as a share of the population to the point that it has been replaced by nonwhite ethnic minorities. This thesis aims to demonstrate that this novel *replacement threat* contributes to anti-immigrant opinion in a way that is distinct and separate from the types of immigration threat explored in the existing political psychology literature.

Literature Review

To understand mass-level hostility toward migrants, political psychologists have categorized perceived threats into two primary groups: *interest threats* and *cultural threats*.

Interest threats hold that migrants threaten native populations through job loss, crime and an excessive tax burden. The emphasis on interest threats derives from Realistic Group Conflict Theory which hypothesizes that group conflict arises through competition over scarce resources (Sherif et al., 1961). Two common forms of interest threat that routinely appear throughout the political psychology literature on reactions to migration are *physical/security threat* and *sociotropic economic threat*.

Realistic Threat

Realistic Group Conflict Theory—conceptualized in 1961 by Muzafer Sherif and his colleagues—states that antisocial behavior, negative stereotyping and prejudices result from conflict between groups over scarce resources (Sherif et al., 1961). This framework was largely used to understand opposition to immigration through a significant portion of the mid-twentieth century and was based on the idea that individuals feel that their personal safety, livelihood and security are put at risk by immigrants and thus oppose allowing immigrants into their society.

Social psychologist Walter Stephan expanded on this framework in two 1999 immigration attitudes studies, labeling the phenomenon of individuals opposing immigration on the grounds of perceived conflict between native and nonnative groups as *realistic threat* (Stephan et al., 1999). According to this conception, realistic threats encompass all perceived behavior that poses a direct threat to the ingroup's existence, physical or material well-being. Broader than the initial scope of Realistic Group Conflict Theory, Stephan's *realistic threat* focuses on immigration while encompassing all threats to group welfare and the welfare of its individual members, not just threat of competition over scarce resources.

Practical applications of realistic threat include natives' opposition to immigration on the basis that immigrants are perceived as physically violent, wrongfully taking employment opportunities from natives and causing harm to individual neighborhoods, families or communities. Critically, these assertions do not have to be true, but must be *perceived* as true by the native ingroup.

Sociotropic Economic Threat

Using National Election Study (NES) survey data from the United States General Elections in 1992 and 1994, political scientist Jack Citrin and his colleagues tested a variety of variables when attempting to identify the factors that shape immigration attitudes among the American populous. The results of their study suggest that, contrary to common belief, an individual's personal or familial economic situation does not directly correlate with attitudes on immigration policy. Rather, an individual's perception of the national

economy and the perceived economic burden of immigrants (such as the fear of increased income taxation) fuel such attitudes (Citrin et al., 1997). Additionally, factors such as perceived employment opportunity of the American public and fear of an overburdened social safety net were directly linked to immigration attitudes.

When native populations begin to believe that immigrants are either (1) contributing to the demise of the national economy or (2) draining critical resources from an already weak national economy, they are increasingly likely to support anti-immigrant measures such as immigration restrictions and increases in deportations.

Still, Citrin et al. concede that while national economic factors play a role in impacting the native population's support for immigration, attitudes based on cultural, ethnic and racial grounds prove to be quite decisive in determining whether or not an individual will support immigration (Citrin et al., 1997).

Cultural threats hold that migrants threaten the very cultural fabric of a nation by importing non-American language, values, dress, and other cultural practices into American borders (Mughan & Paxton, 2006). The emphasis on cultural threats is based in Social Identity Theory, which hypothesizes that the groups to which an individual belongs are central to his or her self-regard and thus "inferior" non-group members should conform to "superior" ingroup norms (Mughan & Paxton, 2006). Two common forms of cultural threat that appear throughout the political psychology literature are *assimilationist threat* and *prototypicality threat*.

Assimilationist Threat

According to political scientist Anthony Mughan and sociologist Pamela Paxton, the unique cultural threat proposed by immigrants does not exist simply because of their status as immigrants, but because of their unwillingness (or perceived unwillingness) to assimilate and adopt the established cultural norms and traditions of their new country (Mughan & Paxton, 2006). This *assimilationist threat* exists because assimilation is not an automatic phenomenon, but rather one that takes place at the will and discretion of incoming migrants rather than at the will and discretion of the host country. New migrants are torn between the cultures of their native homelands and the culture of the host country,

creating a competition for cultural advantage between migrant populations and their native-born compatriots (Lal, 1990).

Paxton and Mughan assert that the success of a migrant population in assimilating into its new country can be measured along three key variables: language, productivity and citizenship, with language being perhaps the most visible and consequential of the variables. The importance that English-speaking Americans attach to language as an indicator of proper assimilation cannot be overstated, as all cross-cultural social interactions hinge on the ability of the individuals involved to effectively communicate in a common tongue.

When native populations begin to believe that immigrant populations are unable or unwilling to assimilate into the dominant native culture (most notably on linguistic grounds), cultural conflict ensues, and native populations begin to feel subject to assimilationist threat (Mughan & Paxton, 2006).

Prototypicality Threat

Through joint studies in 2015, social psychologists Felix Danbold and Yeun Huo established the concept of *prototypicality threat*—the assertion that whites' declining share of the overall United States population threatens their status as the prototypical ethnic group of American culture and society (Danbold & Felix, 2015). Throughout much of American history, the conceptions of "American" and "white" were nearly synonymous, reinforced through the white population's dominant majority status, policies of racial supremacy and media depictions of the prototypical American nuclear family. As the United States' nonwhite population continues to climb, gain representation in government and attain greater portrayal through media, white Americans are beginning to see their long-held dominant position as the "prototypical American" begin to dwindle.

Because seeing one's own group as being prototypical of the larger population has immense psychological benefits, the loss of prototypicality is especially damaging to group identity and thus individual identity, particularly among those who identify very strongly with the group (Branscombe et al., 1999). As a response, self-identified members of the formerly-dominant prototypical group have been shown to: (1) demand that threatening outgroups assimilate to ingroup identity, (2) devalue the general concept of diversity and

(3) endorse conservative political views on a range of issues, even if they previously displayed no endorsement of such views.

While both interest threat and cultural threat have been shown to spur anti-immigrant policy attitudes among majority group members, evidence suggests that cultural threat is a much more powerful catalyst for xenophobic policy preferences (Sniderman et al., 2004). For example, in a 2004 Sniderman, et al. experiment, Dutch nationals preferred migrant groups who "fit smoothly with Dutch culture" to those who were highly educated and suited for well-paying jobs. Conversely, Dutch citizens showed the greatest level of animosity toward migrant groups 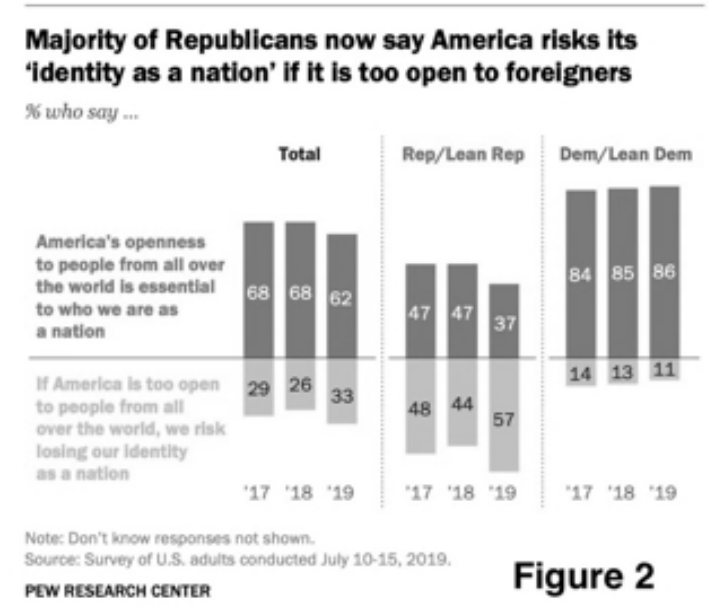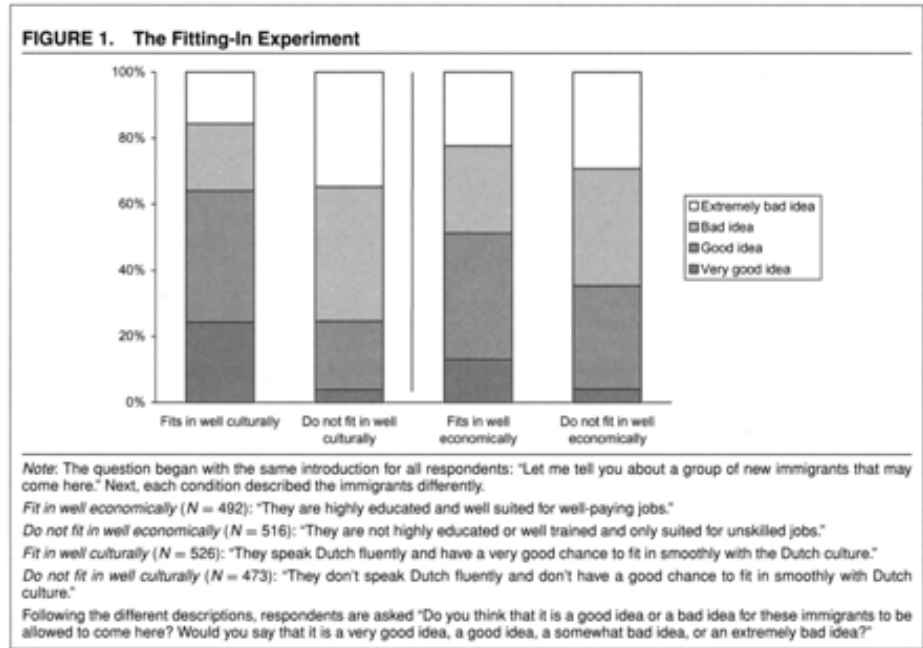who "do not fit in well culturally", even when they were best suited to contribute the most to the overall Dutch economy (see Figure 1). In the United States, a record high number of voters agree with the statement, "If America is too open to the world, we risk losing our identity as a nation" (see Figure 2) and list national identity loss to migrants as a major concern (Brockway & Doherty, 2019).

FIGURE 1. The Fitting-In Experiment

Note: The question began with the same introduction for all respondents: "Let me tell you about a group of new immigrants that may come here." Next, each condition described the immigrants differently.
Fit in well economically (N = 492): "They are highly educated and well suited for well-paying jobs."
Do not fit in well economically (N = 516): "They are not highly educated or well trained and only suited for unskilled jobs."
Fit in well culturally (N = 526): "They speak Dutch fluently and have a very good chance to fit in smoothly with the Dutch culture."
Do not fit in well culturally (N = 473): "They don't speak Dutch fluently and don't have a good chance to fit in smoothly with Dutch culture."
Following the different descriptions, respondents are asked "Do you think that it is a good idea or a bad idea for these immigrants to be allowed to come here? Would you say that it is a very good idea, a good idea, a somewhat bad idea, or an extremely bad idea?"

Majority of Republicans now say America risks its 'identity as a nation' if it is too open to foreigners

% who say ...

Note: Don't know responses not shown.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 10-15, 2019.
PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Figure 2

Replacement Threat

While the existing literature in political psychology does a convincing job of stressing the disproportionate impact of cultural threat, it often limits cultural threat to what this project calls "coexistence threats"—instances of cultural threat that often constitute a native having to "tolerate" a migrant who perhaps speaks a different language, belongs to a different religious group, or has different values from the native. We argue that, in recent years, right-wing political actors have refocused their rhetoric from that of coexistence threat to *replacement threat*—the idea that the ever-growing share of the United States population that is nonwhite immigrants—primarily, though not exclusively, through a mass "invasion" by nonwhites—will lead to the replacement of the white race and its culture by nonwhites and their cultures. Reviews of right-wing media reinforce the frequency of this claim, with investigative journalists from the *New York Times* compiling a list of replacement-based rhetoric echoed throughout American television, radio and online media—from claims of an "immigrant invasion" to statements that "Democrats want to replace... the American people with chain migrants" (Peters, 2019).

A growing line of research in social and political psychology examines white persons' reactions upon learning of their impending minority status. The results show that merely becoming aware of this demographic shift results in greater political conservatism, more hostile attitudes towards minorities, and less willingness to embrace multiculturalism (Danbold & Felix, 2015). As valuable as these findings are, we believe that information about demographic trends rarely appears in a laboratory-induced political vacuum, so to speak. Anti-immigrant activists seize upon these inexorable demographic shifts to make solemn and/or feverish public pronouncements that exaggerate the economic, security and especially cultural threats of immigration. Some on the extreme end of the dimension gravely warn of the "replacement" of "American" (white) culture, or even of "white genocide." Our goal is to examine how the politicization of these basic demographic facts affect Americans' view on immigration and a number of other political outcomes.

Because of the shift in framing of the immigration issue by right-wing populist actors, it is vital to investigate, measure and understand the effects of replacement-based

cultural threat on majority populations. As existing literature indicates, increased levels of perceived threat to national identity and culture have been accompanied by increased intolerance, vilification and support for policies that restrict the rights of migrants (Lahav & Courtemanche, 2012). If it is true that replacement-based framing leads to more severe anti-migrant attitudes, the line of research that may sprout from the results of this thesis will make an important contribution to understanding immigration policy attitudes in white-majority countries across the globe.

Differentiation Between Prototypicality Threat and Replacement Threat

At surface level, Danbold and Felix's conception of prototypicality threat—the assertion that whites' declining share of the overall United States population threatens their status as the prototypical ethnic group of American culture and society—appears to be quite similar to our conception of the novel replacement threat. To view these two conceptions of immigration threat as identical, however, is imprecise, as there are several important theoretical distinctions between prototypicality threat and replacement threat:

The first of these distinctions is the implication of minority status for whites that is explicitly present in replacement threat, but not explicitly present in Danbold and Felix's conception of prototypicality threat. While prototypicality threat prompts one to envision oneself in comparison to the "typical American" at a future date, it does not imply that whites will be a demographic minority (i.e. less than 50% of the total American population) as does replacement threat. To note the alteration of an established prototype—the typical version of something—is substantively different than one group's outright replacement as the dominant group by another.

Secondly, replacement threat contains a definitive conspiratorial component (i.e. the suggestion of a purposeful effort by political elites and powerbrokers to replace the white population with a nonwhite population). This theme can be frequently found throughout right-wing media broadcasting, in which left-leaning or establishment figures are purported to be encouraging racial replacement for economic or political gain (Peters, 2019). This conspiratorial argument is founded on the basis that nonwhite voters overwhelmingly prefer Democratic candidates to Republican candidates in statewide and national elections, thus it would be beneficial for Democratic elites to encourage the

replacement of whites on the basis of political expediency (Judis, 2017). Prototypicality threat contains no such conspiratorial or calculating element.

Finally, we note a differentiation between prototypicality threat and replacement threat in their respective interpretations of the white population's numerical decline (and the nonwhite population's numerical growth) in the United States. While replacement threat prompts one to think about the decline of the white population as a gross number (thus implying an overall recession of the white race/ethnicity), prototypicality threat does not. Replacement threat does not prompt one to think of the blurring of cultures as does prototypicality threat, but rather prompts one to envision the rapid growth of nonwhite cultures at the *expense* of white culture. Replacement threat treats this phenomenon as a zero-sum game, in which one race/ethnicity can gain only so long as another recedes.

Because of replacement threat's distinct theoretical qualities that distinguish it from prototypicality threat as well as the other previously mentioned forms of immigration threat, it is vital to investigate replacement threat as its own concept rather than a version of existing conceptions of immigration threat. To accomplish this, we have created and executed the following research design:

Research Design

Prior to exploring the experimental designs, it is important to note a key demographic trend that directly impacts the factual basis of the replacement threat argument. Demographers have shown that the coming minority status for white persons in the United States is due to three trends: (1) continued or increased immigration of nonwhite persons; (2) higher birth rates among nonwhite persons; and (3) the decline in the absolute number of white people. According to demographic trends reported by the United States Census Bureau, there are fewer white Americans residing in the United States every year. Births among white persons in the US (and elsewhere around the world) have fallen below the rate of about 2.1 children per woman (the established "rate of replacement" that must occur for a population to maintain its size from generation to generation). To the best of our knowledge, no study has specifically drawn attention to the

effects of learning that the white population is shrinking. We expect that information about the real decline in the number of whites will alarm and dismay many whites to a greater extent than learning that whites are declining as a proportion of the United States population, as prior research has examined. As a result, we have devised an Immigration Threat Measurement Study to better understand this novel replacement threat.

The Immigration Threat Measurement Study

Research Design

Our study consists of a simple online survey that helped us to test and develop further an individual-level measure of perceived "replacement threat". We conducted reliability and validity tests of our proposed scale. In particular, we tested whether the proposed scale is sufficiently independent of related measures of immigrant attitudes, particularly cultural threat.

Sample

The sample consisted of 99 undergraduate students enrolled in political science courses. Of the 99 undergraduate respondents, 68 identified as white. Analysis conducted in the "Outcomes of the Immigration Threat Measurement Study" analyzed only the responses of the 68 white respondents. All students were offered extra credit as an incentive to participate.

Measurement/Instrumentation

The survey consists of self-report measures of beliefs and attitudes about immigration and immigrants, as well as beliefs about the proportions of different racial and ethnic groups in the United States. We also include standard demographic and political measures such as age, sex, race/ethnicity, party identification, and immigration status. All proposed survey items are available in list form in the Survey Structure section of this thesis. We conceptualize replacement threat as comprising three interrelated themes: Conspiratorial Thinking; Loss of Status/Culture; and Emotional Response to Status Loss. The three themes, with their respective measures, appear in Table 1.

Table 1: Replacement Threat Themes and Corresponding Survey Items

Theme	Survey Items
Conspiratorial Thinking	• Some political groups stand to benefit if white people are replaced by minorities. • Some elites would prefer to dilute the white race by increasing the share of non-white immigrants that come to the United States.
Loss of Culture/Status	• It seems as though white people are being replaced by racial and ethnic minorities in the United States. • If white people vanish from the United States, American culture will go downhill. • It's not a big deal if the white population shrinks. • The fear that white people will vanish from the United States is way overblown. • If white people vanish from the United States, America's position as a world leader will decline. • Many traditions of white culture are no longer valued the way they used to be and are being replaced by traditions of non-white cultures.
Emotional Response to Status Loss	• The way things are going, I worry that white people might someday disappear entirely from the United States. • I fear that my voice in how government works is being "watered down" by growing voices of minorities. • White people built this country, so it would be very unfair if they ended up as a small minority in the United States. • It makes me sad to imagine the United States with only a small percentage of white people left.

Detailed Study Procedures

Each potential participant was emailed a brief description of the study accompanied by a URL link to the Qualtrics survey. Upon landing on our opening survey page, participants read a welcome message, and will proceeded to the online consent form. Students who consent to participate proceed to the survey proper; those who did not wish to participate simply closed their browser window.

Survey Structure

The Immigration Threat Measurement survey is divided into five item blocks, with each block containing a set of items representing a specific type of threat scale, as described in the literature. The types of immigration threat tested in our Immigration Threat Measurement Study are realistic threat, symbolic threat, assimilation threat, prototypicality threat and replacement threat. Support for assimilation is also tested in a separate block. Response options for each statement included a standard seven-point scale ranging from 'Strongly Agree' to 'Strongly Disagree' with a neutral option. The order of the blocks was randomized, and the order of items *within* each block was also randomized.

Listed below is each survey block (excluding the previously described replacement threat block), labeled by which type of threat it represents and its associated survey items:

- Realistic Threat (adapted from Stephan et al., 1999)
    - The growth of other ethnic groups has increased the tax burden on members of my ethnic group.
    - Social services have become less available to members of my ethnic group because of the growth of other ethnic groups.
    - Members of other ethnic groups are not displacing members of my ethnic group from their jobs.
- Symbolic Threat (adapted from Sniderman et al., 2004)
    - The values and beliefs of other ethnic groups regarding moral issues are not compatible with the values and beliefs of my ethnic group.
    - The growth of other ethnic groups is undermining American culture.

- o The values and beliefs of other ethnic groups regarding work are not compatible with the values and beliefs of my ethnic group.
- Assimilationist Threat (adapted from Paxton & Mughan, 2006)
  - o Immigrants don't have to speak in English in public places all of the time.
  - o Immigrants should speak to each other in English even in the privacy of their own homes.
  - o When in the company of Americans, immigrants need to speak to each other in English even if it is easier for them to use a common native language.
  - o It's okay for immigrants to be choosy about their first job in the United States even if it takes a while to find one they like.
  - o Immigrants who choose not to become citizens can still be committed to America.
  - o Immigrants should become American citizens as soon as they possibly can.
  - o Immigrants who are here illegally should not be allowed to stay for any reason.
- Prototypicality Threat (adapted from Danbold & Huo, 2015)
  - o Compared to today, 50 years from now what it means to be a true American will be less clear.
  - o Compared to today, 50 years from now the values and beliefs of the typical American will be different from the values and beliefs of people like me.
  - o Compared to today, 50 years from now the typical American and people like me will have less in common than in the past.
- Support for Assimilation
  - o If people want to succeed in the US, they should adopt the values of my ethnic group.
  - o What makes the US strong is that we are a mix of different racial cultures.
  - o America should be an English-only country.
- Diversity Endorsement
  - o It is important to have multiple perspectives in America (i.e., from different cultures, races, and ethnicities).

- One of the goals of our country should be to teach people from different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds how to live and work together.

- Americans should understand that differences in backgrounds and experiences can lead to different values and ways of thinking.

- It's perfectly fine for Americans to stick to their own culture and not concern themselves with other ways of life.

- Living alongside people from different cultures can create a lot of unnecessary difficulties.

- Perception of Demographic Information

  - Do you believe that the overall number of white people in the United States today is increasing, decreasing, or staying about the same?

  - Do you believe that the <u>overall number</u> of <u>nonwhite</u> people in the United States today is increasing, decreasing, or staying about the same?

Survey respondents were also asked to provide basic demographic information on their race, political party affiliation, strength of political party affiliation, political ideology (on a seven-point liberal-conservative scale) and ethnic identity. Respondents were also asked to estimate the proportion of the American population that is white as well as the proportion that is nonwhite. Respondents were asked the following two questions after crafting their population estimates:

  - Do you believe that the overall number of white people in the United States today is increasing, decreasing, or staying about the same?

  - Do you believe that the overall number of nonwhite people in the United States today is increasing, decreasing, or staying about the same?

In total, respondents were presented with fifty-five survey items, including demographic information prompts. Respondents were not forced to respond to any prompts in order to complete the survey, though they were presented with an attention check towards the end of the survey to reveal evidence of any individual satisficing.

Results and Discussion

Following data collection using the Qualtrics online survey administration software, the statistical software program SPSS was used to conduct a principal axis factoring analysis. Principal axis factoring—also known as principal factor analysis—identifies the least number of factors which can account for the common variance (or correlation) of a set of variables.

In order to test the internal consistency of the scales measuring realistic threat, symbolic threat, assimilationist threat, prototypicality threat and our novel replacement threat, we conducted a test using Cronbach's alpha as a criterion for reliability. Our scale compared favorably to the existing scales, with a Cronbach's alpha of **0.886**. Among the other scales, the respective alpha scores were 0.692 (realistic threat), 0.699 (assimilationist threat) and 0.596 (prototypicality threat). It therefore appears on first take that our replacement threat scale is a coherent, viable measure. We acknowledge, however, that the reliability coefficient was no doubt inflated to a certain degree by the relatively large number of items (12).

Total Variance Explained				
	Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings[a]
Factor	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total
1	5.323	44.361	44.361	4.559
2	1.033	8.609	52.970	1.963
3	.640	5.336	58.306	4.268
Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.				

We next examined the dimensional structure of the replacement threat scale by conducting a principal axis factoring analysis. Principal axis factoring—also known as principal factor analysis—identifies the least number of factors that can account for the common variance (or correlation) of a set of variables. Out of the twelve items in the replacement threat block, three common factors were identified in the analysis by virtue of exceeding the minimum Eigenvalue of 1.00. We began by labeling the discovered factors as 1, 2, and 3.

Based on the pattern of factor loadings, we offer the following characterizations of the three factors:

Factor 1: Loss of Culture/Status

Items that load strongly in Factor 1 share the common theme of loss of culture and status by the white population in the United States. Key items found in this factor include:

1. Belief in the inevitable decline of America's position as a global leader if the white population vanishes
2. Belief in the inevitable decline of American culture if the white population vanishes
3. A sense of devaluation of white culture and traditions as nonwhite populations approach majority status

The strongest among the items in this factor deals directly with the decline of America's status on the world stage, though trailed only slightly by a sense of decline in American culture if the white population were to vanish altogether. Interestingly, there is a strong connection with the aforementioned variables and a sense of sadness or worry. Registering strongly in this factor were feelings of sadness ("It makes me sad to imagine the United States with only a small percentage of white people left"), ostensibly linked to senses of diminishing white culture and the perceived decline of America as a world leader.

Pattern Matrix[a]

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
It seems as though white people are being replaced by racial and ethnic minorities in the United States.	.325	.276	
The way things are going, I worry that white people might someday disappear entirely from the United States.			-.882
White people built this country, so it would be very unfair if they ended up as a small minority in the United States.	.444		-.481
If white people vanish from the United States, American culture will go downhill.	.447		-.292
It's not a big deal if the white population shrinks.	.590		-.252
The fear that white people will vanish from the United States is way overblown.			-.684
If white people vanish from the United States, America's position as a world leader will decline.	.951		.202
Some political groups stand to benefit if white people are replaced by minorities.		.889	
I fear that my voice in how government works is being "watered down" by growing voices of minorities.			-.635
Some elites would prefer to dilute the white race by increasing the share of non-white immigrants that come to the United States.		.517	
Many traditions of white culture are no longer valued the way they used to be, and are being replaced by traditions of non-white cultures.	.557		
It makes me sad to imagine the United States with only a small percentage of white people left.	.783		

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.
Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 9 iterations.

Factor 2: Conspiracy by Political Elites

Items that load strongly in Factor 2 indicate a belief in some form of purposeful effort by elites to encourage or even cause the replacement of the white population with racial and ethnic minorities. This, of course, is correlated with the general belief that replacement of the white race by nonwhite populations is already occurring ("It seems as though white people are being replaced by racial and ethnic minorities in the United States"). Key concepts found in this factor include:

1. The belief that certain political groups would actively or passively benefit from the replacement of the United States' white population by racial and ethnic minorities

2. A sense that elites would prefer to replace the white population with nonwhite people

The connection of these two items makes a fair amount of logical sense, as political elites who would hypothetically benefit from the replacement of the white population would also desire for that process to occur out of sheer self-interest.

Factor 3: Emotional Response

Items that load strongly in Factor 3 suggest that replacement threat elicits powerful emotional reaction among whites, as each of the items confirm the respondents' anxiety, fear or feelings of unfairness toward the potential for nonwhite populations to replace the white majority. While some of the items indicate hypothetical fears "if" a white majority were to be replaced, others are phrased in the present tense indicating that whites are already being replaced. Key concepts found in Factor 3 include:

1. Anxiety caused by the potential of white people being completely absent from the United States (at an undisclosed future date)

2. A fear that a growing nonwhite share of the electorate will undermine the votes of white Americans

3. A sense of moral unfairness that white people may one day make up a minority, especially when considering their perceived contributions to America

Interestingly, there is a very high correlation between the above themes and expressing doubt that whites' impending minority status is an accepted reality. A majority of respondents for whom the items in Factor 3 are true negated to acknowledge that white people are currently being replaced by racial and ethnic minorities while also overwhelmingly asserting that the fear of white replacement is overblown.

Future Directions

Given the promising results of the Immigration Threat Measurement Study, our next step will be to perform a principal components analysis of all survey items using the statistical platform SPSS. It is our belief that—consistent with the results of the Immigration Threat Measurement Study—the replacement threat items will load separately from prototypicality threat and the other discussed forms of immigration threat.

A natural next step for the project will be to test the distinctiveness of replacement threat in an experimental setting. We have devised two potential experimental designs to compare replacement threat rhetoric with the traditionally conceived forms of cultural threat:

Experimental Design A

Design A (visualized in Table 2) is a 3x3 fully factorial design, with an additional manipulation of the source in the six conditions with rhetoric, resulting in 15 unique treatments. The first factor is Demographic Information. We will tell respondents either (a) nothing about demographic trends among whites and nonwhites; (b) that whites will officially become the minority group in the US around 2042; or (c) whites will officially become the minority group in the US around 2042 *because* the minority population is growing while the white population is *shrinking* (countervailing trends).

Orthogonal to the Demographic Information factor is the Rhetoric factor. Here we elaborate on the demographic information by either: (a) saying nothing; letting the facts speak for themselves; (b) framing the demographic trend as representing an influx of nonwhites who are culturally distinct from the typical "white American"; or (c) framing the demographic trend as the *replacement* of white culture with nonwhite, non-American

culture, perhaps even suggesting whites and their culture will ultimately vanish from America.

Table 2: Experimental Design A

		Demographic Information		
		Countervailing trends	*Coming minority status*	*None*
Rhetoric	*None*			
	Cultural Threat	Credible / Extreme	Credible / Extreme	Credible / Extreme
	Replacement Threat	Credible / Extreme	Credible / Extreme	Credible / Extreme

Finally, if resources permit, we will also manipulate the source in the six rhetoric conditions. Some participants will learn that the rhetoric comes from a credible source (a respected elected official, immigration expert, etc.). Others will learn that the rhetoric comes from a notorious white supremacist. We hypothesize that it is easier to dismiss scary rhetoric when it comes from zealous extremist, but that the same "extreme" claims might receive a more careful hearing coming from a credible source.

'Experimental Design A' Treatments

Based on the theoretical design of Experimental Design A, fifteen separate and distinct treatments will be necessary.

For the purpose of treatment design, "traditional cultural threat" refers to rhetoric which asserts that migrants threaten the cultural fabric of a nation by importing non-

American language, values, dress, and other cultural practices into American borders. Conversely, "replacement threat" refers to the idea that the growth of the share of the United States population that is nonwhite will lead to the replacement of the white race and its culture by nonwhites and their cultures.

    The treatments are divided into the following five subsets:

    The first subset of treatments will be rhetoric-free but display varying items of demographic information. This subset of treatments will take the form of simple population estimates provided in graph form and will encompass the following:

- A rhetoric-free display of countervailing demographic trends
- A rhetoric-free display of the impending minority status of whites
- A rhetoric-free display of demographic information unrelated to racial population changes of any kind, perhaps a display of overall nonracial United States population growth

    The second subset of treatments will include traditionally conceived cultural threat rhetoric provided by a credible source such as a respected elected official or an immigration expert—and will encompass:

- A traditional cultural threat rhetorical framing of countervailing demographic trends presented by a credible source
- A traditional cultural threat rhetorical framing of the impending minority status of whites presented by a credible source
- A traditional cultural threat rhetorical framing of demographic information unrelated to racial population changes of any kind, and presented by a credible source

    The third subset of treatments will include traditionally conceived cultural threat rhetoric provided by an extreme source—such as a renowned white supremacist or right-wing extremist political organization—and will encompass:

- A traditional cultural threat rhetorical framing of countervailing demographic trends presented by an extreme source
- A traditional cultural threat rhetorical framing of the impending minority status of whites presented by an extreme source
- A traditional cultural threat rhetorical framing of demographic information unrelated to racial population changes of any kind, and presented by an extreme source

The fourth subset of treatments will include novel *replacement threat* rhetoric provided by a credible source—such as a respected elected official or an immigration expert—and will encompass:

- A replacement threat rhetorical framing of countervailing demographic trends presented by a credible source
- A replacement threat rhetorical framing of the impending minority status of whites presented by a credible source
- A replacement threat rhetorical framing of demographic information unrelated to racial population changes of any kind, and presented by a credible source

The fifth subset of treatments will include novel *replacement threat* rhetoric provided by an extreme source—such as a renowned white supremacist or right-wing extremist political organization—and will encompass:

- A replacement threat rhetorical framing of countervailing demographic trends presented by an extreme source
- A replacement threat rhetorical framing of the impending minority status of whites presented by an extreme source
- A replacement threat rhetorical framing of demographic information unrelated to racial population changes of any kind, and presented by an extreme source

Each of the above treatments will take the appearance of a faux newspaper article. Each newspaper article treatment will feature a general opening followed by an extensive quote by the source and an accompanying data visualization that displays the respective information being discussed in each treatment group.

Experimental Design B

Because of its factorial structure, Design A protects against threats to internal validity. It is cumbersome and inefficient, however. It includes cells that are theoretically uninteresting combinations of factors. For instance, we had envisioned that the cultural and replacement threat rhetoric would naturally match with the relevant demographic information. It's therefore hard to imagine someone talking about cultural or replacement threat while presenting no demographic information.

Our view is that there is a natural affinity between the type of rhetorical elaboration and the associated demographic information. That is, "cultural threat" rhetoric seems especially relevant to information about the coming minority status of whites, while "replacement threat" rhetoric is more suited to information about the decline of the white population. Design B (visualized in Table 3) has only 7 unique treatments, so it is more efficient. However, it deliberately confounds demographic information with rhetoric. We could not definitively say, for instance, that "replacement threat" rhetoric would not have an equally strong effect on our dependent variables if it was matched with "minority status" demographic information rather than the "countervailing trends" demographic information.

Table 3: Experimental Design B

		Demographic Information		
		Countervailing trends	*Impending minority status*	*None*
Rhetoric	*None*			
	Elaborated by Mainstream Source	Replacement Threat	Cultural Threat	?
	Elaborated by an Extremist Source	Replacement Threat	Cultural Threat	?

'Experimental Design B' Treatments

Based on the theoretical design of Experimental Design B, seven separate and distinct treatments will be necessary.

For the purpose of treatment design, "traditional cultural threat" refers to rhetoric which asserts that migrants threaten the cultural fabric of a nation by importing non-American language, values, dress, and other cultural practices into American borders. Conversely, "replacement threat" refers to the idea that the growth of the share of the United States population that is nonwhite will lead to the replacement of the white race and its culture by nonwhites and their cultures.

Treatments are divided into the following three subsets:

The first subset of treatments will exhibit information regarding countervailing demographic trends, the impending minority status of whites or no meaningful demographic information at all. The treatments for this subset will be rhetoric-free and will encompass:

- Countervailing demographic trends displayed without any attached rhetoric
- The impending minority status of whites without any attached rhetoric
- Provincial demographic trends that are not racial in nature, expressed without any attached rhetoric

The second subset of treatments will exhibit information regarding countervailing demographic trends or the impending minority status of whites. The treatments for this subset will be elaborated by a mainstream source, though will be expressed using either novel replacement threat rhetoric or traditional cultural threat rhetoric. The treatments in this subset will be as follows:

- Countervailing demographic trends expressed with replacement threat rhetoric; delivered by a mainstream source
- The impending minority status of whites expressed with traditional cultural threat rhetoric; delivered by a mainstream source

The third subset of treatments will exhibit information regarding countervailing demographic trends or the impending minority status of whites. The treatments for this subset will be elaborated by an extremist source, though will be expressed using either novel replacement threat rhetoric or traditional cultural threat rhetoric. The treatments in this subset will be as follows:

- Countervailing demographic trends expressed with replacement threat rhetoric; delivered by an extreme source
- The impending minority status of whites expressed with traditional cultural threat rhetoric; delivered by an extreme source

As in Experimental Design A, each of the above treatments will take the appearance of a faux newspaper article. Each newspaper article treatment will feature a general reporting opening followed by an extensive quote by the source and an accompanying data visualization that displays the respective information being discussed in each treatment group.

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