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# The use of a composite variable to represent intersectionality

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THE USE OF A COMPOSITE VARIABLE TO REPRESENT  
INTERSECTIONALITY

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Sociology

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Jarucia M. Jaycox Nirula

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## ABSTRACT

### THE USE OF A COMPOSITE VARIABLE TO REPRESENT INTERSECTIONALITY

By Jarucia M. Jaycox Nirula

The traditional use of single-characteristic independent variables in the study of political attitudes of American citizens is called into question and compared with the use of a composite variable representing the intersectionality of single-characteristic variables. In predicting opinion toward the US government, a selected composite variable, attitude toward affirmative action, is utilized along with gender, race-ethnicity, occupational prestige, and a variable which is the direct the combination of gender and race-ethnicity. Using data from the 1998 General Social Survey, both correlation and regression analyses are conducted to see if attitude toward affirmative action (the selected composite variable) is equal to or better than each of the other independent variables in predicting confidence in government. The results of the analysis show the composite variable was the only variable to significantly predict confidence in government.

This work is dedicated to  
my husband, Surnish,  
without whose unyielding support  
the completion of this project  
would not have made possible.

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## **I. Introduction**

Interest in the American citizen's attitude toward the United States government has been a topic of long standing study in the social sciences. More than four decades of research in the area has focused on topics such as voting patterns, civic involvement, approval of elected leaders, sense of efficacy as a citizen, and confidence in government in general. While this listing of topics is not exhaustive, it is reflective of the range of behaviors, opinions, and attitudes that social scientists have attempted to better explain and understand. The aim for researching attitudes and behaviors related to US politics and government appears to have thus far been focused on identifying a single characteristic or group of characteristics that individuals share, which may in turn significantly influence their minds and actions. In considering this quest for the perfect explanatory variable, this thesis project employs and evaluates traditional and unconventional research approaches.

Over the years some variables or factors have been given more attention than others. In particular, class, race-ethnicity, and gender have been granted the most consideration when attempts were made to differentiate between individuals or groups. These three categorical variables appear time and again in social research as the means by which to attempt to understand many things

about human behavior. However, in the past two decades some headway has been made to circumvent the employing of these variables in a competitive or primary order manner (Constantine 2002; Gimenez 2001; Belkhir and Barnett 2001). While these variables continue to be considered staples of social research (simply look in any journal to find their presence), critical theorists have made attempts to expose them as faulty measures. In claiming the invalidity of these measures, critical theorists such as Dorothy E. Smith and Cornell West point out that these variables are based on constructs informed by a dominant ideology (white, western European, male here in the US). Variables that have long been presumed to be free from bias may in fact be nothing more than biased constructs.

While biases may exist in the way variables have been constructed, it is not the purpose of the project to investigate the biases themselves. Rather an assumption that biases do exist will be employed in the project and come into play later when considering the selection and use of variables. Ultimately, the aim of this project is to question the use of single-characteristic variables when employing quantitative analysis while trying to explain a qualitative phenomenon, in this case the American citizen's level of confidence in government.

## II. Literature Review

Social research conducted on the political activities and opinions of Americans dates back to the 1950s and 1960s (Woodward and Roper 1950; McDill and Ridley 1962; Olsen 1965). Despite a long history of interest in this topic, there has been narrowness in the scope of explanatory variables employed by researchers, as variable selection has been generally influenced by the historical time in which it was situated. In the 1962 paper by McDill and Ridley, for example, the only variable considered for group comparison was social class, or social status. Situated on the cusp of the early stages of the Civil Rights movement, this study's focus was telling because of its limited scope of possible explanations of differences in political participation. At the time neither race-ethnicity nor gender were given much consideration for understanding group differences because those considered to be without socio-political power (namely minorities and women) were often regarded as having non-significant effects on socio-political activities. As a result, mid-century, American, social research was myopically concerned with why white men of varying status were or were not active in political processes.

As the Civil Rights movement progressed, so did the awareness and legitimization of the influence that other variables, such as race-ethnicity and

gender, had on political opinion and activities. In the early to mid 1970s studies began emerging that considered not only the differences between white and black, but also the differences between men and women within and between ethnic groups (Sniderman and Citrin 1971; Citrin 1974; Citrin, McClosky, Shanks, and Sniderman 1975). These studies, however, demonstrated more than an incorporation of such influencing characteristic variables as class, race and gender. They began to display an evolution in what was considered valid when conceptualizing variables used to research differences in political opinions and behavior.

Instead of limiting the measurement of differences to gender, race-ethnicity, class, or a number of readily quantifiable variables, these studies employed variables of a more qualitative nature. They began considering the role of the intangible psyche in determining political opinion and activity. In Jack Citrin's "Comment: The Political Relevance of Trust in Government," he commented on work by Arthur Miller, that had contributed to an understanding of the increase in political cynicism among the American public. While there are many speculations as to the reasons for a rise in cynicism, Citrin (1974) noted in this piece that a likely conclusion was a familiar generalization within social science: "We tend to trust and like those who *agree* with us" (Citrin 1974: 973)

(italics added). The word “agree” is emphasized here because the traditional adage is often “we like those who are *like us*,” which references to physical appearances or social circumstances. Often times, though people are like us in appearances, they may not be in opinion. This notion strengthens the idea that intangible factors that are not easily measured are as much an influence as those that are skin-deep.

Even with this growing awareness of the intangible psychological variables of individuals and groups, there was a lack of understanding of what such variables were representative of. There has been criticism that early studies employing these “new” variables made general assumptions that even with differences between the racial-ethnic groups or genders, individuals within these categories related to their personal circumstances the same way (Amott and Matthaei 1991; Komarovsky 1988; Hill 1981; Miller, Gurin, Gurin and Malanchuk 1981). An example of this would be to assume that all women, regardless of race or social status, felt gender oppression the same way. This contextual framework for the study of political participation and opinion continued virtually unchallenged for the next two-plus decades. Often-time there was reversion to the more concrete and traditional methods for understanding the differences between the race-ethnicities or genders, when the newer more abstract, non-

traditional methods for understanding seemed unreliable (Kinder and Nicholas 2001; Weakliem 1997; Verba, Schlozman, Brady and Nie 1993; Howell and Fagan 1988). It was not until the end of the 1990s and into the part of the 2000s that another change would start appearing in the mainstream discourse.

While previous research efforts focused primarily on identifying a single or a combination of predictive variables, a newer approach to research includes attempts at identifying what can be termed as “composite” variables.<sup>1</sup> These composite variables are intended to capture the intersecting effects of multiple variables at once. In other words, what might reveal the simultaneous effects of being a middle-class, black female or a working-class white male? After all it is difficult to compare the two directly because it is like comparing apples to oranges. One would generally be resigned to measuring the effects of one variable while controlling for the other(s). To combat this dilemma, a newer camp of social researchers has developed the concept of “intersectionality” of variables; in particular the simultaneous effects of race-ethnicity, gender and class may have on a person (Constantine 2002; Gimenez 2001; Belkhir and Barnett 2001; Xu and Leffler 1992; Amott and Matthaei 1991). This notion is

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this project, the referencing to and use of a composite variable is a conceptualized rather than a methodological usage. Accordingly, no composite variable was created methodologically, rather one (Affirmative Action support) was selected from the pre-existing GSS data set.



radical in that it fundamentally challenges the long-standing tradition of utilizing a primary-order approach to identify influencing variables in sociological research. It also seems to be a more appropriate way of considering the fluid and multi-dimensional nature of human interactions with their political environment. It is unlikely that individuals go about relating to their political environment while pondering: “do I not like this politician because I’m a female or because I’m a single-mother?” or “is it that I am gay or Black that makes me vote this way?” Yet this is precisely how the bulk of social research has been conducted and continues to be conducted.

While this conceptualization of composite variables, based on intersectionality, is relatively new, the utilization of composite variables, by way of measuring attitudes, is not. This shift in conceptualization is important now as it can lead to improved progress in understanding the social and political behavior of individuals and groups. Simply measuring attitudes has yielded an unprecedented amount of information about what people think at any given moment in time, but it can contribute to questionable assumptions about how people will continue to think as time goes by. Accordingly, this is generally the result of a failure to fully understand not only the array of contributing factors, *but also* the interplay of those factors beyond the concept of mediation. As was

mentioned before, people do not think of themselves in fragmented terms of mother or woman, single or African-American, and so on. They consider themselves as whole people, and research that is conducted to understand them should better account for this reality.

### *Fragmented Concepts: Race, Gender, and Class*

Race, gender, and class are most assuredly the three variables on which the bulk of social research rests. Historically they have seemed the easiest to identify and measure both qualitatively and quantitatively because they basically relied on what one saw with one's eyes. Race could possibly be operationalized solely by the color of one's skin. Gender was a simple choice between male and female. Class could be broken down into innumerable categories; for example poor, middle, or capitalist, which could then be distinguished by asset wealth. However, in recent years the operationalization of these concepts has become more fluid making them less reliable than they once were.<sup>2</sup> For example at present one's race isn't based solely on the color of one's skin, but may also take into account one's ethnic origins or whether one's parents are from two different

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<sup>2</sup> As critical theorists have pointed out, the present questioning of the reliability of these operationalizations could bring into question whether they were ever reliable tools for measurement because they were categorized in opposition to the ideology of the dominant social group: white, western European, middle class males.

racial-ethnic groups. Gender, in some cases, may take into account sexual orientation or may account for self identifying trans-gendered individuals. As for class, this variable may be more of a reflection of the influence of the gender and/or race-ethnicity and therefore not appropriate for comparing with either of these variables (Lemelle 2002; Xu and Leffler 1992). In recent years it appears that researchers have acknowledged the limitations of comparing these variables independently of one another (Leighley and Vedlitz 1999; Weakliem 1997; Manza and Brooks 1996), yet change is slow when it comes to adopting composite variables that are used expressly with the intent of understanding individual and group attitudes and behaviors as a reflection of a whole set of characteristics that intersect with each other.

### *Variable Conceptualization and Statistical Analysis*

Consideration for the intersectionality of individual and group characteristics is critical to achieving a representative understanding of people as they relate to their social and political environment. Furthermore, it could be argued that this approach to conceptualizing variables can increase the relevance and value of the findings produced from the use of quantitative statistical analysis. As was earlier mentioned, one of the purposes for researching the

political attitudes of American citizens would be to identify the primary factor that reliably predicts individual and/or group political attitudes and behavior. Presently, social research has done a fair job of employing descriptive statistics to identify the differences between groups and their activities, but has fallen short of being able to successfully anticipate attitudes and behavior (Leighly and Vedlitz 1999). The use of inferential statistics has produced linear regression models comparing the predictive power of individual variables, such as between race and class (Weakliem 1997) or within race-ethnicity alone (Hughes and Tuch 2003; Kinder and Winter 2001), but nothing to date has risen up as a singularly strong enough predictor of political behavior or attitude. Accordingly thus, the lack of a singularly, robust, predicting variable is not necessarily a result of one not existing. Rather it may be the result of a faulty appreciation for what variables are perceived to represent.

When applying quantitative analysis methods to the understanding of a qualitative phenomenon, such as political attitude, it is compelling to pick variables that can readily be assigned values which can then be plugged into equations. For example, male = 0 and female = 1. When one applies values such as these to all the characteristics that are of interest, each subject is nothing more than a combination of number values that represent their demographic

characteristics and attitudes. By doing this the researcher can then sift out particular characteristics by controlling for them one or more at a time and determining the effect the remaining characteristic has on the variable of interest. The goal here is to see which characteristic is the most significant in influencing behavior or attitude. However, in conducting analysis this way there may be a false assumption that by controlling for other variables one is truly controlling for the interaction effects of all the variables. While there are statistical checks in place to provide for a level of certainty of the effect of each independent variable, there really is no way to dependably know. This ever present diminished confidence stems from, among other things, the limits set forth by researchers on the conceptualization of variables.

It is best to further elaborate what is meant by variable conceptualization variable utilization and how the former effects the latter. Variable conceptualization is based on the accepted "meaning" of a variable. If one researcher accepts race-ethnicity as a simple choice between Black and White assignments, then it is utilized as a nominal variable with only two values. If another researcher accepts race-ethnicity as a combination of multiple backgrounds, then it could be conceivably utilized as a continuous, interval variable whereby 1 = One race-ethnicities, 2 = Two race-ethnicities and so on.

With these examples it is one could see how differences in the conceptualization of a variable could affect the type of statistical analysis used. This difference could mean the choice between using simple correlation and chi-square testing or being able to use regression analysis.

However, differences in conceptualization can have subtler differences on utilization as follows. If in building a regression model two researchers each choose class to predict political behavior then add other variables, such as gender and race-ethnicity, they are both likely to find that the explanatory power of class goes down considerably. This would be the result of the earlier mentioned influence one's gender has on one's class (Lemelle 2002; Xu and Leffler 1992). With these results each researcher is left to decide what to make of class as an influencing variable. The first researcher decides that class alone is no good as a predicting variable so simply disregards it as insignificant to their research. The second researcher decides that class could have been representing an interaction of economics with gender and race-ethnicity, but as it is perceived is not suitable to fully demonstrate the power of the interaction of the variables. This researcher then attempts to identify another variable that might represent the interaction of the three. In this example the same variable is utilized in the same

way, but the conceptualization of the variable has produced very different lines of reasoning for guiding these two research projects.

It is along the same line of reasoning as that of the second researcher in the example above that the analysis for this project will proceed. The main goal of this investigation is to determine whether or not a composite variable can be at least as useful as a single-characteristic or combination variable in conducting statistical analysis. Of the six variables selected for this analysis, three are categorical demographic variables: race-ethnicity, gender, and class. The fourth independent variable is a direct combination of the gender and race-ethnicity variables. The fifth variable is support for affirmative action. This attitudinal variable will be used as both an independent and dependent variable and will be conceptualized as a composite representation of the first three. The sixth variable will be the primary dependent variable: confidence in government. There is one hypothesis for this project:

H1: When predicting confidence in the US government, the predictive power of the composite variable, affirmative action attitude, will be equal to or stronger than the predictive power of the other independent variables.

By testing this hypothesis, it is hoped to provide support for the use of composite variables, which are conceptualized as representing the intersecting effects of multiple variables. This would thereby contribute to the progressive movement of having a non-primary order approach to the use of statistical analysis in social research.



### III. Methods

#### *Data*

This study used the 1998 General Social Survey, or GSS (NORC 2000). The GSS a full probability sample of non-institutionalized adults in the United States (see Appendix). The survey sample size for 1998 was 2832 persons.<sup>3</sup>

The GSS confidence-in-government measures used for this study have two aspects that make them especially useful for hypothesis testing. First, the GSS measures distinguish among the public confidence in each of the three branches of government. This is appropriate in light of the possibility that confidence in government—and thus the association between confidence and policy preferences—may vary across branches of the federal government (Brooks and Cheng 2001; Granberg and Robertson 1982). The second useful aspect pertains to the wording of the GSS measures, which refer to an individual's level of confidence in the leaders of the executive and legislative branches of government, rather than institutional structures themselves. This is a particularly beneficial element as it is more reflective of the historical time period in which the survey was set, rather than a broad generalization of thoughts about the government (Epstein 1998; Citrin and Green 1986).

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<sup>3</sup> For additional information, please refer to the APPENDIX A, consult the GSS web-site or NORC publications (Davis and Smith 1992).

### *Statistical Procedures*

Three types of analysis are utilized for this project. The first type of analysis was descriptive. The purpose for including this type of analysis was to provide verification that recoded items retained the desired data. Additionally, it would provide assurance sure that once the variables of choice were recoded there would be a respectable sample size for the remaining target group(s).

The second type of analysis used was bivariate correlation. This type of analysis was employed to test whether or not significant correlational relationships existed between each of the variables. Each variable was tested in relation to one another. The purpose for this analysis was to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between the variables.

The third type of analysis used was multiple regression analysis. The purpose for this analysis was to determine whether a composite variable, meant to capture the intersecting effects of multiple variables, better predicted confidence in government than single-characteristic variables or a combined variable. By identifying the additive explanatory power (B-value) of each independent variable as well as determining the predictive power ( $R^2$ ) of the overall regression models, it will be determined which variables are significant predictors (Agresti and Finlay 1997).

## *Variables*

Given that the purpose of this study is to challenge the traditional conceptualizations of variables used in the research analysis of political attitudes, all variables were recoded so as to be more uniform in appearance. The reasoning for this was to maintain a level of simplicity throughout the analysis that would allow for a more pragmatic delivery of the findings and discussion. It is important to this author to make this work accessible to more than those in the higher tiers of academia.

## Dependent Variable

### **Confidence in Government**

The topic of interest for this study is the American citizen's confidence in government. It has long been considered that the more confident a citizen or group is in the US government the more likely they will engage in the political process (Hetherington 1998; Verba, et al 1993, Howell and Fagan 1988; Citrin 1974; McDill and Ridley 1962). The primary dependent variable, confidence in the US government, was constructed by combining two variables found in the GSS based on two branches of the federal government: confidence in congress (CONLEGIS) and confidence in the executive branch (CONFED) (see Table A in

the APPENDIX A for wording). Confidence in the supreme court was not included based on the rationale that a) the American people do not have a direct vote on the judicial branch of government and may therefore feel their political activities or opinions do not have as much affect on its activities, and b) the judicial branch is, in theory, not responsive to anything but the Constitution, so would be uninfluenced by the opinions and activities of the American citizenry.

For the purposes of this study the confidence in government variable was recoded to be a combined categorical variable. The end-result is the reformed dependent variable of "confidence in government by two categories" (CONCAT). Each original variable was first recoded to retain the original responses of (1) "A Great Deal", (2) "Only Some" and (3) "Hardly Any" confidence in government, while responses of (8) DK, (9) NAP, and (0) NA were removed by recoding as SYSMIS. CONFED and CONLEGIS were then combined to form an intermediate variable of "confidence in government" (CONGOV), which produced sums of the total response ranging from 2-6 in value. Finally, CONCAT was created whereby total sums were separated into three categories: a sum of 2 is (3) "A Great Deal"; a sum of 3-4 is (2) "Only Some"; and a sum of 5-6 is (1) "Hardly Any".

## Independent Variables

### **Affirmative Action**

Affirmative action as a federal policy has been a contentious issue since its inception (Kluegel and Smith 1983). While this policy was meant to right the historical injustices resulting from racial and gender discrimination, some scholars argue it has been deemed little more than a reverse discrimination policy (Rofes, Keiser Smith and Wray 1997; Mollins 1995). This policy was meant to remove prejudicial obstacles that produced a respectively diminished count of women and minorities in higher education and both the private and public job sectors.

Despite the intentions of the policy, a fact finding report released by the Federal Glass Ceiling Commission (1995) noted that there was a considerable disconnect between the perceived effects and the actual effects of affirmative action. While the historically privileged group of white-males perceived they had been significantly disadvantaged, the data supported a reality where little headway had been made (at the time) to balance the number of women and minorities in higher academia and both the private and public job sectors. In other words, the respective numbers of women and minority participation were

still falling considerably short of their general population percentages. Since affirmative action is largely informed by and directly effects issues of race-ethnicity, gender and class, it was selected as a composite variable that could appropriately be conceptualized as representing the intersectionality of the three single-characteristic variables.

As was earlier mentioned affirmative action attitude is both utilized as an independent variable and a dependent variable. As an independent variable affirmative action attitude is conceptualized as a composite variable that is meant to reflect the intersection of race-ethnicity, gender and class. As a dependent variable support for affirmative action is used to demonstrate how the three single-characteristic variables correlate with it in order to strengthen the argument that it is reflective of their intersectionality.

In both cases the variable used is derived from the GSS variable AFFRMACT (see APPENDIX A for wording). This ordinal variable is meant to measure the level of the respondent's favor for or opposition to affirmative action, as it pertains to hiring and promotion practices in the workplace. The variable is coded as follows: (1) Strongly favors; (2) Not strongly favors; (3) Not strongly opposes; (4) Strongly opposes. The following responses were excluded from the analysis: (8) DK, (9) NAP, and (0) NA.

### **Race-Ethnicity**

The variable for race-ethnicity (RACE) is derived from the GSS. Only the information for those who selected Black and White was used. This variable was recoded as (1) Black and (0) White, while all "other" answers were recoded as SYSMIS.

### **Gender**

The variable for gender (SEX) is derived from the GSS. First this variable was filtered by race-ethnicity so only those who responded to RACE as white or black were included. This variable was then recoded as (1) Female and (0) Male for those who answered black or white, while all others were recoded as SYSMIS.

### **Gender/Race-Ethnicity**

This variable is a combination of gender and race-ethnicity and is coded as (1) Black Female, while all others were given the value of (0). This variable was created for the purpose of testing whether simply combining variables would produce the same effect as utilizing a composite variable.

### **Class (Occupational Prestige)**

Due to the notoriously non-uniform way of operationalizing class (Manza and Brooks 1996; Wegner 1992), for the purposes of this study the concept of occupational prestige will be used in lieu of class. The rationale behind this choice is based on the notion that occupational prestige can be considered to be fairly uniform from region to region in the United States. The concept of class, as it has been used in the past, often relies on asset wealth, income, and education. While these are related to the notion of class, they can vary greatly between regions, even when individuals are living respectively prestigious lives. The reasoning goes, for example, a teacher in Maine is equally prestigious to a teacher in Arizona, or a doctor in Florida is equally prestigious to one in Montana. Hence, occupational prestige is considered by this researcher a more appropriate indicator of class than economic earnings alone.

Occupational prestige (PRESTG80), as it appears in the GSS, is constructed as a continuous variable with values ranging from 17 for the job with the lowest prestige to 86 for the job with the highest prestige. For the purposes of this study, however, these values were recoded in a 20-60-20 ratio to represent the relative split between lower, middle and upper "classes" and create a new



variable for analysis (PREST123). The new values are: (1) 17 thru 31 for “lower” class; (2) 32 thru 54 for “middle” class; and (3) 55 thru 86 for “upper” class. The value 0 (DK, NA, and NAP) was excluded from the recode. Finally, occupational prestige was filtered so those respondents answering as “white” or “black” for race-ethnicity were selected.

#### IV. Findings

After the initial recoding of variables, the total number of respondents that answered both of the confidence in government measures from the GSS was 1811 (see Table 1 for complete descriptive statistics). Of this a total of 744 respondents also met the other qualifications of having answered the affirmative action measure, the occupational prestige measure and were males and females that selected either black or white as their race-ethnicity. The noticeable loss in sample size is due to the use of a rotating survey ballot in which only two-thirds of the respondents are asked certain attitudinal questions, such as confidence in government or support for affirmative action. Please refer to Tables B and C of the appendix for a complete listing of variable frequencies prior to the recoding. Even with this considerable decrease from the original 2832 respondents reported to have participated in the 1998 GSS results, there remaining overall sample size is adequate for the desired statistical analyses. Relatively small counts for "a great deal" (n=97) of confidence in government and the race-ethnicity category of "black" (n=400) may later prove to be of concern as their effects may be overwhelmed by the effects of the categories with larger counts. However, they should be large enough to provide an adequate number for the purpose of this analysis.

**TABLE 1. Descriptive Statistics**

	Value	Total N	Total Percent	Valid N	Valid Percent
<b>Confidence in U.S. Government</b>					
Hardly Any	1	776	42.8%	353	47.4%
Only Some	2	938	51.8%	365	49.1%
A Great Deal	3	97	5.4%	26	3.5%
		1811	100.0%	744	100.0%
<b>Affirmative Action</b>					
Strongly favor	1	142	8.3%	60	8.1%
Somewhat Favor	2	117	6.9%	40	5.4%
Somewhat Oppose	3	425	24.9%	190	25.5%
Strongly Oppose	4	1024	60.0%	454	61.0%
		1708	100.0%	744	100.0%
<b>Race-Ethnicity</b>					
White	0	2241	84.9%	643	86.4%
Black	1	400	15.1%	101	13.6%
		2641	100.0%	744	100.0%
<b>Gender</b>					
Male	0	1146	43.4%	354	47.6%
Female	1	1495	56.6%	390	52.4%
		2641	100.0%	744	100.0%
<b>Occupational Prestige</b>					
Low	1	483	19.9%	132	17.7%
Middle	2	1529	60.8%	472	63.4%
High	3	494	19.4%	140	18.8%
		2506	100.0%	744	100.0%
<b>Valid N (listwise)</b>		744		744	

***Representing Intersectionality***

The first round of inferential analysis entailed conducting both correlation (see Table 2) and regression analyses (see Table 3) to identify,

quantitatively, how representative affirmative action attitude was of the intersectionality of race-ethnicity, gender and occupational prestige. As affirmative action attitude was earlier stated to be a composite variable representing the intersection of race-ethnicity, gender and occupational prestige, it was anticipated that it would have a significant relationship with each of the variables it was meant to represent. However, as Table 2 indicates, its only significant relationship was a moderate, negative one with race-ethnicity ( $r=-0.280$ ,  $p<.001$ ). This suggested that those respondents that answered "black" as their race-ethnicity were significantly more in favor of affirmative action than in opposition to it. While occupational prestige was not significantly related to affirmative action attitude ( $r=0.013$ ), its positive relationship suggests that lower occupational prestige is associated with increased favor for affirmative action. Interestingly, gender, while not significantly related, was positively related to affirmative action attitude. This would suggest that men are more in favor of affirmative action than women are. Then again, this could be attributed to fact that white respondents outnumbered black respondents nearly 4 to 1.

Alternatively, according to research by Hughes and Tuch (2003), little difference in racial attitudes exists between white males and females. In other words, while one might think that white females would be more inclined to

support policies that benefit both minorities and women, their personal experience with being white may have more of an effect on their opinions than being female (Hughes and Tuch 2003). Hence that they are white may be masking the effects of gender.

**TABLE 2.**  
**Bivariate Correlation of Confidence in U.S. Government, Occupational Prestige, Gender, Ethnicity, and Affirmative Action**

	1. CON	2. PREST	3. GEN	4. R-E	5. AFRM
<b>1. Confidence in U.S. Government</b> (1= "hardly any", 2= "only some", 3= "great deal")	--	--	--	--	--
<b>2. Occupational Prestige</b> (1=Low)	0.036 (n=1620)	--	--	--	--
<b>3. Gender</b> (1=Female)	0.040 (n=1694)	0.008 (n=2506)	--	--	--
<b>4. Race-Ethnicity</b> (1=Black)	0.068* (n=1694)	-0.108** (n=2506)	0.063** (n=2641)	--	--
<b>5. Affirmative Action</b> (1=strongly favor, 4=strongly oppose)	-0.115* (n=829)	0.026 (n=1523)	0.029 (n=1594)	-0.280** (n=1594)	--

Note: Correlation is significant at: \*\*p<.001, \*p<.01 levels

Moving on to the regression analysis for predicting affirmative action attitude, only one of the variables proved to be a significant explanatory variable (see Table 3). This was again race-ethnicity (B=-0.723, p<.001). As occupational

prestige and gender were entered initially into the Models 1 and 2, little was seen in the way of an interaction effect between these two as the B-value for occupational prestige (B=0.039) did not change with the introduction of gender (B=-0.027). However, as race-ethnicity was introduced into Model 3, the B-values of the other two variables noticeably decreased and the value for occupational prestige actually went from being positive (B=0.039) to being negative (B=-0.004). This change in directionality is likely attributed to the well documented interaction between occupational prestige (or class) and one's race-ethnicity (Xu and Leffler 1992).

**TABLE 3.**  
**Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Affirmative Action**  
**(1=strong support, 4=strong opposition)**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
<b>Variables</b>	df= 1521	df= 1520	df= 1519
<b>Occupational Prestige</b> (1=Low)	0.039	0.039	-0.004
<b>Gender</b> (1=Female)	--	-0.027	-0.007
<b>Race-Ethnicity</b> (1=Black)	--	--	-0.723***
<b>(Constant)</b>	3.317	3.332	3.501

B-value significant at: \*\*\*p<.001

Note: R<sup>2</sup>=.001 for Step 1 (p=.303), R<sup>2</sup>=.001 for Step 2 (p=.561) and R<sup>2</sup>=.070 for Step 3\*\*\* (p<.001)

The relationship presented here between race-ethnicity and gender and occupational prestige, along with race-ethnicity's significant predictive power for affirmative action attitude, can be thought of as providing support for the conceptualization of affirmative action attitude as a composite variable representing the intersectionality of the three single-characteristic variables presented here.

### *Comparing the Composite Variable*

Consideration is next given to how affirmative action attitude weighs in as a composite representation of the intersection of gender, race-ethnicity and occupational prestige. In this series of analyses affirmative action attitude is compared to the single-characteristic variables of gender, race-ethnicity and occupational prestige for the purposes of predicting confidence in government. Let's first begin by referencing back to the correlational relationships of Table 2.

In referring to Table 2, the results show a number of interesting significant relationships. Already the relationships between the three single-characteristic independent variables and affirmative action have been presented, so let's turn attention to the variable relationships with confidence in government. Both affirmative action attitude ( $r = -0.115$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and race-ethnicity ( $r = 0.07$ ,  $p < .01$ )

produced significant relationships; with affirmative action attitude having a modestly stronger relationship. A negative relationship between affirmative action attitude and confidence in government indicates that those with greater favor for affirmative action also have greater confidence in government. Additionally, the positive relationship with race signifies that those who answered “black” have more confidence in government, as well.

As was seen when considering the relationship between affirmative action attitude and each of the other three single-characteristic variables, race-ethnicity appeared to be the biggest contributor to affirmative action attitude (see Table 3). However, in this correlational analysis (see Table 2) affirmative action attitude exceeds race-ethnicity in its relationship strength with confidence in government. This suggests that affirmative action attitude is drawing upon more than just the effects of race-ethnicity. Thus further support is provided for the conceptualization that affirmative action attitude is working as a representation of an intersection of multiple variables.

The next step of the analysis was to test whether affirmative action attitude was equal to or better than the single-characteristic variables when it comes to predicting confidence in government. Referring to the findings in Table 4, in all four models affirmative action attitude proved to be a significant



explanatory variable. In Model 1, affirmative action attitude is introduced on its own. It had a B-value of -0.061 ( $p < .01$ ), with a significant predictive power of  $R^2 = 0.010$  ( $p < .01$ ). This negative relationship signifies that greater favor for affirmative action predicts greater confidence in government. With the introduction of race-ethnicity ( $B = 0.039$ ) in Model 2, there was a slight decrease in the B-value and significance for affirmative action ( $B = -0.058$ ,  $p < .02$ ), but not so much as to signal a remarkable influence of race-ethnicity on the explanatory power of affirmative action.

**TABLE 4.**  
**Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Confidence in U.S.**  
**Government (1= Hardly Any, 3= Great Deal)**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<b>Variables</b>	df= 743	df= 742	df= 741	df= 740
<b>Affirmative Action</b> (1=strong support, 4=strong opposition)	-0.061**	-0.058*	-0.058*	-0.057*
<b>Race-Ethnicity</b> (1=Black)	--	0.039	0.037	0.046
<b>Gender</b> (1=Female)	--	--	0.048	0.046
<b>Occupational Prestige</b> (1=Low)	--	--	--	0.039
(Constant)	1.768	1.752	1.726	1.645

B-value significant at: \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .02$

Note:  $R^2 = .010$ \*\* for Step 1 ( $p = .007$ ),  $R^2 = .010$  for Step 2 ( $p = .521$ ),  $R^2 = .012$  for Step 3 ( $p = .244$ ), and  $R^2 = .014$  for Step 4 ( $p = .257$ )

Furthermore there was no change to  $R^2$  between Models 1 and 2, which signified that race-ethnicity was not a significant contributor to the predictive power of the model. The introduction of gender ( $B=0.048$ ) in Model 3 had no effect on the B-value for affirmative action attitude, but did increase  $R^2$  slightly ( $R^2=.012$ ). The increase in  $R^2$  did not add up to significant contribution of predictive power, however. In the fourth and final model occupational prestige ( $B=0.039$ ) was introduced. This variable was not a significant addition to the model. It did contribute to another slight decrease in the B-value for affirmative action ( $B= -0.058$ ,  $p < .02$ ), but did not alter its significance. Additionally, there was a slight increase in  $R^2$  ( $R^2=.014$ ), as there was with Model 3, but it was not a significant contribution.

In sum, this regression analysis provided support for the research hypothesis that affirmative action attitude was at least equal to if not better than the other independent variables with regard to predictive power. In fact it was the only variable to demonstrate a significant relationship with confidence in government. Additionally, it should be noted that there was little evidence the affirmative action's predictive power was bolstered or diminished with the introduction of each of the other independent variables. This bolsters the conceptualization of affirmative action attitude as a composite variable

representing the intersectionality of the other three variables. In other words, no one of the other variables was overwhelmingly influencing or interacting with the effect affirmative action was having on predicting confidence in government.

### *Combination or Composite*

As a final step to the overall analysis for this project it was thought prudent to check if the effect affirmative action attitude was having on confidence in government couldn't simply be replicated by combining two of the other variables (in this case gender and race-ethnicity). The rationale for including this in the analysis is to call into question the regular practice of controlling for various factors as a means of attempting to isolate the "one" factor that is having the greatest effect. This last analysis was meant to test whether a composite variable—thought to represent the intersecting effects of multiple variables—is equal to or better than a simple combination of the variables it is conceptualized to represent. For the purpose of this final analysis a combined variable of gender and race-ethnicity was dummy coded for females who selected black as their race-ethnicity. This variable had a total population of 2641 with 256 falling into the "black female" category and 2385 falling into the "other" category. There was some concern that this striking difference in category counts

might later affect the analysis, and would subsequently be taken into consideration if it appeared to.

In referring to Table 5 for the first part of this analysis, there is a comparison of the combined gender/race-ethnicity variable with each of its single-characteristic variable components. In Model 1, gender/race-ethnicity was introduced as a predictor for affirmative action attitude and proved to have a significant relationship ( $B = -0.676$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In addition it provided for a significant  $R^2$  ( $R^2 = .042$ ,  $p < .001$ ). This significant negative relationship signifies

**TABLE 5**  
**Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Affirmative Action**  
 (1=strongly favors, 4=strongly opposes)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Variables	df=1592	df= 1591	df= 1590
<b>Gender/Race-Ethnicity</b> (female-black=1)	-0.676***	0.074	0.117
<b>Race-Ethnicity</b> (Black=1)	--	-0.795***	-.819***
<b>Gender</b> (Female=1)	--	--	-0.043
(Constant)	3.437	3.482	3.506

B-value significant at: \*\*\* $p < .001$

Note:  $R^2 = .042$ \*\*\* for Step 1 ( $p < .001$ ),  $R^2 = .078$ \*\*\* for Step 2 ( $p < .001$ ) and  $R^2 = .079$  for Step 3 ( $p = .377$ )

that being a black female significantly predicts that one will favor or strongly favor affirmative action. However, with the introduction of race-ethnicity into

Model 2, the significant negative relationship of gender/race-ethnicity is completely eliminated and actually replaced by an insignificant positive one ( $B=0.074$ ). This can be accounted for by the significance of race-ethnicity ( $B= -0.795$ ,  $p<.001$ ), and signifies to what extent the influence of race-ethnicity is playing in the combination variable; nearly all of it. Additionally, Model 2 saw an increase in  $R^2$  ( $R^2=.078$ ,  $p<.001$ ), which was a significant addition of predictive power. With the insignificant addition of gender ( $B= -0.043$ ) in Model 3, increases in B-values were seen for both gender/race-ethnicity ( $B=0.117$ ) and race-ethnicity ( $B= -.819$ ,  $p<.001$ ). The  $R^2$  ( $R^2=.079$ ) for Model 3 also saw a slight increase, but it was not a significant addition of predictive power.

Two anomalies have been presented in this regression analysis. The first was the reversal from negative to positive of the direction of relationship between gender/race-ethnicity and affirmative action attitude. The second is that the relationship of the variables contributing to the combination are each negative, while the combined variable has become positive. The cause for these two anomalies may have come about when the powers for race-ethnicity and gender were accounted for on their own. This then resulted with the power of the combined variable being stripped and subsequently negated and reversed by the opinions of the "others". In other words, what made the combined variable

significant in the first place was mostly due to the contributions race-ethnicity making to it. The slight increase in gender/race-ethnicity's positive B-value with the later addition of gender signified an accounting for the slight contribution that gender likely played in the original predictive power of the combined variable. Thus once both race-ethnicity and gender were accounted for individually, the factors contributing to gender/race-ethnicity's power of prediction were stripped from it and in fact appeared to be reversed by the overwhelming number of "others" for that variable.

The second part of this final analysis was to compare the combination variable with the composite variable to see which one of these two representational variables was better at predicting confidence in government. The results displayed in Table 6 were quite telling regarding the interplay of the variables.

To begin, in Model 1 the combination variable of gender/race-ethnicity was introduced. Its B-value ( $B=0.127$ ) was not significant nor was its  $R^2$  value ( $R^2=.004$ ). It is worth noting at this point that the positive relationship between the combination variable and confidence in government signifies that females who are black have more confidence in government. In Model 2, the

**TABLE 6.**  
**Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Confidence in U.S.**  
**Government (1= Hardly Any, 3= Great Deal)**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Variables	df= 771	df= 770	df= 769	df= 768
<b>Gender/Race-Ethnicity</b> (female-black=1)	0.127	0.159	0.112	0.136
<b>Race-Ethnicity</b> (1=Black)	--	-0.034	-0.009	-0.061
<b>Gender</b> (1=Female)	--	--	0.047	0.041
<b>Affirmative Action</b> (1=strongly favor, 4=strongly oppose)	--	--	--	-0.063**
(Constant)	1.554	1.557	1.532	1.755

B-value significant at: \*\*p<.01

Note:R<sup>2</sup>=.004 for Step 1 (p=.078), R<sup>2</sup>=.004 for Step 2 (p=.699), R<sup>2</sup>=.006 for Step 3 (p=.283), and R<sup>2</sup>=.016\*\* for Step 4 (p=.005)

introduction of race-ethnicity (B= -0.034) was also insignificant to the predictive power of the model, which did not change (R<sup>2</sup>=.004). However, it should be noted that when comparing the relationship between race-ethnicity and confidence in government in Table 6 with the same relationship in Table 4, the directionality has reversed.

In Table 6 it appears now that identifying oneself as black is predictive of diminished confidence in government, where as in Table 4 it was predictive of increased confidence in government. This reversal of direction may be attributed

to the explanatory power of the combined variable. In this case the interaction between gender and race-ethnicity has been exposed. By combining the two single characteristic variables into one, the effect each was having on the other (with regard to forming personal opinion) was now wholly accounted for. With race-ethnicity competing as a single-characteristic variable with the combination variable, whatever hidden influence race-ethnicity was receiving from gender was now taken away by the combined effects. This illumination weakens the notion that gender and race-ethnicity can be reliably used as competitive variables when measuring attitudes because there are some hidden interactions occurring.

Returning to the regression analysis, Model 3 shows gender introduced with an insignificant ( $B=0.047$ ) contribution to predicting confidence in government. With the addition of this third variable, though, the  $R^2$  value ( $R^2=.006$ ) did increase slightly, although it was an insignificant contribution. In Model 4, affirmative action attitude was introduced with a significant B-value ( $B= -0.063$ ,  $p<.01$ ). The introduction of this fourth variable also caused the single largest increase in  $R^2$  ( $R^2=.016$ ,  $p=.005$ ), demonstrating that affirmative action attitude was the strongest predictive variable. In fact, as it was in the regression



model of Table 4, it was the only variable to significantly predict confidence in government.

## V. Discussion

To recap, the goal of this project was not only to call into question the continued competitive use of single-characteristic variables, but increase awareness of the possibility of utilizing composite variables that represent the intersectionality of single-characteristic variables. As was outlined in the literature review, there is a movement toward identifying non-traditional means by which to measure political attitude, rather than simply ranking single-characteristic variables by correlational or predictive significance. When utilizing inferential statistical analysis to test the effects of non-traditional variables, it is fundamental that the variables to be tested are conceptualized in such a way that the researcher can be confident that there is a representation of the desired intersectionality of effects.

### *Representing Intersectionality*

More than simply seeking significance, it is important to conduct several layers of analysis to verify that the selected composite variable is representing intersectionality; as was the case with selecting affirmative action attitude. The initial reason for selecting this as a composite variable was an apparent conjunction of three of the most regularly used single-characteristic variables:

class (occupational prestige), gender, and race-ethnicity. The wisdom of this choice was further supported by the use of correlational and regression analyses. While race-ethnicity appeared to be the single greatest contributor to explaining affirmative action attitude, the other two variables demonstrated an influence on attitude as well. In this case it was not as important to determine significant contribution as it was to identify some contribution, period. In other words, the purpose for using this composite variable was to reliably reflect the intersectionality of the otherwise competing single-characteristic variables. Furthermore, the composite variable was then expected to be an equal to or better explanatory variable of political attitude as it was reflecting an intersection of effects. As per this research, the composite variable did prove to be a better predictor than any one of the single characteristic variables or the combination variable presented. What then, might be the implications of these findings?

### *Research and the Real World*

From this project comes significant evidence that a composite variable, representing the intersectionality of single-characteristic variables, can act as a better predictive variable than otherwise singularly competing variables. Recalling the reasons for studying political attitude in the first place, it is possible

to conceive of the importance of identifying this alternative means of measurement. If researchers (and politicians alike) desire the ability to predict political behavior and attitudes rather than simply explaining past occurrences, then shifting to a new a set of measurement tools based on new conceptualizations will likely be the key.

Researchers, such as Citrin (1974), Useem and Useem (1979), Hetherington (1998), have addressed the question of the relevancy of studying political attitudes. Among other things, it is one way to gauge how well the citizenry think government and its leaders are performing at any given time in addition to “guessing” how citizens will react to potential legislation or policy implementation. Additionally, being able to predict what topics will sway the favor of voters could be crucial for determining election year debate and discourse. However, improving the specific conceptualization of measurement variables is just one step in improving research methods that will identify better predictors of attitude and behavior. It would also be important to consider some of the political and social circumstances under which the attitude was formed.

The data studied for this project were collected in 1998, which was a year of congressional elections, economic prosperity, affirmative action debate, and presidential scandal. Considering the affirmative action debate point a little

further may shed light on why this particular composite variable worked well as a predictor of government confidence for this particular data set. Late 1997 and through 1998 a highly publicized legal suit was developing against the University of Michigan Regents (University of Michigan Library Documents Center 2003). This suit addressed the concern over affirmative action measures being included in the application process for the University of Michigan. In essence it was a charge of reverse discrimination. Around this same time and in the couple of years leading up to it, affirmative action had become a marked part of social and political discourse (Rofes et al. 1997; Citrin 1996; Pitts 1995; Mollins 1995; United States Department of Labor 1995).

While only some headway had been made to diminish the historical effects of racial and gender discrimination, more had been accomplished toward heightening the perception that white males (and white females in the University of Michigan case) were being unfairly discriminated against in favor of lower performing minorities and females. The earlier report by the Glass Ceiling Commission (1995) had verified this discrepancy between sentiment and fact. In light of the political and social awareness of affirmative action within the general US population at the time the data for this study was collected, it was a sensible choice to represent an intersectionality of multiple variable effects.

### *Bringing Into Question Single-Characteristic Variables*

Considering further the aforementioned social and political climate under which this data was collected, may also help with understanding why a single-characteristic variable, such as gender, was not significantly related to either affirmative action attitude or, subsequently, confidence in government. This lack of a significant relationship may be representative of long-term attitudes held by the different genders, but was more likely reflective of the circumstances of the time. If this were the case, then the concern over the continued use of single-characteristic variables is further validated as underlying factors compromise the assumptions about what those variables are meant to represent.

While affirmative action legislation was put into place to benefit both minority groups and women, as was noted in Hughes and Tuch (2003), white women were more likely to experience their "race" more strongly than their gender. At the time the GSS was conducted in 1998, white women were being depicted as being subjected to reverse discrimination as much as white men because of their skin color. This being the case, the influence of white women at that time (being the survey group with the largest count) could very well have suppressed what may have otherwise been a significant relationship between gender and affirmative action. After all, affirmative action had helped women of

all creeds and colors advance academically and professionally, so it would be assumed that all women would support affirmative action enough to make the relationship significant. Given the apparently mutable nature of this otherwise "easily" defined variable, leads one to wonder if other traditional single-characteristic variables are as prone to sway under differing social and political currents.

## VI. Conclusions

While this project may be considered a mere academic exercise of the mastery of graduate studies, its focus addresses broader changes in the social research arena. Years of past research have yielded a considerable amount of data and results that attempting to explain why people have acted or thought the way they have. In doing so there was most assuredly some hope that future behavior and opinions could be predicted, influenced, or even avoided. However, as theories have developed and been applied, the real world has often proved it is not block of clay to be molded as desired.

Relying on snap-shots of behavior and attitude without reference to the time-frame in which the data was collected or without concern for the underlying factors that make the conceptualization of variables questionable, truly undermines the quality of the knowledge social science is thought to have acquired. With each new generation of social researchers it seems as if the work of the generation before is considered obsolete, if for nothing more than the use of poorly conceived measures and variables. While levels of confidence in quantitative methods seem stronger than ever, one can hardly be assured if the foundation of the analysis—the data—may not even be providing the researcher



with an unbiased reflection of the desired measurement item. This concern raises a need for serious re-examination of the variable conceptualization element of social research methodology.

Already researchers are opening their minds to the possibility that variables are not free from bias or that single-characteristic variables cannot be readily relied upon as immutable reflections of their namesake (e.g., sex, race, class, etc.). Future research should include looking at timely composite variables, as was the case for affirmative action attitude in 1998. Composite variables representing the intersectionality of multiple characteristics that make up the whole person may change from year to year. However, given the social and political circumstances under which they are identified, it may be possible to use them in standardized statistical forms for long-term comparison.

It is likely not impossible to uncover endlessly and increasingly better ways to understand and predict human behaviors and opinions. In addition, there may even be that one “perfect” variable out there that could account for political behavior and attitude. However, as variable conceptualization stands now, it seems unlikely that progress will occur until the human-subject of social science research is consistently regarded as an intersection of identities rather than as a make up of fragmented characteristics.

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## APPENDIX A: GSS CONSTRUCTION

In the 1990's, this sampling strategy starts with 100 Primary Sampling Units (PSUs). These sampling units are either Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSAs) comprised of clusters of counties and similar jurisdictions or rural non-SMSA counties. The GSS uses a multi-stage, stratified probability sample. In each of three stages, NORC chooses progressively smaller geographic units, and all members of the target population have an equally likely probability of selection. Starting with a list of PSUs stratified by region, metropolitan status, state, percent minority, and per capita income, the NORC selects communities to survey, then census blocks within those PSUs, and ultimately specific addresses. Once specific addresses have been identified, face-to-face English-language interviews are conducted.



## APPENDIX B: VARIABLE QUESTIONS AND FREQUENCY TABLES

**TABLE A: Description of GSS Variables Used in the Analysis**

Variables (Coding)	Question Wording
<i>Confidence in Government</i>	I am going to name some institutions in this country. As far as the people running these institutions are concerned, would you say you have a great deal of confidence, only some confidence or hardly any confidence at all in them?
Confidence in president (CONFED) (1= "a great deal"; 2= "only some"; 3= "hardly any")	Executive branch of the federal government?
Confidence in congressional leaders (CONLEGIS) (1= "a great deal"; 2= "only some"; 3= "hardly any")	Congress?
<i>Affirmative Action</i> (AFFRMACT)	Some people say that because of past discrimination, blacks should be given preference in hiring and promotion. Others say that such preference in hiring and promotion of blacks is wrong because it discriminates against whites. What about your opinion -- are you for or against preferential hiring and promotion of blacks?
IF Favors: (1= "strongly favors"; 2= "not strongly favors")	A. Do you favor preference in hiring and promotion strongly or not strongly?
IF Opposes: (3= "not strongly opposes"; 4= "strongly opposes")	B. Do you oppose preference in hiring and promotion strongly or not strongly?
<i>Occupational Prestige</i> (PRESTG80)	Predetermined values were assigned to respondent's answers about their occupation. Please refer to the GSS web-site or work by Nakao, Hodge and Treas (1992) regarding the development of the prestige codes and assignment of values.

**TABLE B. Descriptive Statistics of Original GSS Variables (Excluding Occupational Prestige)**

		N	Percent
<b>Confidence in Congress</b>			
	1 Hardly Any	200	7.1
	2 Only Some	1071	37.8
	3 A Great Deal	571	20.2
	8 Don't Know	62	2.2
	Total	1904	67.2
Missing	0 NAP	921	32.5
	9 NA	7	.2
	Total	928	32.8
<b>Total</b>		2832	100.0
<b>Confidence in Executive Branch</b>			
	1 Hardly Any	265	9.4
	2 Only Some	909	32.1
	3 A Great Deal	671	23.7
	8 Don't Know	60	2.1
	Total	1905	67.3
Missing	0 NAP	921	32.5
	9 NA	6	.2
	Total	979	32.7
<b>Total</b>		2832	100.0
<b>Affirmative Action</b>			
	1 Strongly favors	142	5.0
	2 Favors	117	4.1
	3 Opposes	425	15.0
	4 Strongly Opposes	1024	36.2
	8 Don't Know	145	5.1
	Total	1853	65.4
Missing	0 NAP	961	33.9
	9 NA	18	.6
	Total	979	34.6
<b>Total</b>		2832	100.0

**TABLE B (cont.)**

**Race-Ethnicity**

1 White	2241	79.1
2 Black	400	14.1
3 Other	191	6.7
<b>Total</b>	2832	100

**Gender**

1 Male	1232	43.5
2 Female	1600	56.5
<b>Total</b>	2832	100.0

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**TABLE C. Descriptive Statistics of Original  
GSS Occupational Prestige**

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	17	11	.4
	19	3	.1
	20	15	.5
	21	14	.5
	22	75	2.6
	23	35	1.2
	24	39	1.4
	25	22	.8
	27	24	.8
	28	60	2.1
	29	77	2.7
	30	93	3.3
	31	64	2.3
	32	102	3.6
	33	51	1.8
	34	81	2.9
	35	75	2.6
	36	115	4.1
	37	12	.4
	38	26	.9
	39	76	2.7
	40	80	2.8
	41	27	1.0
	42	112	4.0
	43	39	1.4
	44	85	3.0
	45	37	1.3
	46	121	4.3
	47	109	3.8
	48	35	1.2
	49	79	2.8
	50	26	.9

**TABLE C (cont.)**

51	248	8.8
52	30	1.1
53	20	.7
54	26	.9
55	8	.3
56	7	.2
57	22	.8
58	5	.2
59	35	1.2
60	48	1.7
61	49	1.7
62	9	.3
63	7	.2
64	83	2.9
65	41	1.4
66	91	3.2
67	2	.1
68	9	.3
69	29	1.0
70	2	.1
71	8	.3
72	4	.1
73	11	.4
74	37	1.3
75	18	.6
86	9	.3
Total	2678	94.6
Missing	DK,N	
	A,NA	154
	P	5.4
Total	2832	100.0