

FEAR AND LOATHING IN THE HEARTLAND: STATUS INSUFFICIENCY,  
RESENTMENT, AND THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

by

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## ABSTRACT

JORDAN LOUIS KITCHENS. Fear and Loathing in the Heartland: Status Insufficiency, Resentment, and the Future of American Democracy (Under the direction of DR.

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The current technological and economic transformations spurred by globalization are having detrimental effects on White rural communities' social status. The status-power theory of social relations predicts that status insufficiency results in negative emotions. To remedy these negative emotions White rural residents are devaluing those they hold responsible for their current despair. To understand this phenomena more thoroughly, I utilize 2012 American National Election Survey (ANES) data to model geographic place of residence, racial resentment, and egalitarian attitudes. Results indicate that there is initial evidence of heightened racial resentment in rural areas that negatively effects egalitarian attitudes. However, it is the inclusion of demographic and political self-identification variables that emerge as more significant in predicting racial resentment and egalitarian attitudes.

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## INTRODUCTION

There are many ways to describe the growing economic and political divide in America. One of the most prominent features of this divide is the cultural values between those Americans who live in rural communities and those who live elsewhere. Individuals who live in rural communities claim to live in a different country, one ignored by politicians and the rest of America. Marred by higher rates of poverty, unemployment, drug overdoses, and health disparities (Kusmin 2016; Monnat and Brown 2017), the pulse of America's heartland is fading.

Many of these social maladies have emerged in America's post-industrial economy, leaving once thriving manufacturing hubs desolate. Left behind are communities of "postindustrial peasants" (Leicht and Fitzgerald 2006), who are sustaining their fledgling middle-class lifestyles with increasing debt. The Great Recession of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century has further propagated a lifestyle of debt-peonage. Stagnant wages, declining home values, and increased personal bankruptcies and foreclosures have changed the rules that once governed the economic game (Leicht and Fitzgerald 2014). Once seen as a vehicle to bridge the gap between less prosperous times, persistent debt is extinguishing the flame of the American Dream for rural Americans.

The economic hardship that most middle-class families are experiencing is exacerbated for rural communities that are facing a cultural "hollowing out" of their communities (Carr and Kefalas 2009). The new, post-industrial economy stimulates the migration of young professionals and service workers into metropolitan hubs. For many rural families, the prevailing assumption is that their children will leave their rural homes

to pursue opportunities elsewhere (Carr and Kefalas 2009). Like most parents, rural families want the best for the children and that means advising them to seek areas of opportunity. Once seen as a place of opportunity, rural communities offer little to educated, young professionals and have become more attractive to Latino/a families who find opportunity in the low-wage factory farming jobs that remain (Carr and Kefalas 2009; Saenz and Torres 2003).

Surviving economic hardship is difficult enough, but doing so without the benefits of familial and communal support introduces increased complications. Members of rural communities have weathered the storm of changing economic times; but what was once the heartland of America is experiencing the decline of the importance of the values that made their communities whole. No longer are rural communities a homogenous racial and cultural mass (Brown and Swanson 2003). Market forces have demanded a more skilled, educated workforce, contributing to a decline in religiosity (Pew Religious Study 2017). This double-edged sword of increasing diversity and decreasing religious homogeneity presents a status complication for rural Americans.

To date, sociologists dealing with macro-level status differentiation has focused on the way that those with economic power act to enhance their own status (Gusfield 1963; DiMaggio 1982). The consequences of status insufficiency and how a community with little to no power reacts to status insufficiency, has received little attention. Much more than economic insecurity, the values and customs associated with the rural way of life conflict with post-industrial America. The current research examines how social status affects egalitarian attitudes in rural communities. Although I do not directly test the

relationship between emotions and egalitarian attitudes, my theoretical argument draws heavily on scholarship linking status insufficiency to emotional outcomes.

Two pieces of recent research highlight how rural residents are experiencing status insufficiency. Hochschild (2016) and Cramer (2016), examine how rural individuals understand their social class and status position in the United States. Hochschild (2016) finds that rural Southern White voters in Louisiana suffer from a perceived loss of status. She describes their status anxiety by constructing a deep story, “a feel-as-if story that corresponds to a real structural squeeze” (Hochschild 2016:146). This structural squeeze is the result of economic conditions that culminated in the financial crisis of 2007-2008. Furthering these voters’ frustration is what they deem “politically correct” (PC) culture propagated by Liberal elites and the Mainstream Media. Hochschild (2016) explains that PC culture is leading to a condition she calls “sympathy fatigue.” All of the Louisiana voters Hochschild (2016) interviewed reported feelings that certain categories of people have been allowed to “cut in line” in front of them, while they have been working towards the American Dream.

Cramer’s (2016) research in rural Wisconsin finds a litany of the same opinions described by Hochschild’s (2016) rural White Southern voters. According to Cramer (2016), rural White Wisconsin voters harbor an increasing amount of resentment towards residents of big cities, the local and federal government, and public institutions. Rural White Wisconsin voters believe that they are being ignored by the government and that it no longer represents their interests. Cramer (2016) explains that this is more than a common set of complaints. Rather, it is a way of understanding these voters place in the

social structure. Cramer (2016) calls this perspective “rural consciousness,” and it has led to the development of a deeply seated resentment toward our fellow citizens.

The above studies involve groups of rural White residents articulating two things: their shared sense of collective identity, and an agreement that their group is in a status deficit. Wright (2015:26) explains that “a status group cannot exist without its members being in some way conscious of being a member of the group.” What Cramer (2016:12) refers to as rural consciousness might be better described as status consciousness because as she states, one of the elements of this rural consciousness is a shared sense that rural folks have fundamentally distinct values and lifestyle and that they are dissatisfied with their group’s status. While this distinction is partially just a difference in disciplinary vernacular—Cramer is a political scientist—the status designation has important theoretical importance that I will address below.

Hochschild (2016) provides a persuasive qualitative account of the roles that status and emotion play in shaping the political opinions of Americans (Hochschild 2016:15). Hochschild (2016:48) explains “Like everyone I was to talk with, [they] felt like victims of a frightening loss...of their cultural home, their place in the world, and their honor.” Kemper’s status-power theory of social relations (2006:93) argues, “[A] status deficit refers to a feeling- it is an emotional state- that one is not receiving a suitable, appropriate, or deserved level of appreciation, respect, approval, acceptance or love.” Although the current study does not measure emotional outcomes, it is clear that rural White voters in both Hochschild (2016) and Cramer (2016) are attempting to alleviate this status deficit by making normative appeals to fairness, voicing complaints

about their experiences, and using nostalgic elements of their common past to strengthen communal bonds in the present (Kemper 2006).

## BACKGROUND

Historically, rural communities have been racial homogenous, tight-knit communities based around a common set of customs and values. According to Carr and Kefalas (2009:16), outside of a state's cities, rural communities "social system is based on everyone acting and looking like everyone else." It is not hyperbole to state that religion and the local church are the center of rural communities' cultural beliefs and practices (Glenna 2003). As such, participation in religious life has long been a primary source of rural residents' feelings of status and belonging. Moreover, religion helps to establish social control over the community, making any deviation from established norms suspicious and conspicuous.

The economic center for most rural communities has focused on one or two large regional employers, mainly related to mineral extraction and manufacturing, with a host of other product services providing the basis for a local economy. Historically, entry into a job that provided a comfortable middle-class lifestyle required a high-school diploma, perhaps some vocational training, but mostly the willingness to work hard, due to the arduous around the clock work cycle involved in mineral extraction and manufacturing. A hard work ethic is a point of pride in rural communities, one that helps differentiate themselves from jobs that require more education and provides a sense of self-worth (Lamont 2002). With the loss of economic security rural communities are experiencing, social status is pushed to the forefront when estimating self-worth.

### *Social Class and Status*

Most important to the present discussion is Weber's (1946) analytical distinction between class and status. According to Weber (1946) the economic, social, and political

order of a community is a threefold phenomenon of the distribution of power that consist of classes, status groups, and parties, respectively. The distribution of power in the economic order is a class situation, whereas in the social order power is “conditioned by the social honor” attached to a group (Weber 1946). In this sense, status is the amount of honor or prestige a group or individual is endowed with. More importantly, classes “are not communities” while status groups “are normally communities” (Weber 1946). Wright (2015:26) explains it more precisely, “members of a class become a status group when they become conscious of sharing a common identity, and they become a party when they organize on the basis of that identity.”

Of course, the economic order can condition the social order to a high degree (Weber 1946). Wright (2015:26) explains that for Weber, “it is not that status groups are derived from purely symbolic motives and classes are derived from material interest...both status and class are implicated in the pursuit of material interest.” Having no power in one order, the economic, can affect the amount of power you have in another, the social, for example. Rural communities feel they lack the economic largesse to elicit a response from politicians, which in turn affects their collective status. Rural communities have been hard hit by the current economic transformation taking place in the United States; poverty rates, educational attainment, and median annual income remain below that of urban areas (Kusmin 2016). As Weber (1946) states. “Every technological repercussion and economic transformation threaten stratification *by status* and pushes the class situation into the foreground” (emphasis added).

### *Status Insufficiency*

Members of rural communities' social status has been affected more than any other American community by three phenomena: persistent demeaning cultural stereotypes, migration, and growing secularization. These three phenomena are linked to globalization (Meyer 2000), which is having a disproportionate negative impact on rural communities.

*Historic sources of status insufficiency.* Rural Americans have become accustomed to the stereotypical representations of their culture through persistent portrayals of the uneducated "redneck" and "white trash" propagated by mass media. This makes them particularly sensitive to status insufficiency. Hochschild (2016:144) recalls how one man complained, "Two missing front teeth, all raggedy, that's how they show us." This is a historical stereotype attached to rural White Americans, one that associates being rural and White with being lazy, uneducated, and immoral (Wray 2006; Isenberg 2016).

Many rural Americans strive to disassociate themselves from these stereotypes by relying on a hard work ethic and adherence to Christian religious morality. Disdain for government programs that sought to alleviate the ills of poverty and images of the uneducated hillbilly propagated by television shows have developed into a deeply-rooted mistrust of government and media elites. Public policies that strive to elevate historically marginalized communities have become easy fodder for politicians looking to distract from the endemic catastrophe of neoliberalist austerity and corporate profit-seeking schemes, i.e. globalization.

*Contemporary sources of status insufficiency.* Rural America is fast becoming the land of the old, as young people move away to find employment and pursue college (Carr and Kefalas 2009). This is commonly referred to as “brain drain” and, along with an aging population, is becoming the biggest threat to rural White Americans. Hochschild (2016:144) explains this as a compounding effect on the “sense of fading honor” that rural Americans feel while watching the “very group” you belong to decline in numbers. With a declining population comes less resources, both political and institutional. Churches, clubs, and social centers become stagnant and moribund, while the state reallocates funds and representation to more densely populated areas. Without resources to fund educational institutions, rural areas quite literally experience brain drain.

Compounding the problem of out-migration is the in-migration of non-white Hispanics and Asians. Since the 1990s, immigrants have begun to settle in smaller towns, changing the face of what were traditionally homogenous communities (Massey 2008). The presence of new ethnic groups heightens the status anxiety of rural residents (Kemper 2006), who now experience first-hand different cultural practices that may not coincide with the established order. Cramer (2016:103) states, “at the same time many rural communities are experiencing a loss of young White adults, the Hispanic population is growing” citing a 2004 USDA report that explains it is the “most rapidly growing demographic in rural and small-town America.”

Changes in the religious landscape also threaten the status of rural Americans. Secularization refers to the diminishing authority, both institutional and cultural, that religious values and institutions have in society (Lechner 2003). According to a 2012 Pew Research analysis, “the number of Americans who do not identify with any religion

continues to grow at a rapid pace... [rising to] the highest percentages ever in Pew Research Center polling.” According to Lechner (2003:1), “the world the West has lost” is one where being a member of a community was being a member of a community of faith, “to be a member meant identifying with that faith.”

Globalization has a homogenizing effect on culture, creating a “world society” with common models of “mass education” (Meyer 2000). The devaluation of a group’s deeply-held morals and values leads to resentment towards the catalyst of secularization, i.e. the so-called Liberal Media, educational institutions, and the government (Hochschild 2016; Cramer 2016). For rural communities, the Church is an anchor institution, one that has been historically at the center of social, political, and economic organization. Secularization has devalued the cultural authority of the Christian faith (Chaves 1994), promoting a culture of religious pluralism where “religious faith takes many forms, and meaning has many nonreligious sources” (Lechner 2003:1). As Collins (1998:595) states, “secularization is not a zeitgeist but a process of conflict” and rural Americans are keenly aware of this.

What is starkly obvious in both Hochschild (2016) and Cramer (2016) is rural residents complaining of not receiving the attention that they feel their problems deserve. Kemper (2006, 2011) argues that complaining is a form of status seeking behavior and is one action that individuals use to alleviate a status deficit.

#### *Status-Power Theory of Social Relations*

Kemper’s (2006; 2011) status-power theory of social relations explicates the psychological and emotional outcomes of social interactions along two dimensions—status and power. It is important to state that actors do not have these two dimensions in

mind when interacting, they are not conscious goals *per se*. Power and status are theoretical constructs that “demystify” social interaction (Kemper 2011, see Chp.8). Actors are not consciously asking “am I receiving less status than I am accustomed to”, but are acting in accordance to a status-power explanadum. The status-power construct “increases the transparency of what lies beneath” to provide a cogent rationale for actor’s behavior (Kemper 2011:131).

Status is a voluntary behavior in which actors willing give and accept deference, respect, admiration, love, and support without coercion (Kemper 2006). Power is the ability to realize your will over the resistance of others (Weber 1946); compliance is obtained involuntarily. Kemper’s (2011) theory connects social experiences of status and power to personal psychological and behavioral outcomes through the emotions that arise in interactions. An actor anticipates a certain amount of status-conferral during an interaction. When this expectation is not met, there is a conscious reflection that accompanies an emotion (Kemper 2006; Kemper 1978). The motivating factor in the decision to continue interaction is the emotional state aroused during an interaction. Again, though the goal of the present study is not to examine the interaction-emotions link, understanding the emotions related to status is essential for explicating the relationship between status insufficiency and racial resentment, which is central to my analyses.

*Status.* Kemper (2011:55) argues that acquiring status is the “most common motive of relational action.” A successful interaction is one where an individual evaluates her or his status as adequate. This elicits the experience of satisfaction and contentment; though this is generally felt at a subconscious level and may not register a conscious

evaluation of the interaction (Kemper 2006). It is only when one evaluates his or her status as excessive or insufficient that negative states elicit a conscious cognitive appraisal. Status adequacy contributes to a willingness to continue interactions and the formation of relationships (Kemper 2011).

Status insufficiency or deficit arises when one perceives that she or he is not receiving a desirable level of respect, appreciation, approval, or love. Status insufficiency is the most important interactional outcome for the proposed project. When one's own status is deficient, Kemper's theory predicts a complex amalgam of sadness-depression and anger are the experienced emotions (Kemper 2006). The crux of which emotions are felt, depends on whom the deficit is attributed to. If one blames oneself, then the dominant emotions will be sadness-depression. If one attributes the loss of status to a third-party, say the government or another group, then anger and resentment is experienced (Scheff 1988).

Though not directly relevant to the current argument, it is worth noting that when one evaluates her or his status to be excessive, shame/embarrassment is the outcome (Kemper 2006). Shame and embarrassment are temporary feelings that can be remedied through action that restores one to an adequate amount of status. Excessive status has the reciprocal effect of making others involved in the interaction as status insufficient (Kemper 2006), making an excessive amount of status undesirable for long-term relationships.

*Power.* As stated above, power is the ability to get others to conform to your will (Weber 1946). Thus, to use power in a social interaction is to motivate people's behavior against their own will. To be power adequate is to feel safety and security, which is

analogous to contentment and satisfaction (Kemper 2006). Rarely is this a conscious feeling and is only noticeable when one becomes power excessive or insufficient.

Kemper (2006) proposes that fear/anxiety are the emotional outcomes of one's own power being insufficient. When another's power is insufficient, the reciprocal position would be one's own power excessive, which promotes feelings of guilt. Due to this reciprocal process, Kemper (2006:99) argues the nature of the power relational dimension tends to be "more of a zero-sum nature."

As stated above the status dimension is the "most common motive of relational action" (Kemper 2011:55). All forms of etiquette are learned behaviors of status conferral, or what Collins (1981a) refers to as "deference rituals." Holding a door open for someone to enter a building, and saying "please" and "thank you" are forms of status conferral to those around you. This is important because these are all learned symbols of group-level behavior, conveying them displays to those around you that you are a part of the group. *Ipsa facto*, not displaying certain forms of etiquette creates a status insufficiency situation. This avoidance of disturbing interaction rituals, and thus status insufficiency, creates pressure for conformity and acts as a form of social control. Once status and power hierarchies are established, their relative stability makes changes extremely disruptive resulting in negative emotions and coping behaviors.

#### *Powerlessness and Resentment*

Without the power to alleviate status insufficiency rural communities are experiencing, the negative personal outcomes persist, compelling coping behaviors. Situational interactions involve relatively short-lived emotional outcomes. To resolve any negative emotions one might encounter is a matter of not continuing the interaction;

essentially one has the power to stop the interaction. However, the catalyst of status insufficiency for rural residents is much larger, they are powerless to stop the effects of globalization, leaving them with few options to address the sources of their negative emotions.

Scheler [1915] (1994:29) defines resentment as “a lasting mental attitude, caused by the systematic repression of certain emotions.” Emotions such as anger, fear, and anxiety that cannot be overcome become repressed. This impotence, or powerlessness, to alleviate these emotions is a key concern for Scheler [1915] (1994) because it directly relates to social structure and the stratification of groups. According to Scheler [1915] (1994) groups that feel they have been unfairly wronged develop a “thirst for revenge.” When revenge cannot be taken, it must be “temporarily checked or restrained...postponed to a later time and to a more suitable occasion” (Scheler [1915] 1994:29). If this desire for revenge cannot be satisfied, the targets of revenge “shift toward indeterminate groups of objects” (Scheler [1915] 1994:32).

Oddly enough, modern democracies, with the increase of social mobility are fertile grounds for resentment. Writing at the turn of the twentieth century, Scheler ([1915] 1994:33) hypothesized, “[Resentment] must therefore be strongest in a society like ours, where approximately equal rights (political and otherwise) of formal social equality, publicly recognized, go hand in hand with wide factual differences in power, property, and education.” It does not stretch the imagination too far to understand modern political ideologies as introductory paths of resentment. During times of economic and technological change, the shuffling of social positions is almost guaranteed. This leaves

individuals whom have fared worse looking for reasons, which inevitably opens the door for blame.

Resentment is at the core of class conflict, not because of the emotions associated with power and status insufficiency, but because of the behaviors through which resentment manifests itself. When the so-called rising tide does not lift all boats, those left sinking jump ship. This is precisely the form the American experiment has taken. Americans who have benefited from an increase in social mobility, but are now stagnant or worse, declining, have no appetite for equality. Resentment is a pernicious attitude, one that is “associated with the tendency to detract from other [people’s] value...” (Scheler [1915] 1994:32). Americans who have historically been discriminated against, African Americans and the poor, along with immigrants have found themselves in the crosshairs of political and cultural backlash.

### *Summary and Hypotheses*

My argument is two-fold: (1) the status insufficiency that White rural communities are experiencing is creating a community full of anger and resentment that is directed towards minorities and immigrants; and (2) this resentment is manifesting itself in their political opinions, specifically in their opinions of egalitarianism. Setting aside the question of the relationship between status and emotion, my analyses focus on the relationship between rural residence, racial resentment, and egalitarian attitudes.

The status-power theory of social relations argues that a loss of status results in the experience of negative emotions, a complex amalgam of fear, anxiety, and resentment (Kemper 2011). The source of this status insufficiency for rural communities is threefold: (1) persistent negative cultural stereotypes, (2) in-migration of racially and culturally

diverse immigrants, out-migration of racially homogenous White youth, and (3) growing secularization. Immigrants and minorities are viewed as unjust beneficiaries of the changing cultural and economic climate, policies such as affirmative action or temporary work visa programs, provide political pressure points, giving the negative emotions caused by status insufficiency an outlet.

Resentment is an emotion that needs opposition, “its action is fundamentally reaction” (Nietzsche [1887] 2013:25). Not only is resentment reactive, it is also creative, it “gives birth to values” that oppose its targets (Nietzsche [1887] 2013:25). Rural American’s resentment is birthing inegalitarian values, ones that fundamentally threaten the core of Democracy.

Following my argument above, I offer the following four hypotheses:

*H<sub>1</sub>: White rural residents will report higher levels of racial resentment than non-rural communities.*

*H<sub>2</sub>: White rural residents will report less egalitarian attitudes than non-rural communities.*

*H<sub>3</sub>: Racial resentment is inversely related to egalitarian attitudes.*

*H<sub>4</sub>: Racial resentment mediates the relationship between rurality and egalitarian attitudes.*

In sum, rural communities are experiencing status insufficiency resulting in heightened levels of racial resentment. Egalitarian attitudes are affected by heightened levels of racial resentment. Where there are elevated levels of racial resentment there will be low levels of egalitarianism and vice versa. Lastly, racial resentment intervenes in the relationship between rural communities and egalitarian attitudes. In what follows, I describe my procedures for testing my four hypotheses.

## METHODS

### *Sample*

The 2012 American National Election Survey is a time series study that is administered during every year of the American Presidential election since 1948. The 2012 ANES is administered in two waves; one pre-election and one post-election. The 2012 ANES time series survey is a “dual-mode” survey, conducted face-to-face and via Internet, that includes two independent samples. The two samples include U.S citizens age 18 and older with an oversample of black and Hispanic respondents included for optional subgroups analysis. (ANES 2014). Some of the main variables of concern for the current project are White rural residents, as such I remove all non-White respondents. The elimination of non-White respondents and only concentrating on rural areas of residence further reduces my sample size ( $N = 573$ ).

The face-to-face sample was collected in three stages. The first stage of sampling for the face-to-face sample stratified the contiguous United States and the District of Columbia into nine regions corresponding to Census Divisions. Within these nine regions a census tract was selected that is proportional to that regions population for a total of 125 census tracts. Regions with larger populations have a higher probability of selection, which is desirable to maintain “similar selection probabilities for individuals all over the country” (ANES 2014).

The second stage of sampling for the face-to-face sample randomly selected residential address within each of the nine census tracts (ANES 2014). The United States Postal Service’s Delivery Sequence File (DSF) provides a list of residential addresses in

the United States that receives mail. While not perfect, steps were taken to ensure addresses not on the DSF had a chance to be included in the sample (see ANES 2014).

The third stage of sampling for the face-to-face sample “was the selection of one eligible person per household” (ANES 2014). An interviewer was sent to the sampled address to conduct a brief interview with “a household informant that provided the first name, age, citizenship status, race, and ethnicity of all household members” (ANES 2014). An eligible member of the household was then randomly selected using the interviewer’s computer. Pre-election interviews were conducted during the two months preceding the November Presidential election, and then a re-interview of the same respondent after the election.

Interviewers were also asked to make observations of the dwelling unit, “noting its state of repair and the presence of political yard signs” (ANES 2014). Both the pre-and post-election interviews were administered using a computer-aided personal interview (CAPI) format, in which the interviewer read a question verbatim that was displayed on the computer. The respondent was then asked to answer aloud and interviewers marked the answer on the computer (ANES 2014). Interviewers were trained to encourage respondents to answer all questions, using a process known as “probing” if any reluctance was experienced. For some portions of the interview, respondents were given a tablet computer and asked questions privately. This is noted in the questionnaire and codebook using the acronym CASI, computer-aided self-interview. Interviews averaged about 90 minutes in length excluding the after interview module about facilitating future survey participation. Response rates for the pre-election face-to-face sample was 38 percent with

a 94percent re-interview rate for post-election interviews. Monetary incentives were offered in the pre- and post-election stages of data collection.

To analyze the relationship among status insufficiency, racial resentment, and egalitarianism, I employ a series of OLS regression models to test each of my hypotheses. Additionally, I will employ a Sobel test to assess mediation, as predicted in hypothesis *H4*. I employ data from the 2012 American National Election Survey (ANES) that incorporates variables pertaining to respondents' race, region, and questions that gauge respondents' overall levels of racial resentment and egalitarianism. I include a weight variable in each of my regression analyses that was developed specifically for the face-to-face sample and provided by the ANES.

#### *Dependent Variables*

*Egalitarianism.* Following Bartels (2008:132) I employ a scale variable using the six egalitarian questions to use as my dependent variable (see Appendix A). Each of the six egalitarian questions is composed of a five-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from (1="strongly agree") to (5 = "strongly disagree"). Out of the six egalitarian questions, three invite respondents to agree with egalitarian sentiments and three with inegalitarian sentiments. To create a summary scale, I reverse code the inegalitarian questions so that agreeing in any form will receive less points on the egalitarianism scale. The summary scale demonstrates adequate internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = .95).

*Racial Resentment.* I also create a scale variable using the four racial resentment questions (See Appendix A). Again questions are assessed on a five point Likert scale ranging from (1="strongly agree") to (5 = "strongly disagree"). Of the four racial resentment questions, three invite respondents to agree with sentiments that are racially

sensitive. I reverse code these three questions, so that disagreeing in any form will receive more points on the racial resentment scale. The one remaining racial resentment variable invites respondents to agree with sentiments that are racially insensitive. Following Bartels (2008) treatment of the egalitarian scale variable above, I average each respondent's answers to the four racial resentment questions. The summary scale demonstrates adequate internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = .92).

### *Independent Variables*

As both Cramer (2016) and Hochschild (2016) have explained, rural communities have specific grievances that surround their lifestyle. They believe rural communities and their residents are discriminated against because of their rurality. Included in the face-to-face sample of the 2012 ANES is a variable that corresponds to the interviewer's assessment of the geographic location of the dwelling in which the respondent lives: (1) "Rural farm or undeveloped land" (2) "Rural town" (3) "Suburban" (4) "Urban". I will dummy code this variable by consolidating categories 1 and 2 into one category called "rural" and categories 3 and 4 into one category called "urban."

I include a standard battery of socioeconomic variables that are known to influence opinion; age, sex, income, educational attainment, marital and employment status. More importantly, I include political self-identification as a control variable as its influence has increasingly become an important predictor of opinion regarding political matters (Achen & Bartels 2016). Additionally, to account for secularizations influence outlined above, I include two variables that control for religious practice and behavior.

I have recoded the income variable into five categories, using the fifth income quintile as the reference category. Educational attainment is also recoded into five

categories, with graduate degree as the reference category. Marital status has been recoded into three categories with married, widowed, or separated as the reference category. Employment status is also recoded into three categories with a consolidated “other” category being used as reference. Political self-identification has been recoded into three categories with moderate being used as the reference category. Additionally, both religious variables (one for practice and one for behavior) have been recoded so that no is the reference category for each.

Hypothesis one ( $H_1$ ) will receive support if, after controlling for relevant covariates, the rurality variable is statistically significant with a positive coefficient. Hypothesis two ( $H_2$ ) will receive support if, after controlling for all other variables, the rurality variable is statistically significant with a negative coefficient. Hypothesis three ( $H_3$ ) will receive support if, after controlling for all other variables and the introduction of racial resentment as an independent variable the racial resentment variable is statistically significant with a negative coefficient. This indicates that a respondent’s racial resentment score, ranging from 1 to 5, will negatively impact egalitarian attitudes. The higher the respondent’s racial resentment score, the greater the negative impact on egalitarian attitudes.

Hypothesis four ( $H_4$ ) will receive support if, after interpreting the results from the regression model in  $H_3$ , we observe the rurality variable’s coefficient either decrease or become insignificant. This will indicate that the inclusion of the racial resentment variable is mediating the relationship between rurality and egalitarian attitudes. If this occurs, then a Sobel test will be conducted to test the significance of the mediation effect.

## Results

In this chapter I present results for my planned regression analyses. I also conduct exploratory analyses to help explain unexpected findings. Following an explanation of my results I discuss their impact on the current research project and conclude with broader implications of my results.

My regression analyses include 21 variables that measure 573 respondents' attitudes, opinions, while controlling for area of residence and demographic characteristics. The mean age of respondents is 50 years old with a minimum age of 18 and maximum age of 90. I have restricted the race of my sample to include only White respondents. The mean score for respondents on the egalitarianism scale variable is 20, with a range from 6 to 30. The mean score for respondents on the racial resentment scale variable is 14, with a range from 4 to 20. All other variables have been recoded for use in my analyses and as such have a minimum of zero and maximum of one. Table 1 below presents descriptive statistics for all of my variables.

**Table 1** Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Rural	0.27 (0.56)	0	1
Egalitarianism	20 (6.31)	6	30
Racial resentment	14.07 (5.08)	4	20
Age	49.95 (21.54)	18	90
First quintile	0.13 (0.43)	0	1
Second quintile	0.17 (0.47)	0	1
Third quintile	0.16 (0.46)	0	1
Fourth quintile	0.28 (0.57)	0	1
Sex	0.50 (0.63)	0	1
Married	0.63 (0.61)	0	1
Never married	0.17 (0.47)	0	1
Less than HS	0.06 (0.30)	0	1
HS diploma	0.25 (0.55)	0	1
Post HS, No bach	0.30 (0.58)	0	1
Bachelors	0.25 (0.55)	0	1
Employed	0.57 (0.63)	0	1
Unemployed	0.04 (0.24)	0	1
Liberal	0.24 (0.54)	0	1
Conservative	0.47 (0.63)	0	1
Religion important	0.61 (0.62)	0	1
Attend religious services	0.61 (0.62)	0	1
n= 573			

There are some key relationships that are apparent when reviewing my bivariate correlation matrix (see Appendix B for full correlation matrix). Rurality is correlated with racial resentment, but not egalitarianism. Racial resentment is highly correlated with egalitarianism, being never married, having a high school diploma, and both political self-identification variables. Egalitarianism is highly correlated with the first quintile income variable, being never married, and both political self-identification variables. These relationships bear themselves out in my regression analyses as I will now explain.

Hypothesis one (Table 2) fails to receive support. Compared to urban communities, there is no statistically significant relationship between rural communities and racial resentment when controlling for all other explanatory variables. Initially, when the rural community variable is the sole predictor of racial resentment, it is positively statistically significant, indicating an increase in racial resentment. Roughly one percent of the variance is explained with this simple model. However, as more explanatory variables are added to the model the statistical significance of rurality disappears.

**Table 2** OLS Regression Predicting Racial Resentment

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model3
Intercept	13.68*** (0.20)	11.68*** (1.05)	12.01*** (1.00)
Rural	0.79* (0.36)	0.33 (0.37)	0.25 (0.34)
Age		0.00 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)
Second quintile		0.71 (0.54)	1.00 † (0.50)
Third quintile		0.90† (0.53)	0.72 (0.49)
Sex (1 = male)		0.35 (0.33)	0.16 (0.31)
Never married		-2.56*** (0.61)	-1.98*** (0.57)
Less than HS		1.77* (0.83)	1.62* (0.76)
HS diploma		3.56*** (0.57)	3.27*** (0.52)
Post HS, No bach		3.00*** (0.54)	2.42*** (0.50)
Bachelors		1.75** (0.53)	1.34** (0.50)
Employed		0.28 (0.39)	0.46 (0.36)
Unemployed		-1.42 (0.89)	-0.67 (0.82)
Liberal			-2.53*** (0.42)
Conservative			1.33*** (0.36)
Religion important			0.00 (0.39)
Attend religious services			-0.40 (0.38)
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.01	0.12	0.26
n= 573	p<.1† p<.05* p<.01** p<.001***		

Looking at model 2 in table 2, which includes demographic control variables, compared to respondents who have been divorced, widowed, or separated, respondents who have never been married have a highly negative statistically significant relationship with racial resentment, indicating a large decrease in racial resentment. Controlling for all variables, compared to respondents who have a graduate degree, all other categories of educational obtainment are positively statistically significant, indicating an increase in racial resentment. Additionally, compared to respondents in the fifth income quintile, those in the third income quintile almost have a statistically significant relationship ( $p < 0.09$ )<sup>1</sup> with racial resentment, but it fails to reach the .05 level of statistical significance. With the addition of demographic variables, the total variance accounted for jumps to 12 percent.

Next, model (Model 3) introduces controls for political self-identification and religious practice and attitudes. Controlling for all variables, compared to respondents who describe themselves as moderate, self-described liberals have a highly negative statistically significant relationship with racial resentment, indicating a large decrease in racial resentment, while self-described conservatives have a highly positive statistically significant relationship with racial resentment, indicating a large increase in racial resentment. The demographic variables highlighted above remain statistically significant in the full model, though the second quintile income variable is now almost statistically significant and the third quintile income variable is not. Model 3 accounts for roughly 26 percent of the variance in the data.

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<sup>1</sup> In this analysis and all subsequent relevant analyses, I control for income quintiles one through four, with the fifth quintile serving as the reference category. To reduce the size of my tables, I present coefficients only for income quintiles that demonstrate a significant or near-significant relationship to my dependent variable.

Hypothesis 2 (Table 3) fails to receive support. Compared to urban and suburban communities, there is no statistically significant relationship between rural communities and egalitarianism when controlling for all other explanatory variables. Even as the sole predictor (Model 1), there is no statistically significant relationship.

**Table 3** OLS Regression Predicting Egalitarianism

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Intercept	19.89*** (0.24)	21.66*** (1.34)	22.03*** (1.27)
Rural	0.42 (0.47)	0.37 (0.48)	0.45 (0.44)
Age		-0.02 (0.02)	-0.02 (0.01)
First quintile		1.94† (0.81)	1.40† (0.74)
Sex (1 = male)		-0.49 (0.43)	-0.21 (0.40)
Never married		2.14** (0.78)	1.52* (0.72)
HS diploma		-1.45* (0.73)	-1.18† (0.67)
Post HS, No bach		-1.28† (0.69)	-0.54 (0.63)
Bachelors		-1.58* (0.69)	-1.03† (0.63)
Employed		-0.60 (0.50)	-0.88† (0.45)
Unemployed		2.02† (1.14)	1.00 (1.05)
Liberal			2.61*** (0.54)
Conservative			-2.56*** (0.46)
Religion important			0.48 (0.50)
Attend religious services			-0.44 (0.48)
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0	0.06	0.22
n= 573	p<.1† p<.05* p<.01** p<.001***		

With the addition of demographic variables, some statistical significance begins to emerge in Model 2. Controlling for all variables, compared to respondents who have been divorced, widowed, or separated, respondents who have never been married have a positive statistically significant relationship with egalitarianism, indicating an increase in egalitarian attitudes. Furthermore, compared to respondents that have obtained a graduate degree, those who have obtained a high school diploma and those that have obtained a bachelor's degree have a negative statistically significant relationship with egalitarianism, indicating less egalitarian attitudes than those with a graduate degree. Additionally, the first quintile income variable, the post-high school, no bachelor's degree education variable, and the unemployed employment variable all almost reach statistical significance ( $p < 0.1$ ) in this stage of model 2. Roughly six percent of the variance is accounted for at this stage of the regression model.

Finally, controlling for political self-identification and religious practice and attitudes in model 3, compared to respondents who describe themselves as moderate, self-described liberals have a highly positive statistically significant relationship with egalitarianism, indicating a large increase in egalitarian attitudes. Compared to respondents who describe themselves as moderate, self-described conservatives have a highly negative statistically significant relationship with egalitarianism, indicating a large decrease in egalitarian attitudes. Controlling for all other variables, being never married continues to be statistically significant, compared to respondents who have been divorced, widowed, or separated. Additionally, the first quintile income variable remains almost statistically significant, while having a high school diploma and a bachelor's

degree loses statistical significance reaching only the 0.1 significance-level. The unemployed employment variable that had almost reached statistical significance in the previous stage has been reduced, switching places with the employed employment variable that is almost statistically significant in model three. Roughly 22 percent of the variance is accounted for in the full model three.

Hypothesis 3 (Table 4) receives support. Controlling for all other variables, racial resentment is highly negatively statistically significant with egalitarianism, indicating an inverse relationship. A one unit increase on the egalitarian scale relates to roughly a half unit decrease on the racial resentment scale, or as a respondent's egalitarian attitudes increase their racial resentment decreases. This is a consistent relationship across all models of analysis three. Racial resentment alone accounts for roughly 24 percent of the variance in egalitarianism.

**Table 4** OLS Regression with Racial Resentment Predicting  
Egalitarianism

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Intercept	28.57*** (0.66)	28.45*** (0.66)	28.93*** (1.30)	27.91*** (0.66)
Racial resentment	-0.61*** (0.05)	-0.62*** (0.05)	-0.62*** (0.05)	-0.49*** (0.05)
Rural		0.91* (0.41)	0.58 (0.42)	0.57 (0.40)
Age			-0.02 (0.01)	-0.02 (0.01)
First quintile			2.10** (0.71)	1.64* (0.68)
Sex (1 = male)			-0.27 (0.37)	-0.13 (0.37)
Never married			0.55 (0.70)	0.55 (0.67)
Bachelors			-0.49 (0.60)	-0.38 (0.58)
Employed			-0.42 (0.44)	-0.65 (0.42)
Unemployed			1.14 (1.00)	0.67 (0.97)
Liberal				1.38** (0.51)
Conservative				-1.91*** (0.43)
Religion important				0.48 (0.46)
Attend religious services				-0.63 (0.44)
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.24	0.24	0.28	0.33
n= 573	p<.1† p<.05* p<.01** p<.001***			

Secondly, I add rurality to regression model two. Compared to urban communities, there is an initial statistically significant relationship between rural communities and egalitarianism when controlling for racial resentment. However, this relationship disappears with the addition of demographic control variables in the next stage and the variance accounted for remains the same (24percent) as in the model 1 of analysis three.

For model 3, I include the same demographic variables used in analysis one and two. The only statistically significant control variable is the first quintile. Controlling for all other variables, compared to respondents in the fifth income quintile, those in the first income quintile have a positive statistically significant relationship with egalitarianism, indicating an increase in egalitarian attitudes. Roughly 28 percent of the variance is accounted for in model three.

Finally, I estimate my full model (Model 4) which also controls for political self-identification and religious practice and attitudes. Controlling for all variables, compared to respondents who describe themselves as moderate, self-described liberals have a highly positive statistically significant relationship with egalitarianism, indicating a large increase in egalitarian attitudes. Controlling for all variables, compared to respondents who describe themselves as moderate, self-described conservatives have a highly negative statistically significant relationship with egalitarianism, indicating a large decrease in egalitarian attitudes. Controlling for all other variables, compared to respondents in the fifth income quintile, those in the first income quintile have a positive

statistically significant relationship with egalitarianism, indicating an increase in egalitarian attitudes. Roughly 33 percent of the variance is accounted for in model four.

Hypothesis 4 fails to receive support since there is no statistically significant relationship between rurality and egalitarianism as tested in hypothesis 2 and inclusion of the rurality variable in analysis 3 confirms this as well. The initial statistically significant relationship disappears when controlling for demographics and political self-identification.

#### *Exploratory Analysis*

To further investigate the relationship between rurality, racial resentment and egalitarianism I recode each response category for the dwelling variable so that rurality is now separated out into rural farm and rural town. That is, my initial analyses may not have been fine-grained enough. By coding rural farms and rural towns together, I may have obscured important relationships. Given the possibility that residents of rural towns experience the changing social landscape differently than residents of farming communities, I repeat my previous analyses, focusing this time on rural farm residents.

Results presented in table 5 examine the relationship between rural farm residence and racial resentment. Results are nearly identical to the results from hypothesis one above. The rural farm variable is initially statistically significant when the only predictor in the regression model and becomes insignificant with the addition of other explanatory variables. Besides the statistically significant predictors discussed above in hypothesis one (Table 2), the second quintile income variable has a positive statistically significant relationship with racial resentment, compared to those in the fifth income quintile.

**Table 5** Exploratory Analysis, OLS Regression Predicting Racial Resentment

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Intercept	13.95*** (0.16)	11.74*** (1.05)	12.00*** (1.00)
Rural farm	1.28* (0.58)	0.55 (0.56)	-0.24 (0.53)
Age		0.00 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)
Second quintile		0.71 (0.54)	1.02* (0.51)
Third quintile		0.90† (0.53)	0.76 (0.49)
Sex (1 = male)		0.33 (0.33)	0.17 (0.31)
Never married		-2.54*** (0.61)	-1.98*** (0.57)
Less than HS		1.76* (0.82)	1.70* (0.76)
HS diploma		3.56*** (0.57)	3.29*** (0.52)
Post HS, No bach		3.00*** (0.54)	2.46*** (0.50)
Bachelors		1.73** (0.53)	1.34** (0.49)
Employed		0.28 (0.39)	0.47 (0.36)
Unemployed		-1.40 (0.89)	-0.64 (0.82)
Liberal			-2.54*** (0.42)
Conservative			1.33*** (0.36)
Religion important			0.02 (0.39)
Attend religious services			-0.40 (0.38)
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.01	0.12	0.25
n= 573	p<.1†	p<.05*	p<.01** p<.001***

These results indicate a more complicated relationship among rural farm communities and egalitarianism. Initially, the rural farm variable is not significant (Table 6), but in the full model becomes statistically significant with the addition of further variables (this is also the case for the rural farm variable when ran in table 7 discussed below). This complex relationship may indicate the presence of suppressor variables or result from highly correlated predictors (Thompson and Levine 1997).

**Table 6** Exploratory Analysis, OLS Regression Predicting Egalitarianism

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Intercept	19.98*** (0.23)	21.73*** (1.35)	22.30*** (1.27)
Rural farm	0.26 (0.72)	0.61 (0.73)	1.56* (0.66)
Age		-0.02 (0.02)	-0.02 (0.01)
First quintile		1.95* (0.81)	1.31† (0.74)
Sex (1 = male)		-0.51 (0.43)	-0.27 (0.40)
Never married		2.16** (0.78)	1.55* (0.72)
HS diploma		-1.45* (0.73)	-1.21† (0.66)
Post HS, No bach		-1.26† (0.69)	-0.57 (0.63)
Bachelors		-1.59* (0.69)	-1.06† (0.62)
Employed		-0.61 (0.50)	-0.92* (0.45)
Unemployed		2.04† (1.14)	0.98 (1.04)
Liberal			2.65*** (0.54)
Conservative			-2.64*** (0.46)
Religion important			0.53 (0.49)
Attend religious services			-0.52 (0.48)
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0	0.06	0.23
n= 573	p<.1† p<.05* p<.01** p<.001***		

As mentioned above, there is a complicated relationship between rurality and egalitarianism. Like the result from hypothesis 3, though less significant, the rurality

variable is almost significant in model 2 (Table 7), but this effect disappears with the inclusion of demographic control variables. However, with the addition of political self-identification and religious practice and attitudes in model 3, rurality becomes positively statistically significant when controlling for all other variables, indicating an increase in egalitarian attitudes. The only other difference between hypothesis 3 and table 7 is the employed employment variable almost reaches statistical significance ( $p < 0.09$ ) in table seven.

Interestingly, the coefficient of the rurality variable is positive in table 5 and table 6 indicating an increase in egalitarianism, but the coefficient for the political self-identification conservative variable is negative and much larger than the rurality variable. Using the rural farm variable from my exploratory analysis, I ran two logistic regressions predicting political self-identification; one liberal dichotomous outcome and one conservative dichotomous outcome. Results indicate a statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ) relationship with rural residents being 134 percent more likely to self-identify as a conservative and 68 percent less likely to self-identify as a liberal. With the results from the logistic regression, it seems likely there is a possible interaction effect between rurality and political self-identification, but upon further analysis the results are not statistically significant ( $p$ -values from the interaction when included in the full models from all six of my analyses are greater than 0.10). If other variables are suppressing rurality, it would seem that political self-identification would be a prime suspect. The political self-identification variables have the largest beta weights in my full models and large coefficients that are inversely related.

**Table 7** Exploratory Analysis, OLS Regression with Racial Resentment Predicting Egalitarianism

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Intercept	28.57*** (0.66)	28.57*** (0.66)	28.93*** (1.30)	28.14*** (1.32)
Racial resentment	-0.61*** (0.05)	-0.62*** (0.05)	-0.62*** (0.05)	-0.49*** (0.05)
Rural farm		1.05† (.063)	0.96 (0.64)	1.55* (0.61)
Age			-0.02 (0.01)	-0.02 (0.01)
First quintile			2.11** (0.71)	1.57* (0.69)
Sex (1 = male)			-0.30 (0.38)	-0.19 (0.37)
Never married			0.57 (0.69)	0.59 (0.67)
Bachelors			-0.52 (0.60)	-0.41 (0.58)
Employed			-0.44 (0.44)	-0.70† (0.42)
Unemployed			1.17 (1.00)	0.67 (0.96)
Liberal				1.41** (0.51)
Conservative				-1.99*** (0.43)
Religion important				0.53 (0.46)
Attend religious services				-0.71 (0.44)
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.24	0.24	0.28	0.34
n= 573	p<.1† p<.05* p<.01** p<.001***			

## Discussion and Conclusion

As hypothesis one shows, there is an initial statistically significant relationship between rurality and racial resentment. Compared to White urban residents, White rural residents have more racial resentment. However, it is the inclusion of political self-identification, education, and having never been married that mitigate this relationship making it not significant. In other words, it is not where one lives, but individual characteristics that matter more when analyzing racial resentment. Having never been married significantly reduces racial resentment as does self-identifying as a Liberal. All levels of educational attainment increase racial resentment, compared to obtaining the highest level of education, a graduate degree. More interesting, it is having a high school diploma and some college that increases racial resentment the most, while having less than a high school diploma and a bachelor's degree have less of an impact on this increase. Besides the education variables I have just mentioned, self-identifying as a conservative has the largest impact on increasing racial resentment. My exploratory analysis reveals identical results, but also highlights the significance of the second quintile income variables influence on increasing racial resentment.

When analyzing egalitarian attitudes in hypothesis two, a trend of the importance of political self-identification coupled with individual characteristics begins to take shape. Rurality does not have a statistically significant relationship with egalitarianism at any stage of analysis two. More than any other variables, self-identifying as a Liberal or a Conservative have the largest impact on egalitarian attitudes, an almost perfect inverse relationship. Self-identifying as a Liberal increases egalitarianism, while self-identifying as a Conservative decreases egalitarianism. Again, it is a few demographic variables that

predict egalitarian attitudes. The only statistically significant variable in the full model (model 3) of hypothesis 2 is having never been married. Compared to respondents who have been widowed, divorced, or separated, being never married is statistically significant, increasing a respondent's egalitarian attitudes. Additionally, a few education variables are statistically significant in the partial model (model 2) of hypothesis 2, but fall below the .05 threshold in the full model. These variables are still of interest though as they are almost reaching the level of statistical significance and are presenting a pattern when we consider analysis one's results.

My exploratory analysis results in table 6 begin to reveal the complicated relationship between rurality and egalitarianism. While initially not statistical significance, rural farm respondents do have a positive statistically significant relationship with egalitarianism in the full model (model 3). Also, the employed variable reaches statistical significance, decreasing a respondents egalitarian attitudes. It is possible that rural farm is highly correlated with political self-identification and the inclusion of these variables in the full model allows the statistical significance of rural farm to emerge. However, this may indicate the presence of suppressor variables which is likely because according to Thompson and Levine (1997) one sign of suppression is an increase in R-square nearly as large or larger than the previous model when variables are added in a forward stepwise fashion, which I have done. The adjusted R-squared jumps from .06 to .23 with the addition of the statistically significant political self-identification variables.

In hypothesis three I introduce racial resentment as an explanatory variable to predict egalitarian attitudes. As predicted in hypothesis 3, there is a statistically

significant inverse relationship between racial resentment and egalitarianism, as a respondent's egalitarian attitudes increase their racial resentment decreases. Rurality is initially statistically significant when added to model 1 of hypothesis three (Table 4), but again disappears with addition of other explanatory variables. Again we see that it is the political self-identification variables and a demographic income variable that are statistically significant predictors of egalitarian attitudes, along with racial resentment in analysis three. However, in table 7 of my exploratory analysis rural farm is statistically significant along with these same variables in the full model.

It is obvious the relationship between rurality, racial resentment, and political self-identification is complicated. Rural residents do report higher racial resentment, but this effect appears to be driven almost entirely by the fact that the rural residents in my sample were significantly more likely to identify as conservatives, and as my analyses show, conservatism is strongly positively related to racial resentment. This same trend continues when predicting egalitarian attitudes. Both Cramer (2016) and Hochschild (2016) explain the grievances rural residents espouse, yet in trying to understand these grievances miss the ubiquitous forces of class characteristics and conservative political identification on their formation of these grievances. As my research shows, these variables far outweigh area of residence.

As the results from my quantitative analysis have shown, status insufficiency does not fully explain White rural communities' racial resentment and egalitarian attitudes. Though initially statistically significant, it is the addition of demographic and political ideology variables that are more important than rurality. Of particular importance is educational attainment, having never been married, and political self-identification as

either a liberal or a conservative. Additionally, in different stages of my analysis income and employment variables gain and lose significance. Rather than an operationalization of status, the statistically significant demographic variables from my quantitative analysis point more towards the operationalization of socioeconomic status, emphasizing social class more than social status.

Across all quantitative models I have presented, political self-identification is consistent in its statistical significance. By concentrating on area of residence, the results from my analysis is evidence of a larger phenomenon that Bill Bishop explains in *The Big Sort* (2008). Over the past three decades Americans have been segregating themselves into communities of “lifestyle choices” that not only includes income, education and race, but also political opinion. As Lauren Howe (2014) from the non-profit Civil Politics explains, “geography [has become] a better predictor of political opinions than age, gender, occupation, or even religion.” In fact, political scientists Larry Bartels and Christopher Achen (2016:214) argue that group identity is “more scientifically accurate and politically realistic foundation for democratic theory.” The ANES is an inherently political survey administered during the run-up to the national presidential election. Presumably there is some degree of priming that occurs while answering political questions, effectively activating political relevant group identities that could explain the political self-identification variables consistent significance in my results.

As hypothesis three confirms, there is a statistically significant inverse relationship between racial resentment and egalitarianism. While this result may seem obvious, it also provides some degree of agreement with Scheler’s ([1915] 1994) and

Nietzsche's ([1887] 2013) conception of resentment as a reactive force that devalues others. As I have argued above, it does not stretch the imagination too far to understand modern political ideologies as introductory paths of resentment. During times of economic and technological change, individuals whom have fared worse are looking for reasons, which inevitably opens the door for blame. From this perspective we can view the adoption of political ideologies as a form of coping mechanism, one that gives meaning in an advanced capitalist society that, as Eagleton (1991) explains "oscillates between meaning and no meaning."

Results from my analyses emphasize the magnitude of influence political self-identification has when examining racial resentment and egalitarian attitudes. My research points to a number of areas for future research that include, the importance of emotions in the adoption of political ideologies, the detrimental societal effects of economic disruption on local communities and a better operationalization of social status that can be used in large survey instruments. The use of the American National Election Survey poses a possible limitation when measuring the attitudes and opinions of the American electorate. The undesirable effect of priming political group identities is detrimental to quantitative analysis and thus generalization.

More attention must be paid to the changing values that coincide with technological and economic disruption. Political ideologies use emotions, such as resentment, to stoke division among the American electorate. To do this they use power and status based appeals. Communities that are in economic transition brought on by technological disruptions via globalization are prime areas for such appeals. These appeals usually concentrate on grievances that target one community at the expense of

another. Many rural areas are suffering from a sense of despair, a key ingredient in the rise of all-cause mortality as highlighted by Case and Deaton (2015). Accompanying this disturbing phenomena is an overwhelming sense of pessimism, one that borders on the nihilistic. As I have shown, resentment towards others counters egalitarian attitudes that are important to a well-functioning and diverse democracy. More research is needed to understand how status insufficiency and class conflict effects values because ultimately we must share some values of what the future of America looks like and can then elect leaders who share those values and visions.

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## Appendix A: Questionnaire Items Assessing Egalitarian Attitudes and Racial Resentment<sup>2</sup>

Egalitarianism: *How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?*

1. *'Our society should do whatever is necessary to make sure that everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed.'*
2. *'We have gone too far in pushing equal rights in this country.'* \*
3. *'One of the big problems in this country is that we don't give everyone an equal chance.'*
4. *'This country would be better off if we worried less about how equal people are.'* \*
5. *'It is not really that big a problem if some people have more of a chance in life than others.'* \*
6. *'If people were treated more equally in this country we would have many fewer problems.'*

Racial Resentment: *How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?*

1. *'Irish, Italians, Jewish and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors.'*
2. *'Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class.'* \*
3. *'Over the past few years, blacks have gotten less than they deserve.'* \*
4. *'It's really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if blacks would only try harder they could be just as well off as whites.'*

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<sup>2</sup> \*question responses have been reverse-coded

Appendix B: Bivariate Correlation Martix

Pearson Correlation Coefficients, N = 573																					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
(1) Rural	1																				
(2) Egalitarianism	0.04	1																			
(3) Racial resentment	.09*	-.5***	1																		
(4) Age	0.05	-.11**	.070†	1																	
(5) First quintile	0.04	.17***	-0.02	-0.04	1																
(6) Second quintile	.07†	-0.05	.08†	0.03	-.17***	1															
(7) Third quintile	0.06	-0.04	.09*	0.03	-.17***	-.20***	1														
(8) Fourth quintile	0.03	0.01	-0.04	0	-.24***	-.23***	-.27***	1													
(9) Sex	-0.02	-0.04	-0.02	-0.02	-.08†	-0.04	0.01	-0.03	1												
(10) Married	0.02	-.12**	.10*	.17***	-.34***	-.11*	0	.10*	0.04	1											
(11) Never married	-0.02	.09***	-.09***	-.49***	.21***	0.01	0.01	-0.02	.08*	-.59***	1										
(12) Less than HS	.13**	.07†	-0.04	0.04	.18***	0.07	-0.05	-0.01	-0.02	-0.01	0.03	1									
(13) HS diploma	0.04	0	.17***	0.02	.09*	.12**	0.02	0.04	0	-.10*	0.06	-.14***	1								
(14) Post HS, No bach	.12**	0.01	.10*	-.13**	0.02	-0.05	0.04	0.03	-.15***	-0.01	.08†	-.16***	-.37***	1							
(15) Bachelors	-.15***	-.07†	-.08†	0.03	-.10*	-0.01	0.02	-0.02	0.06	0	-0.04	-.14***	-.33***	-.38***	1						
(16) Employed	-0.01	-0.05	-0.01	-.41***	-.15***	-.09*	-.09*	0.03	.14***	0.01	.10†	-.12*	-.15***	.13**	-0.03	1					
(17) Unemployed	0.04	.10*	-.08†	-0.04	.08†	0.04	0.02	-0.03	.09*	-.14**	.09*	0.03	-0.04	0.05	-.22***	1					
(18) Liberal	-0.05	.38***	-.40***	-0.03	.08†	0.06	-.08†	-0.05	0.03	-.12**	.16***	.07†	0.01	-.12**	0.01	0	.11**	1			
(19) Conservative	-0.01	-.39***	.30***	.12**	-.07	-0.06	0.05	-0.04	0.07	.08†	-.09*	-.09*	-0.09*	0.02	.09*	-0.06	-0.04	-.54***	1		
(20) Religion important	.09*	-.10*	.11**	.12*	-0.01	0.04	-0.01	0.02	-.18***	.12**	-.13**	0.01	-0.04	.08*	-0.02	-.08†	-0.01	-.26***	.24***	1	
(21) Attend religious services	0.02	-.10*	0.02	.09*	-0.06	-0.06	-0.01	0	-.12*	.10*	-.12*	-.08*	-.07†	.09*	-0.01	-0.02	-0.06	-.17***	.16***	-.59***	1

p<.1† p<.05\* p<.01\*\* p<.001\*\*\*