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The Dangerous Effect of Entitlement on White Nationalist Ideology

Kara Elizabeth Harris
DePaul University, kara.harri3@gmail.com

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The Dangerous Effect of Entitlement on White Nationalist Ideology

A Dissertation
Presented in
Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

By
Kara Elizabeth Harris
November 2023

Department of Psychology
College of Science and Health
DePaul University
Chicago Illinois
Dissertation Committee

Christine Reyna, PhD, Chair
Verena Graupmann, PhD
Yan Li, PhD
Geoff Durso, PhD
Erik Tillman, PhD
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Vienna waited for me.
Bibliography

The author was born in Detroit, Michigan on September 14, 1995 to parents Stanley and Carolyn Harris, and sister Bria. She graduated from Union Academy in 2013. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and minor in Communications from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro in Greensboro, North Carolina in 2017. In 2019, she received her Master of Arts degree in Psychological Science from DePaul University in Chicago, Illinois. Currently she works as a government contractor for the Department of Homeland Security and Department of Defense. After graduating from the doctoral program, she will pursue tenure track academic professor positions.
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Abstract

Within the past few years, White nationalism has been on the rise due to societal changes and feelings of uncertainty for White Americans' perceptions of their racial group’s future. As a result, many have speculated what may be a factor in this rise. Previously it has been found that having a high White identity is associated with White nationalist ideologies. However, White identity may not be enough to drive White nationalist ideologies and the violence that can follow. Feelings of racial entitlement towards status, preferential treatment, and resources may contribute to White nationalist ideologies based on beliefs of racial superiority and deservedness over other groups. Furthermore, when expectations associated with their racial identity are not met, extreme violence may occur to “right” the “wrong” against their racial group and identity. Across three separate studies, this dissertation explored how racial entitlement influences White identity which can contribute to White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence. This investigation found that racial identity, racial entitlement, White nationalist ideologies, and intergroup violence moderately related to one another (Hypothesis I). Furthermore, findings suggest that racial entitlement was inconsistent in strengthening the relationship between racial identity and White nationalist ideologies (Hypothesis II). However racial identity and racial entitlement also worked independently of one another in the relation of endorsement of White nationalist ideologies. Finally, racial entitlement was found to partially but significantly account for White nationalist ideology’s relation to intergroup violence (Hypothesis III). Theoretical implications and avenues for future research are discussed.

Keywords: entitlement, identity, White nationalism, extremism, intergroup violence, intergroup relations
The Dangerous Effect of Entitlement on White Nationalist Ideology

On January 6th, 2021 at our nation’s capital, the world witnessed a dangerous display of political extremism and ethnocentric ideologies that have been on the rise among White Americans, particularly White male conservatives in recent years (Fernando, 2021; Reyna et al., 2022a). The insurrection was enacted by people and groups who shared White nationalist ideologies that are critical of, fearful towards, and threatened by the changing cultural and demographic landscape of the United States (Fernando, 2021; Reyna et al., 2022a; Southern Poverty Law Center, 2021). These groups present at the insurrection displayed both fear of change and entitlement for society to stay the same.

Though many participating in the insurrection were part of White nationalist and extremist groups, this was not strictly a White nationalist issue. A recent study by Reyna et al. (2022b) found some White Americans long for America’s homogenous racial past and the prior structure and values of the United States (Reyna et al., 2022b). This insinuates that the resistance towards further societal change and longing for the past is not strictly an association with White nationalism. Even though the insurrection was a surprise for some, it was just a matter of time for others as a consequence to change (Jones et al., 2015; Reyna et al., 2022b).

The electoral victory of Joe Biden over Donald Trump was seen as intolerable for the insurrectionists, in part based on the belief in Trump’s election victory despite the reported loss, and thereby Trump’s deservedness to stay in power (Fernando, 2021; Miller et al., 2021). False claims of election fraud from the Trump administration, Republican congresspersons, and conservative media led to a widespread belief among conservatives that Democrats “stole” the election (Miller et al., 2021). Roughly 70% of Republicans believed that the election was illegitimate (Greenberg, 2022). For example, one Republican and avid Trump supporter stated,
“There’s millions and millions of Trump votes that were just thrown out” (Brooks et al., 2020). Federico et al. (2022) found that collective narcissism—or the demand for external validation based on the belief of the greatness of one’s ingroup, a concept linked to entitlement—was associated with attitudes towards the 2020 Presidential election. Specifically, those high in collective narcissism were more likely to believe that the election was illegitimate (Federico et al., 2022). Feelings of superiority and greatness are themes in White nationalism and given that many insurrectionists were associated with White nationalist groups it is no surprise that collective narcissism and entitlement may have been present during the attack on the capital (Diaz & Triesman, 2021; Federico et al., 2022).

Many scholars and researchers have begun to investigate which factors contributed to such a dark moment in American history (Fischer, 2021) in which the ideologies of racial extremism and, more specifically, White nationalism are on the rise (Diaz & Triesman, 2021). White nationalism is born of White supremacy. The Anti-Defamation League defines White nationalism as “a form of white supremacy that emphasizes defining a country or region by white racial identity and which seeks to promote the interests of whites exclusively, typically at the expense of people of other backgrounds” (Anti-Defamation League, 2018).

To investigate extreme manifestation of intergroup conflict like White nationalism, researchers have focused on group membership, prejudice, and discrimination. Specifically, for psychological researchers, constructs such as social identity (Reyna et al., 2022a; Tajfel et al., 1979), stereotypes (Haslam & Turner, 1995; Hilton & Von Hippel, 1996), intergroup contact (e.g., the contact hypothesis; Fiske, 2002; Pettigrew, 1998), social exclusion (Bryne, 2005; Pretus et al., 2018), and intergroup threat (Obaidi et al., 2022; Stephan et al., 2017) have been examined in the context of which factors affect intergroup conflict. These constructs contribute
to how an individual views their group identity and their perception of other groups. For instance, extremists who have great pride in their identity and feelings of superiority will look down upon other groups and be more likely to discriminate due to the stereotypes associated with the outgroup (Haslam & Turner, 1995). Despite prior research on extremism, much remains uncovered regarding what contributes to the development of these conflicts and what additional psychological factors need to be considered, particularly for White nationalism.

Psychological research on White nationalism has focused on how identity and feelings of threat can contribute to White nationalist ideologies (Caren et al., 2012; Obaidi et al., 2022; Reyna et al., 2022a). Identity tends to play a role in White nationalist racial group pride, though it does not necessarily contribute to the belief that one’s group is more deserving or better than other racial groups. Instead, White nationalist racial group pride is a combination of identity with a sense of deservedness and entitlement that can exacerbate feelings of threat and injustice (Reyna et al., 2022a). Entitlement is associated with a grandiose ideology of a superior self and group, which reinforces the sense of deservedness for better resources and opportunities (Federico et al., 2022; Golec de Zavlala, 2009; 2016). If an individual or group feels they have been denied what they believe they deserve, feelings of anger, aggression, and retribution can emerge to “fix” the injustice (Kunst & Obaibi, 2020; Redford & Ratliff, 2018). Entitlement has received less attention in intergroup relations research relative to other domains of psychology. I argue that this has limited our understanding of intergroup relations, and the relationship that entitlement may have with psychological and social variables that lead to more extremist actions. The damaging consequences of individuals and groups that believe something is owed to them is
evident in events such as the January 6th insurrection and racial extremist violence such as the mass shooting that targeted Black Americans in Buffalo, New York1 (Thompson, 2023).

Given this research gap, this dissertation will focus on entitlement’s relation to extremism, with a primary focus on entitlement's influence on identity in White individuals leading to White nationalist ideologies. The intended purpose of this dissertation is to understand how entitlement may take a more dangerous and extreme form in intergroup conflict. Through a quantitative methodological framework, this dissertation will examine what the theoretical implications are when entitlement interacts with identity and how this combination may contribute to racial extremism. To understand entitlement’s association with racial extremism, this introduction will be broken up into three parts. First, I will discuss racial identity and how it relates to White nationalism and intergroup violence and possible limitations in prior literature. Next, I will discuss prior literature on extremism to understand possible motivations and factors that relate to White nationalist ideology, as well as explore White nationalism’s relation to intergroup violence. Lastly, I will discuss the theoretical framework of entitlement and argue why entitlement is important to consider in racial extremism research.

Part I: Identity and Whiteness

To understand White racial extremism, one must first understand the power of racial identity. Feelings of White superiority are linked to racial extremism and can come about from a high sense of deservedness and high racial identity and pride (Endevelt et al., 2021; Reyna et al., 2022a). For White nationalists, identity is essential to their group and self-concept; it allows

1 This shooting occurred at a grocery store in Buffalo, New York, where the gunman purposely targeted Black folks. This gunman wrote racial epithets on his weapons and made internet posts prior to committing the act.
them to have a sense of belonging and great pride within their group (Berlet & Vysotsky, 2006; Reyna et al., 2022a).

Identity refers to how a person thinks of themselves and can represent the relationship between an individual and the world around them (Chryssochoou, 2003). Identity is also a phenomenon in which actions and behaviors can originate from an individual's social thinking regarding the self or their group (Chryssochoou, 2003; Tajfel et al., 1979). We can gain an identity through different aspects of our lives such as family, friends, and careers (Zarate et al., 2020). Identity can also develop from our membership in various social or demographic groups, which refers to “an individual’s awareness of belonging to a certain group and their psychological attachment” (Mcclain & Stewart, 1998). Group identities can create a division of “we” and “us” versus “them” (Chryssochoou, 2003; Tajfel & Turner.,1979). This division can produce a feeling of protection for one’s group, in which they may start to provide more access to resources and material benefits particularly for their ingroup; as well as strive for stability in times of change or uncertainty, and protection from outside threats (see Zarate et al., 2019).

Having a sense of group membership and strong identities offers many social benefits, such as a boost in positive feelings for their ingroup (Otten & Moskowitz, 2000), a deeper sense of connection with other group members (Aron et al., 2005), and an integration of trust and loyalty for the group and its members (Brewer, 1999; Glaeser et al., 2000). Strong group identities can also promote resilience to threat (Wong et al., 2003), self-esteem (Phinney & Chavira, 1992; Rowley et al., 1998), and a sense of stability (Hogg, 2014). For White Americans who value their White identity, psychological benefits include an increase in belonging racially and nationally (De Koster & Houtman, 2008; Doosje et al., 2002; Hartzell, 2020).
People who receive social and psychological benefits from strong group identities express ingroup favoritism, in which opportunities and resources are allocated more towards their ingroup (Brown & Humphreys, 2002). When individuals allocate limited funds, resources, and opportunities to their ingroup, this may involve taking away these opportunities and resources from outgroup members (Brown & Humphreys, 2002). However, ingroup favoritism does not automatically mean that it is detrimental to those of the outgroup. However, when it does, outgroup derogation can include hostility, prejudices, discrimination and possibly intergroup violence (Brewer, 2002; Golec de Zavlala et al., 2012). Ingroup favoritism stems from a strong sense of group identity, needs for group preservation, and a sense of deservedness (Hogg, 2014; Wong et al., 2003). This sense of deservedness and entitlement can come from believing your ingroup has more to offer, are morally better than other groups, and are possibly superior to the outgroup (Panofsky et al., 2021; Rotella & Richeson, 2013).

Doosje and colleagues (2010) found that high group identification improves the overall group dynamic and interactions a group may have. Specifically, those who have high group identity were more committed to the group even when social changes to their status occurred, versus those with low group identity, whose group identification was only contingent upon their group’s status in the hierarchy (Doosje et al., 2010). During the civil rights movement Whites who identified highly with their group and displayed ingroup favoritism were more committed to keeping themselves separate from Black Americans, in addition to providing their White only spaces with better tools, resources, and opportunities at the expense of Black Americans (Bonilla-Silvia et al., 2006).
White Identity in America

For White folks in America, a sense of collective racial identity has been difficult to connect to and identify with culturally, in comparison to racial/ethnic minorities in America (Lewis, 2004). This is in part due to many White Americans not understanding what their Whiteness means for themselves and their social identity (Lewis, 2004; Knowles et al., 2014). Helms (2017) defined Whiteness as “the overt and subliminal socialization processes and practices, power structures, laws, privileges, and life experiences that favor the White racial group over all others” (p. 718). According to the American National Election Studies (ANES) survey about 30-40 % of Whites in America identify with their Whiteness (Illing, 2019); even so, of this percentage only 6% had strong indicators related to White nationalist ideologies. These individuals strongly identified with White identity, believed in White solidarity, and felt Whites are victims of discrimination (Hawley, 2018). This suggests that only having a high White identity may not equate to holding extremist ideologies, but this concept will be explored in the dissertation later.

In American society, those who benefit from Whiteness have privileges and opportunities associated with their White identity, such as being provided better healthcare (Hobbs, 2018), getting more job promotions and leadership roles (McIntosh, 1990), and having reduced sentences for crimes, compared to minorities who commit the same crime (Liu, 2017). Many of these privileges and standards are in place systemically, and as a result it upholds White supremacy in America. As a consequence, a great deal of White folks are afraid that by identifying with their racial identity and Whiteness others will accuse them of supporting White supremacy (Lewis, 2004).
Thus, for White Americans, having a strong connection to their identity can create feelings of ambivalence due to the implications of what a positive racial identity means. Theories about White identity have suggested that having a positive White identity is dependent on acknowledging and fighting against racism (Helms, 1995; 1997; Hardiman, 1982). However, racism is a concept that is difficult to discuss, making it difficult for White people to move towards a positive White identity. Even so, research has found racial socialization to be beneficial in developing a White person's racial identity, similar to racial minorities. For example, Zucker and colleagues (2018) examined racial socialization among White parents. They found that parents who had racial biases were less likely to discuss race and racism with their child, whereas parents with less racial bias were more likely to engage in discussions on race with their child. These results suggest that discussion of race is associated with Whites developing a positive racial identity.

One of the more well-known models to explore White identity was suggested by Helms (1995), who posits that White identity may be rooted in the acknowledgement and denial of racism, in which the more an individual denies that racism is an issue the further they move away from developing a positive White identity (Hardiman, 1982; Helms, 1995;1997; Howard, 2004). That said, Helms believed for a White person to develop a positive identity they must overcome their denial of racism and accept their Whiteness and the cultural implications of what it means to be White in America. Within the model, there are six stages: contact, disintegration, reintegration, pseudo-independence, immersion/emersion, and autonomy. Within the model to create a positive White identity White people must move past feelings of guilt and uncomfortability that comes with recognizing racism in the Reintegration phase. This phase appears to be the most integral, since the White individual will move past this phase into Pseudo-
Independence, in which they start to challenge White supremacy. However, if a White individual in the reintegration phase cannot get over feeling guilty, they may start to develop resentment, and feelings of racial superiority will occur. This could lead to a negative White identity and possibly a racial extremist ideology. Helm’s model proposes that developing a negative or positive White identity is dependent entirely on an individual’s anti-racism, suggesting that this model was developed in the context of race relations (vs. purely a model of White identity).

Helms’ model is not the only model that suggests White identity is dependent on racism. Models proposed by Hardiman (1982) and Howard (2004), all suggested that to achieve a positive White identity the White individuals must acknowledge and fight against racism. Though these models helped shape our understanding of White identity, each fails to mention what factors may lead into more toxic forms of White identity aside from denial of racism. In particular, feelings of entitlement have been linked to how an individual believes they deserve privileges, respect, or preferential treatment related to their identity (Campbell et al., 2004; Classeen, 2016; Golec de Zavlala, 2009).

Thus, I propose that entitlement may be a factor in each stage Helms proposed. For instance, the final phase–autonomy–refers to someone feeling comfortable with their White identity; which may suggest it manifests as an individual with high identity, but low feelings of entitlement. This can manifest as an individual perceiving privilege but rejecting racism. Contrariwise, a White individual who has difficulty moving past the reintegration phase, could lead them towards a “toxic” form of White identity and possibly racial extremist ideology, which suggest it can manifest as an individual with both high identity and high feelings of entitlement. Furthermore, someone with low identity and low entitlement, may dissociate from their White
identity altogether. I propose that the connection between identity and entitlement is one major aspect missing from these models.

Another critique of these models is that they fail to recognize the desire that White people have for a positive identity similar to how racial minorities need to feel positively about their groups. Instead, these models focus on White people acknowledging and rejecting racism. Often, many recruitment narratives for White nationalism emphasize how society wants Whites to be "ashamed of their Whiteness" (Stormfront, 2017). For example, one user on the White nationalist forum Stromfront states “it was always kind of subtly assumed that we should feel some sort of guilt or even shame about not only our upper middle-class family, but even our whiteness” (Stormfront, 2017). Expecting a group to embrace shame as part of their group identity can backfire and negatively affect their identity development. The need to be proud of one's identity without it becoming toxic needs to be addressed.

The need for a “healthy” White identity is pertinent, and the suggestion that White identity contributes to White nationalism has made it difficult for White Americans to identify with their Whiteness and what it means to be White in a healthy and beneficial manner. However, this dissertation is arguing that having a high White identity does not equate to White nationalist ideologies; instead, I propose that high White identity coupled with feelings of deservedness and entitlement will lead to more detrimental manifestations of White identity such as White nationalism. By considering the moderating role of entitlement, we can examine what a “healthy” White identity means and how to develop one.

**The Role of Group Identity on Extremism**

Prior literature has related White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence to resistance to change (Armenta, 2022; Reyna et al., 2022a), feelings of threat (Ellemers et al.,
2002; Kulig et al., 2021), nostalgia (Reyna et al., 2022b), and high White identity (Moffitt & Rogers, 2022). Each of these factors have been shown to relate to extremist ideologies among Whites. However, in racial extremism we see that group identity is central to the development of White nationalism and negative intergroup relations.

It is important to understand how identity and threat can play a detrimental role in racial extremism. Intergroup comparisons may create context towards a group’s current social position and can create either a sense of security or threat (Ellemers et al., 2002). Through feelings of instability or threat an individual who has high group identity will cling to their group membership (Hartzell, 2020) especially in the wake of societal change. By clinging on to one’s identity and group feelings of uncertainty can lower (Ellemers et al., 2002; Hartzell, 2020). Ellemers and colleagues (2002) suggested that groups who have high group commitment and are faced with a group threat may stick closely together in hopes of improving their status. Individuals with extremist views will seek out those with similar prejudices and ideologies (Caren et al., 2012; De Koster & Houtman, 2008). These groups that feel their status is threatened were more likely to express contempt towards the outgroup and seek to redress the situation with acts of collective actions (Ellemers et al., 2002). One such example is Stormfront, an online message board where White nationalists and those with extremist ideologies gather. Stormfront’s rhetoric has allowed for a communal space and a sense of belonging to those with similar ideologies when faced with uncertainty of their race's future (Hartzell, 2018;2020). The transition from uncertainty to extremism allows White nationalists to protect their racial identity and protect their group from societal status loss (Hoggs et al., 2013; Reyna et al., 2022a). With continued exchanges of one’s in-group, group membership begins to solidify the “we” narratives, as well as the “other” narrative for the outgroup; which can lead towards extremism associated
with a higher need to protect the ingroup from perceived threats of the outgroup or towards status loss and violations of identity (Bai & Federico, 2021; Gaudette et al., 2021).

Part II: Extremism and White Supremacy

The psychology of White racial extremism (i.e., White nationalism) is difficult to comprehend. At its core, White racial extremism seeks to uplift the White race, exclude minoritized groups, and create a white-centered community (Hartzell, 2020; National Alliance, 2020; Reyna et al., 2022a; Stormfront, 2013; White-power, n.d.). To understand racial extremism, it is also important to identify ways in which this ideology differs from other extremist and radicalized ideologies.

Status and Racial Extremism

In intergroup conflicts, especially extremism, the interactions are usually between members of the high-status group (e.g., White people) versus members of a low-status group (e.g., Black people; immigrants). The status of groups in society is determined by a host of factors: race, income, class, socioeconomic status, religion, gender, sex, sexual orientation, etc. (Fiske et al., 2016; Weber, 2019). Groups that are considered low status, such as women, racial/ethnic minorities, and LGBTQ folks, often hold less societal power (Fiske et al., 2016), are seen as less competent (Lee & Friske, 2006; Lin et al., 2005), and are oppressed by those within high-status groups (Weber, 2019). In contrast, when a group or group member holds high status, they often benefit from a privileged position that provides them with preferential treatment and resources (e.g., Whites, wealthy, men, heterosexuals; Weber, 2019).

Those holding a privileged or powerful position (e.g., White Americans) will often have an expectation for respect (Blader et al., 2016). When status or an expectation is threatened, this can create insecurity and uncertainty for their future (Hogg et al., 2013). For high-status group
members, any perception of instability to the status quo can evoke fear and be seen as a violation (Hogg et al., 2013). That fear can urge individuals to cling to their identity and increase feelings of prejudice and threat towards the outgroup (Golec de Zavala et al., 2012), as shown in racial extremism (Reyna et al., 2022a).

White nationalist ideology claims that the White race is deserving of preferential treatment, resources, and status due to beliefs of cultural and genetic superiority (Berlet & Vysotsky, 2006; Reyna et al., 2022a; Toliver, 2017). This belief in superiority associated with their identity facilitate “basking in reflected glory” (BIRGing), which acts as a method to alleviate negative feelings associated with failure and shame, as well as assist in identifying with the success of others and the group, and overall increases one’s self-esteem (Cialdini et al., 1976; Lee, 1985; Miller, 2009). It can distort a group's perception of themselves and enhance their feelings of superiority over other groups (Rotella & Richeson, 2013). For BIRGing in a racial context, portrayals of White people as exceptionally gifted and successful compared to other minoritized groups is a powerful strategy for maintaining high group identity. When one identifies with their group’s successes and talents a heightened sense of deservedness, superiority, and group pride can occur, along with stronger attachments to the group (Dalakas et al., 2004; Bernache-Assollant et al., 2007; Cialdini et al., 1976).

White nationalists who feel their identity and high status have been violated often have a victim narrative framed as originating from perceived injustices (e.g., Berbrier, 2000; Patriot Front, 2020). Victimhood can be a powerful motivator for individuals, as suggested by Reyna and colleagues (2022a) who explored the psychology of White nationalism. The theoretical paper suggested that though White nationalists feel superior due to their racial identity, feelings of victimhood can occur from feelings of lost status and power that demographic and cultural
changes in America create (Reyna et al., 2022a). The feelings of victimhood coupled with strong identity can result in high-status groups striving to protect their status from demographic shifts and feelings of uncertainty.

**White Nationalism and Feelings of Uncertainty**

Changes in demographic trends, minority rights movements, and political power in the United States have led Whites with nationalist ideologies to interpret these changes as intergroup competition between Whites and marginalized groups for resources and societal dominance (Hartzell, 2020; Stormfront, 2013). Extremism and radicalization have historically come about as a reaction to immigration, war, and social and economic instability (Hogg et al., 2013; Hogg, 2014). When societal instability is prevalent, feelings of uncertainty emerge which can lead to resistance to change and extremism (Hogg et al., 2013). Multiple psychological factors that drive individuals to participate in extremism have been identified, such as restoring personal significance—the desire to matter and have meaning, after experiencing a failure or social exclusion (see also, Significance Quest Theory, Jasko et al., 2020; Kruglanski et al., 2014; 2018; 2022). Factors that can contribute most to extremism are perceived injustice and grievance (Allan et al., 2015; Van den Bos, 2018), and, in turn, those of an outgroup are blamed for unwanted change or perceived suffering of their ingroup (Cheung et al., 2017; Obaidi et al., 2022; Reyna et al., 2022a).

Societal and status instability will often bring socio-political and ideological extremism. For instance, in the 1950s the United States and parts of western Europe had demographic changes that produced uncertainty for the majority group and concern of what it means to be “White”. During this time, extremist groups started to emerge/re-emerge such as the Ku Klux Klan in America and the British National Party in the United Kingdom (Hogg et al., 2013). Hogg
and colleagues (2013) suggest that uncertainty linked to extremism is in part due to social comparison theory, which refers to how an individual perceives their own social and personal worth in comparison to others. Hogg et al. (2013) state that when an individual feels uncertain about their environment and their perceptions and attitudes of the world around them, they will likely seek out others with a similar worldview to make comparisons that confirm the validity of their attitudes (Hogg et al., 2013).

**Demographic Change and Fear of the “Great Replacement”**

White nationalists hold the belief that Whites have ownership over the U.S., thus their status and identity is deserving of privilege and respect (National Alliance, 2020). This belief in ownership is based on the presumption that the U.S was inherently a White nation and Whites contributed the most in building the country (Hage, 2012; Patriot Front, 2020). In America, Whites are seen as “native” to the United States, while racial minorities, even indigenous Americans are seen as non-native. This contributes to the assumption that American identity is equivalent to White identity (Devos & Banaji, 2005; Painter, 2020). Nativism is often related to racism towards immigrants, especially Latino immigrants; and is associated with racism and resistance towards demographic shifts due to non-White immigrants (Huber et al., 2008; Lippard, 2011; Sanchez, 1997). Many hold the belief that without a White majority the United States will not prosper (Mitchell, 2020; Obaidi et al., 2022). About 46% of White Americans claim a majority non-White population will weaken American culture and values (Mitchell, 2020).

Cultural inertia theory (CIT) provides an explanation for why people may react differently to changes in society and cultural norms. CIT suggests that a culture met with unwelcome change will oppose said change in an equal and opposite manner (Zárate et al.,
High-status groups (e.g., White culture) often prefer other groups to assimilate to their majority group’s culture (Verkuyten, 2005). This preference allows majority groups to resist potential societal change by maintaining their dominant culture. The preference of assimilation can derive from the belief that one’s ingroup’s culture is more “civilized” or “superior” in comparison to the outgroup (Saini, 2019).

Current demographic shifts have made White nationalists hyper-aware of possible societal and status shifts, which fuels their opposition to multiculturalism in America. For instance, demographic projections suggest that Whites will no longer be the majority group in America by 2045 (Frey, 2022). This prediction is frightening to White nationalists and has created the existential threat of the “Great Replacement” or “White Genocide,” which refers to the belief that Whites are being wiped out on account of immigration, low birth rates, and decline of familial traditions (Obaidi et al., 2022). The “Great Replacement” and “White Genocide” has been a fear for many White nationalists in America (Fight White Genocide, 2017; Obaidi et al., 2022; Stormfront, 2013). However, the fear of replacement is not strictly American: in parts of Europe, far-right movements are growing on account of immigration. For example, the European White-nativist movement “Generation Identity” has advocated, protested, and at times committed violent acts to ensure an ethnically homogenous Europe.

Cultural shifts have resulted in animosity, outrage, and violent extremism towards racial minorities in Europe and America (Obaidi et al., 2022; Patriot Front, 2020). Violent extremism often occurs when an individual or group has a grievance rooted in perceived threats or injustice towards themselves or their group (Allan et al., 2015).
**Moral Outrage**

One motivator of violence in extremist groups can be feelings of moral outrage. For example, a study conducted by Obaidi and colleagues (2022) examined how the “Great Replacement” theory has led Whites towards violent extremism and islamophobia. They found that a participant’s fear of replacement of one’s groups contributed to more intergroup hostility, and support for violence. Additionally, when one’s group perceived replacement, it led to more islamophobia, in comparison to the controlled condition. Interestingly, each result was mediated by symbolic threat, suggesting that symbolic threat is a strong predictor of hostility.

The study by Obaidi and colleagues (2022) is an example of how perceived threats towards the White ingroup can result in violent extremism. Uncertainty, fear, and a need to rectify the perceived violation towards one’s group or status can enact a need to protect said group. Furthermore, symbolic threat being a main predictor of hostility tells us that morals and values need to be explored to understand underlying predictors of intergroup violence and extremism. Interestingly, coinciding with, and possibly driving, retribution and intergroup violence is the other outcome of unfulfilled entitlement: moral outrage.

Moral outrage is defined as anger that is brought on by a violation to one's moral standards, which is often associated with justice and fairness (Montada & Schneider, 1989). Furthermore, moral outrage is centered on individuals believing they have a moral stake in an issue, and how deep they believe the issue affects them (Batson et al., 2007; Miller, 2001; 2009; Miller et al., 2011). Moral outrage is an emotional reaction to witnessing or perceiving a moral transgression (Darley et al., 2003). When individuals feel moral outrage based on perceived injustice, they will act on their outrage whether through social protest, aggressive behavior, or other actions (Bastian et al., 2013; Miller, 2009; Miller et al., 2011). Several political protests,
for example, have led to violent outcomes due to individuals and groups believing it is their moral duty and right to stop an ‘injustice’ that is affecting them through any means necessary.

Individuals can also choose not to act on their outrage. This action or lack of action depends on the individual’s feelings of entitlement to act and how closely they relate to their identity (Miller, 2009). If an individual is directly or perceived to be directly affected by an issue or concern pertaining to their morals and group, they are more likely to actively exhibit outrage (Miller, 2009). When an individual chooses to act on their moral outrage through violent means they may do so as an act of retributive justice. A motivator of White nationalists committing violent extremism is retributive justice for feelings of violated entitlement, and acts as a means to protect their ingroup and identity.

**White nationalism and Intergroup Violence**

White nationalism is frequently associated with violence towards racial/ethnic or religious outgroups. Incidences, like Charlottesville \(^2\) (Peter & Besley, 2017), Buffalo grocery shooting (Thompson, 2023), Charleston church shooting \(^3\) (Momodu, 2023), and the Greensboro Massacre \(^4\) (Boger et al., n.d.) are all examples of how far-right ideology can lead to violent extremism (Borum, 2011a; 2011b; Kruglanski et al., 2018). However, individuals who have White nationalist ideologies may not always commit acts of violent extremism towards racial/ethnic minorities, since radicalization and extremism do not always lead to violence, but rather opposition to the status quo and unwanted social changes (Bartlet & Miller, 2012).

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\(^2\) A ‘Unite the Right’ rally took place, which included white supremacists, neo-Nazis, white nationalists, neo-Confederates and militias carrying semi-automatic weapons.

\(^3\) White Supremacist Dylann Roof killed nine African Americans at a church in Charleston, South Carolina.

\(^4\) The Ku Klux Klan and American Nazi Party members attacked and killed five protesters at the “Death to the Klan” rally in Greensboro, North Carolina.
Different non-violent methods of racial extremism might include protest (Kassimeris & Jackson, 2015), discrimination (Shanaah, 2022), or recruitment (Robinson & Whittaker, 2020).

Intergroup violence refers to hostile and violent acts committed between groups. For high status groups, especially White Americans, when a violation against the group or status quo is perceived as undeserving, a reaction is to lessen the violation in some way by restoring justice through retributive means for one’s ingroup and “righting a wrong” (Goode & Smith, 2016; Okimoto & Wenzel, 2008; Wenzel, 2000). Retributive notions of justice is the desire to see justice occur after a transgression and can be related to trying to maintain status/power. Specifically, retributive justice can be a driver towards restoring the power and status after a transgression occurs. This can consist of taking power/ status away from the perceived offender and reasserting the power/ status of one’s self and community (Wenzel et al., 2008). This form of justice usually involves punishment, pain, and violence (Okimoto & Wenzel, 2008; Wenzel et al., 2008). In contrast, a restorative notion of justice focuses on repairing and rebuilding any harm done by the offender and is usually non-violent (Okimoto & Wenzel, 2008; Wenzel et al., 2008). Though both retributive and restorative justice are important to consider in intergroup relations, retributive justice usually is the hallmark of violent extremism. Methods for retributive justice typically occur through violent actions, harmful policies, discrimination, and punishment (Durrheim et al., 2011; Okimoto & Wenzel, 2008). For instance, Bastian and colleagues (2013) found that moral outrage is related to severity of punishment given after a crime is committed. Those who had moral outrage were more likely to try and match the severity of the punishment with the severity of the crime (Bastian et al., 2013).

Intergroup violence can be a byproduct of moral outrage and the need for retributive notions of justice when an individual or group feels a violation has occurred (Iqbal & Bilali,
2018; Okimoto & Wenzel, 2008). For instance, when a violation of status occurs to White nationalists who view their racial group as deserving of respect and power, they may react with violent extremism as a form of retributive justice, which may in part stem from feelings of deservedness and entitlement.

**Part III: Group Entitlement: The Missing Piece of the Puzzle**

*Entitlement* has not received a lot of attention from many social psychologists, particularly in an intergroup and extremist context (however, see Collective Narcissism; Golec de Zavala, 2009; 2016). Instead, most research that examines entitlement in psychology focuses on an individual's sense of deprivation, exclusion, and narcissism (Feather, 2015; Reidy et al., 2008). For each of these important constructs, entitlement can act as an undercurrent and has steadily been on the rise in American society (Twenge et al., 2008).

**The History of Entitlement**

*Entitlement* is the belief that one is deserving of privileges and special treatment, regardless of whether it is earned (Campbell et al., 2004). Historically, entitlement has been studied in clinical psychology by examining how entitlement develops and the associated traits (e.g., grandiose sense of self) that tend to follow. This research suggests that the development of entitlement may derive from an upbringing in which children were brought up to feel more special or even superior to others (Bishop & Lane, 2002; Campbell et al., 2004). Through this upbringing, an unstable idealization of the self and others can develop (Bishop & Lane, 2002). Additionally, when the child feels that they are not loved enough, there appears an increase in demands for love, care, respect, and comfort, which can then result in actions to achieve a fulfillment in what is missing (Kris, 1976). This tends to occur when a child feels frustration towards the parents or helplessness towards their situation (Shabad, 1993). Thus, this belief of
entitlement can protect a person against feelings of powerlessness and helplessness. When the expectations to feel special and powerful are not met, pathological and psychological entitlement may develop (Campbell et al, 2004). Psychological entitlement is a personality trait characterized by pervasive feelings of deservingness, specialness, and exaggerated expectations (Campbell et al., 2004). There are different forms of entitlement that can present, and these depend on contexts and additional influences, such as narcissistic entitlement (Raskin & Terry, 1988), aggrieved entitlement (Silverman, 2020), group or collective entitlement (Classeen, 2016; Golec de Zavala, 2009), and the special manifestation of group entitlement relevant to this dissertation: Racial entitlement (Harris et al., in preparation).

Research on entitlement initially emerged empirically and theoretically from research on narcissism. Narcissism is exemplified by feelings of superiority over others, a grandiose sense of self, self-centeredness, and diminished empathy (e.g., Raskin & Hall, 1979; Raskin & Terry, 1988). Entitlement has been examined as a core driving factor in narcissism, in which those who are narcissistic and display aggressive behavior are linked to having high levels of entitlement (Ackerman & Donnellan, 2013; Miller et al., 2011). There is a strong association between entitlement and anger, impulsivity, and aggression. Rapists, domestic abusers, and criminals exhibit higher levels of entitlement (Archer & Thanzami, 2009; Bouffard, 2010; Collins, 2018; Reidy et al., 2008). This mindset of demandingness and anger affects the ability to empathize with the needs and rights of others, which can make an individual simultaneously cold and apathetic while also being more volatile and aggressive. Reidy and colleagues (2007) examined the link between violence and narcissism in relation to adaptive (e.g., self-sufficiency) and maladaptive (e.g., entitlement) forms of narcissism. They found that maladaptive forms of narcissism highly predicted general and extreme aggression. Though entitlement can derive from
narcissism, they are different constructs; narcissism is more self-oriented, whereas entitlement involves others and a sense of deservedness versus undeservedness (Rose & Anastasio, 2014). Entitlement may be one of the most problematic traits of narcissism due to its manifestations of aggression, impulsivity, and sense of retribution (Reidy et al. 2008).

Related to individual narcissism is a construct that has been related to group entitlement, known as collective narcissism. Collective narcissism refers to “an exaggerated, unrealistic belief in an ingroup’s greatness that demands constant external validation” and has been linked to nationalism and political attitudes (Federico et al., 2022; Golec de Zavala et al., 2019). Similar to entitlement, the exaggerated beliefs of greatness can lead to aggression if that belief is not recognized or is somehow violated (Golec de Zavala & Lantos, 2020). Furthermore, the exaggerated sense of “greatness” of their ingroup can affect feelings of deservedness for ingroup and outgroup attitudes (Golec de Zavala et al., 2011; 2013), such as with higher status groups believing they deserve more than those of lower status (Bagci et al., 2023).

**Group (Collective) Entitlement and Extremism**

Feelings of deservedness within groups has been a factor in resistance to demographic change, in which high status groups (e.g., White American) fear that the outgroup is taking more than they deserve (Beck, 2000). This is one manifestation of group entitlement, which refers to what group members believe their group deserves in comparison to other groups (Classeen, 2016; Endevelt et al., 2020; Federico et al., 2022; Golec de Zavala, 2009). Group entitlement literature has not received as much attention in intergroup relations research, and by placing more focus on it, researchers can better understand the complexity of what impacts intergroup dynamics. However, collective narcissism helps fill these gaps in the intergroup literature due to it having a component of group-based entitlement.
Although entitlement is a central theme of collective narcissism, there is a conceptual benefit in separating entitlement out from the other psychological aspects of collective narcissism—namely the exaggerated sense of greatness and need for constant validation. For example, some forms of group entitlement are legitimate (e.g., Black people being entitled to equal rights and reparations). Also, an exaggerated sense of greatness might not require external validation. Because collective narcissism is a multidimensional construct, it is hard to tease out the effects of entitlement vs. greatness vs. need for recognition because they are conflated in this construct. Although both entitlement and greatness are present in White nationalism, it is important to understand how each separately contributes to ideologies and outcomes. For instance, group entitlement can present itself when a group or group member believes they deserve achievements (e.g., jobs), power, or resources over other groups (Claassen, 2016; Endevelt et al., 2021), which can stem from feelings of superiority based on one’s group membership (Reyna et al., 2022; Saini, 2019). However, when a group is not given what they believe they deserve, ingroup members often exhibit increased levels of anger towards outgroups and their members, which can lead to acts of aggression (Classeen, 2016). An example of how unfulfilled deservedness is not the same as collective narcissism is the civil rights movement and other progressive movements, which could be characterized as people not getting something they deserve, but it doesn’t have a narcissistic bent to it. However, White nationalism looks much more like collective narcissism in that it is rooted in an exaggerated sense of (racial) greatness and illegitimate sense of deservedness. For instance, Golec de Zavala (2011) found that collective narcissism was linked to intergroup hostility.

For White Americans, and other high status-groups, intergroup hostility can often transpire after what they believe they are entitled to is not given. This is known as aggrieved
When this sense of violation occurs, feelings of threat, victimization, moral outrage, and perceived injustice can play a role in feelings of aggrievement (Durrheim et al., 2011; Kimmel, 2017; Silverman, 2020). Along with aggrievement, a sense of resentment may emerge when entitled individuals believe something is taken or will be taken from them unjustly. Feelings of aggrievement and resentment can be a component of collective narcissism, when a group's exaggerated sense of “greatness,” and their need for validation, are threatened (Federico et al., 2022; Golec de Zavala, 2019). If their need for validation is not met, collective narcissists tend to react with aggression and hostility towards the outgroup; however, a need for external validation is not as important in aggrieved entitlement (Golec de Zavala et al., 2012; 2016).

Aggrieved entitlement can also stem from perceived relative deprivation, which refers to viewing oneself or group as worse off than the norm or relative to other groups, which, in turn, can trigger feelings of injustice and anger (Smith et al., 2012). This can then affect intergroup attitudes, motivating group members to enact their own justice through collective action (Smith et al., 2012). In White nationalism, relative deprivation may correlate with feelings of victimization when a perceived violation towards the ingroup’s status occurred, contributing to extremist actions (Kunst & Obaibi, 2020). Kunst & Obaibi (2020) examined how relative deprivation is linked to extremism in status groups. They found that perceptions of relative deprivation commonly led to violent extremism, but how it manifested differed based on status. For low-status groups, violent extremism occurred in attempts to challenge the inequality in the status quo. In contrast, for high-status groups, violence was in defense of their status and privilege.
The development of entitlement among extremist groups can arise from feelings of uncertainty and perceived status loss and threat, which can be seen as a violation of one’s identity (Kimmel, 2017; Silverman, 2020). The entitlement felt from perceived status loss and threat from cultural change can be seen as unjust, especially to those of high-status groups who have an expectation for “greatness” based on prior exaggerated and false narratives (e.g., men are superior because they are more intelligent than women; Gillborn, 2005) associated with one’s group membership (Reyna et al., 2022a). The belief that “rightful” power is being stripped from one’s self or group has been a central talking point for radicalization among White nationalist (Obaidi et al. 2022) and can often have negative downstream consequences (Endevelt et al., 2020; Lange et al., 2019). Endevelt and colleagues (2020) proposed that group entitlement predicted lower support for human rights and stricter punishment for minoritized groups. Groups that often display feelings of deservedness and entitlement tend to develop harmful outgroup perceptions and aggressive tendencies in the name of retribution (Federico et al., 2022; Golec de Zavala, 2019). Investigating entitlement as a potential driver towards extremism and violence (retribution) allows researchers to focus on the different manifestations and development of perceived group deservedness, as opposed to shame, associated with one’s identity.

The relation to retribution, entitlement, and status can be seen in White nationalists’ need to protect their societal power. More severe cases of psychological entitlement are associated with the wish to humiliate and destroy others through retribution, which enhances a sense of power and mitigates underlying feelings of helplessness (Grey, 1987; Lerner, 1987). For instance, throughout history Whites who felt a group member or themselves were wronged by a Black individual retaliated by attacking not only the Black individual, but random Black folks and communities. For example, the Tulsa Massacre occurred because Whites in Tulsa felt Black
folks were not deserving of the thriving community of Black Wall Street and began burning
down businesses and homes as many Whites viewed it as a violation to the racial status quo
(Tulsa Library, n.d.). The example of Tulsa shows entitlement’s association with increased
motivations to seek and maintain status in America (Lange et al., 2019). Similarly, the British
National Party believed racial minorities were undeserving of similar patronage, and a threat to
their nation’s values, politics, and culture due to their “non-whiteness”. In racial extremism,
when “Whiteness” is associated with a nation, feelings of entitlement can affect how White
citizens treat other outgroups (Rhodes, 2011).

**Nationalistic Entitlement.**

Nationalism, the belief in superiority and unwavering devotion for one’s nation, is an
example of a group unifying to achieve ingroup goals when faced with threats from an outgroup
(Blank & Schmidt, 2003; Osborne et al., 2019). Nationalism should not be confused with
patriotism, which refers to love for one’s country while still being willing to critique the country
(however, see blind patriotism; Parker, 2010; Schatz et al., 1999). There is a high sense of
devotion and loyalty for one’s nation associated with nationalism, as well as feelings of
deservedness of goods and resources in comparison to other nations (Koch & Perreault, 2019).
An individual’s national identity may lead to prejudicial beliefs and actions against immigrants
when combined with deservedness (Martinovic & Verkuyten, 2013).

A shared history, bonds, and identity among citizens increases ingroup favoritism, in
which opportunities and resources are allocated more towards citizens as opposed to immigrants
(Brown & Humphreys, 2002; Sedikides et al., 2016; Smeekes et al., 2015). This may be due to
autochthony—the belief that entitlements, related rights, and ownership should be given to the
group that is the identified “first inhabitants” of a country (Martinovic & Verkuyten, 2013;
Smeekes & Verkuyten, 2015). Autochthony is related to nationalistic entitlement as seen in the argument “we were here first” that native citizens tend to have when faced with immigration from other countries (Martinovic & Verkuyten, 2013). The belief in ownership by natives can make it difficult for immigrants to settle down since the allocation of resources and opportunities are favored towards citizens (Geschiere, 2009; Smeekes et al., 2015). Furthermore, feelings of nationalism can be in relation to collective narcissism. With nationalism, there can be a need for others to recognize one’s nations ‘greatness’, similar to collective narcissism (Cichocka & Cisla, 2020; Federico & Golec de Zavala, 2018). Collective narcissism has been a predictor of political and nationalist attitudes, which relate to support for leaders and national populist parties (Federico & Golec de Zavala, 2018). For example, national collective narcissism was associated with prejudice towards refugees and other minorities in Poland (Golec de Zavala et al., 2013), as well as low levels of forgiveness if harm was done to their ingroup (Golec de Zavala et al., 2009).

In relation to extremism, national collective narcissism has been linked to extreme intergroup violence and support for ideological extremism (Golec de Zavala et al., 2009; Yustisia et al., 2019). This may be associated with national collective narcissism’s influence on one’s feelings of resentment towards their ingroup’s status in comparison to other groups’ status even if one’s ingroup status is not worse off or at risk. For instance, Americans who viewed themselves as worse off than immigrants were higher in national collective narcissism (Marchlewska et al., 2018). In America, much of the anti-immigrant rhetoric is perpetrated by White Americans, which can relate back to the fear of the “Great Replacement”. Non-white immigrants coming to America are associated with negative stereotypes that allow individuals to justify their anti-immigrant attitudes. With anti-immigrant narratives relating to stereotypes of
racial/ethnic minorities, nationalism can at times be coupled with racism. By relating racism and nationalism, we can better understand White nationalists’ fear of the “Great Replacement” and their perceptions of deservedness when more non-White immigrants enter America.

*Racial Entitlement.*

Feelings of deservedness can impact how ingroups treat the outgroup, and by examining entitlement in a race-based context we can better understand how it affects intergroup relations and racial extremism. *Racial* entitlement refers to the belief that one’s self or group is inherently deserving of privileges or special treatment because of their race (Harris et al., 2023). Building on our previous examination of entitlement, racial entitlement explores the grandiose sense of self in relation to one’s racial group, which may further the perception of undeservedness of other racial groups’ rights, privileges, or resources (Harris et al., 2023). As suggested from a scale created by Harris and colleagues (2023), racial entitlement can be examined as an individual’s personal sense of racial entitlement (e.g., “I feel I am more deserving of good things than others because of my race/ethnicity,”) as well as an individual’s sense of racial entitlement for their racial group (e.g., “Those of my race/ethnicity should have access to more opportunities [e.g., jobs, education, housing] because we have more to offer”).

Although entitlement is often associated with high-status groups, those of low status, minoritized groups can also have a sense of racial entitlement that can have a more progressive or even revolutionary outcome towards change (e.g., voting rights), in which they may fight towards equality as opposed to keeping the unequal status quo. However, racial entitlement for people of color (low-status racial groups) may differ from the majority. For example, people of color may have feelings of deservedness towards equality and status. In contrast to White Americans, feelings of entitlement for people of color are more directed towards improving their
wellbeing and way of life (Kluger, 2011; Orfield, 1969). Specifically, feelings of deservedness for equity can arise after taking note of the unequal treatment and limited privileges and rights one’s group has in comparison to White Americans (Carter, 2011). This sense of deservedness may lead to challenging the status quo, as what was seen with the integration of schools during the civil rights movement (Kluger, 2011). Many Black folks fought for equity and equality in education that Black children and adolescents did not receive in segregated schools (Kluger, 2011).

Racial entitlement can manifest in any racial/ethnic group; however, White entitlement has been a reoccurring issue in America. Racial entitlement is evidenced through many White Americans feeling that Black Americans were undeserving of the same rights and privileges, such as receiving similar education during the integration of schools (Kluger, 2011) or voting rights (Davidson, 1992). As such, racial entitlement often involves the majority racial group (i.e., White Americans) and the reactance that may occur when certain racial norms and privileges are threatened or changed. This is a consequence brought about by societal and cultural shifts (e.g., shifting birth rates; immigration; Kulig et al., 2021), or at a personal level in perceptions of affirmative action at a job or school (Harper & Reskin, 2005). For example, support for discriminatory practices against marginalized groups (Endevelt et al., 2020), White nationalist ideologies (Harris et al., 2022), and dehumanization of, and support for, harsh treatment of immigrants were all associated with racial entitlement (Evdevelt et al. 2020; Harris et al., 2023; Smeekes et al., 2015).

Psychological research conducted by Endevelt and colleagues (2020) examined group entitlement with an ethnic and racialized focus to see how it impacted punishment and human rights for minoritized groups. They found that high levels of group entitlement amongst Jewish
Israelis predicted lower support for human rights and stricter punishments for minoritized group members (i.e., Palestinian citizens). Results were similar for White Americans with high levels of entitlement: they were supportive of harsher punishments and overall lower human rights for Black Americans. This study suggests that racial entitlement is a key component in harmful perceptions and possible aggressive consequences towards outgroup members, especially for minoritized groups (Endevelt et al., 2020). For both Jewish Israelis and White Americans, identity may play a role in sense of self and group importance, which, in turn, can impact the treatment of those in the outgroup. For high-status groups, especially Whites and men, the development of collective identity and entitlement may be related to the narrative that those in the ingroup are meant for greatness and power; when this power and the current ‘status quo’ is threatened, high-status groups usually hold harsher perceptions of the outgroup (Madfis, 2014).

In part, the development of a sense of racial entitlement surrounding one’s White identity can stem from the history, literary, science and social studies curricula taught in U.S. schools focusing almost exclusively on White-American, Male, and Christian accomplishments and perspectives (Gillborn, 2005). This limited view can create the false narrative that the majority of great advancements in civilization were discovered by people of European descent, especially men (Gillborn, 2005; Ives, 2020; Mohamed, 2018). Furthermore, history, religion, and science have been historically used to justify the disenfranchisement of low-status groups by claiming that people of high-status groups (e.g., Whites) were more civilized, more intelligent, and had greater capacity for moral judgment (Panofsky et al., 2021; Saini, 2019), further intensifying their feelings of deservedness.

Identity plays an integral role in a White nationalist belief and it is important to understand how entitlement brought on from feelings of expectation and deservedness can affect
identity and in turn White nationalism. Looking back at Helm’s model for White identity, she presented six stages that affect whether a White individual may develop a “positive” or “negative” identity. For example, to achieve a “positive” identity, the final phase—autonomy—refers to someone feeling comfortable with their White identity, which may suggest it manifests as an individual with high identity, but low feelings of entitlement. This can manifest as an individual perceiving their own privilege but rejecting racism. Contrariwise, a White individual who has difficulty moving past the reintegration phase, could lead them towards a “toxic” form of White identity and possibly racial extremist ideology, which suggest it can manifest as an individual with both high identity and high feelings of entitlement. For those with White nationalist ideologies, racial identity has been examined as a main factor in White nationalism. However, racial entitlement may strengthen the effect that identity has on White nationalist ideologies, since entitlement associated with White Americans can be derived from historical domination and exploitation of other racial groups to maintain power and privileges (Anglin, 2016; Harris, 1993; Hartzell, 2018). The relationship between entitlement and identity is important in understanding racial extremism. See Figure 1.
Note: The current project focuses on racial entitlements effect on the relation identity and White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence. The overall theoretical framework is tested; however, the mediation and moderation were tested separately.

**Rationale**

With an alarming increase in White racial extremism and violence committed over the past few years (Diaz & Triesman, 2021), there has been an increase in research aimed to investigate what factors are contributing to racial extremism and intergroup violence. The current literature has provided some insight. In line with social identity theory, group identification can provide an individual a sense of self and impact outgroup perceptions, which can create a mindset of “us” versus “them”. With demographic changes in the U.S., White people may cling more to their racial identity and have increased negative outgroup perceptions, as well as have increased perceptions of threat from the outgroup. This can create feelings of uncertainty and instability of a group's norms and status, which are often contributors to increased endorsement of extremist ideologies (Bai & Federico, 2021; Gaudette et al., 2021; Silverman, 2020). White nationalist often hold the belief that Whites are deserving of high status and greatness (National
Alliance, 2020; Patriot Front, 2020); when that is potentially threatened, downstream consequences and negative reactance towards cultural shifts and the outgroup may emerge (e.g., through group violence). The existing literature provides a foundation on which fellow researchers can build a clearer understanding of how entitlement can impact identity’s relation to racial extremism and account for intergroup violence. I believe the way to build upon the current literature is to measure racial entitlement to determine its relationship with White nationalism and White racial identity, and the downstream consequences of extremism (i.e., intergroup violence). The existing literature provides the groundwork to assist in our understanding of the influence of entitlement on the link between White identity, White nationalism, and intergroup violence. In doing so, we will be able to provide further insights on the consequences of entitlement and interventions to lessen growing support for extremism.

**Present Research**

Within social psychology, a strong sense of White identity has been viewed as an important factor in White nationalist extremist attitudes (Bonilla-Silvia et al., 2006; Hardiman, 1982; Helms, 1995). However, I theorize a main driver that can impact an individual’s endorsement of extremist ideology is entitlement coupled with high identity. Specifically, I believe people can have a positive White identity; however, when identity is coupled with entitlement it can lead to a more antisocial manifestation of identity in the form of extremist ideologies. The form of entitlement I will focus on is racial entitlement, which refers to the belief that one’s self or group is inherently deserving of privileges or special treatment because of their race. I believe this form of entitlement is important to consider when examining White nationalism and intergroup violence.
Research Questions

Across three studies and samples, I plan to investigate the relationship between entitlement and identity and their interaction on extremist attitudes and outcomes. I will seek to answer the following questions: “Does racial entitlement positively correlate with White nationalist ideologies?”; “Is racial entitlement more of a factor in White nationalist ideologies than White identity?”; “Can White individuals have a high White identity and not endorse White nationalist ideologies?”; “Does racial entitlement strengthen the relationship between White identity and white nationalist ideologies?” and “ Does racial entitlement account for the relationship between White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence?”

Hypotheses

To explore the following hypotheses, I will be using existing data that was gathered across three different time points (Study 1: June 2019; Study 2: January 2020; Study 3: June-Nov 2020).

Hypothesis I

First, for Hypothesis I, I predict that racial identity, racial entitlement, intergroup violence, and White nationalism will relate positively with one another (tested in Studies 1, 2, & 3). See Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Hypothesis I Prediction
**Hypothesis II**

Hypothesis II states the association between identity and White nationalist ideologies will be moderated by racial entitlement, such that as racial identity increases, so will White nationalist ideology, and this trend will especially be strong the more a White individual endorses racial entitlement (tested in Studies 1, 2, & 3).

**Figure 3: Hypothesis II Prediction**

![Diagram for Hypothesis II Prediction]

**Hypothesis III**

Hypothesis III states the association between White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence will be in partially accounted for by racial entitlement (tested in Studies 1, 2, & 3), such that the association between White nationalist ideologies and support for intergroup violence will be partially accounted for by their shared association with racial entitlement.

**Figure 4: Hypothesis III Prediction**

![Diagram for Hypothesis III Prediction]
In seeking to understand racial entitlement’s impact on extremism, we investigate racial entitlement as a moderator and a mediator. We felt this necessary from prior research suggesting that an individual can feel a sense of greatness and deservedness related to their identity which can lead to White nationalist ideology (i.e., moderator; how does entitlement strengthen this relationship), and when a violation occurs to one’s group, status or identity, especially among White nationalist, this can lead to violent actions (i.e., mediator; how does entitlement account for this relationship).

**Study 1**

For Study 1, I explored the relationship between racial entitlement, White identity, White nationalist ideologies, and intergroup violence. I examined how identity and entitlement interact with one another when White individuals have extremist ideologies and endorse intergroup violence. This study was first created to test racial entitlement and other factors related to White nationalism. The scales within the survey were created by members of the Social and Intergroup Perceptions Lab at DePaul University, with the exception of the racial identity measure.

**Study 1 Methodology**

**Participants**

In this study, 158 White American participants were recruited from CloudResearch/M-Turk to take an online survey for $1.50. Participants were 48% female and had a mean age of 40 (SD=13.72) and 18% identified as liberal, 13% identified as moderates, and 69% identified as conservatives. For political ideology, conservatives were oversampled, because prior literature has associated White nationalist ideologies with conservatism (Schorr, 2020).

**Procedure**
Participants completed a 15-minute survey via CloudResearch/MTurk that had measures of identity, racial entitlement, endorsement of White nationalist ideologies, support for intergroup violence, and political ideology. The order of measures and the order of items within each measure were randomized. Finally, participants completed a demographics section that included a political ideology measure. These measures were part of a larger survey on extremist ideology.

The survey was conducted entirely online, allowing participants to take the survey at any location of their choosing. During participation, participants had the option to skip any questions except the attention check questions. Attention check questions were innocuous questions that ensured participant's active attention during the survey (e.g., "In America today, if you are paying attention, please select slightly disagree"). Participants were informed in the information sheet that attention checks questions require correct answers and failure to answer an attention check question correctly would result in their immediate removal from the research without compensation.

Materials

All questions were measured using the following 7-point scale unless noted otherwise:
1=Strongly disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Slightly disagree; 4=Neutral; 5=Slightly agree; 6=Agree; 7=Strongly agree.

Racial Identity

To measure racial identity, a 12-item Racial Identity Scale (Phinney, 1992) was used. Sample items included: “I have spent time trying to find out more about my racial/ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.”; “I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own racial/ethnic group.”; “I have a clear sense of my
racial/ethnic background and what it means for me.” The identity scale showed high reliability ($\alpha=.91$). See Appendix A for full scale.

**Racial Entitlement**

A 10-item Racial Entitlement Scale was developed for this study, with items such as “I feel I am more deserving of good things than others because of my race/ethnicity.”, "Those of my race/ethnicity should have access to more opportunities (e.g., jobs, education, housing) because we have more to offer.” Some items were adapted from the Campbell et al. (2004) psychological entitlement scale, with the addition of other items created based on face validity of how racial entitlement may manifest. In this sample, the Racial Entitlement Scale was highly reliable ($\alpha=.94$). See Appendix A.

**White Nationalist Ideology**

To measure White Nationalist Ideology, a 4-item White Nationalist Ideology Scale (Reyna et al., 2022b) was used, which measured an individual’s endorsement for extremist ideology in relation to White supremacy and nationalism. Items include “Multiculturalism is the biggest threat to White America.”, “I am sympathetic to organizations/groups that bring attention to White concerns.”, “White American culture is what makes this country great.”, “One of the problems with America is the decline of Whiteness.” The scale had high reliability ($\alpha=.92$).

**Intergroup violence**

Intergroup violence was measured via a single item, “In order to maintain White status it is sometimes necessary to use violence towards racial/ethnic minority groups.” This item was originally part of the White Nationalist Ideology scale but was analyzed separately due to the item reflecting support for violence, a key outcome variable in this study.

**Political Ideology**
Political ideology was measured via a 7-point scale with a single item. “How would you characterize your political views overall?” (1=Very liberal, 2=Liberal, 3=Somewhat liberal, 4=Moderate/centrist, 5=Somewhat conservative, 6=Conservative, 7=Very conservative).

Attention Check.

There was one attention check item included in the survey: “In America, please select ‘Somewhat agree’ if you are paying attention”. Participants needed to select the requested response to be considered “attentive”. If the participants failed the attention check, they were automatically removed from the survey via a fail out rule set up in Qualtrics.

Study 1 Results

Hypothesis I examined whether the variables of racial entitlement, racial identity, White nationalist ideologies, and intergroup violence positively related with one another. A partial correlation analysis controlling for political ideology was conducted to view the relationship between the variables shown in Table 1. Correlations revealed that each variable was highly related to one another. Specifically, racial entitlement among Whites related highly with White nationalist ideologies, related moderately with identity, and related highly with intergroup violence. Furthermore, White nationalist ideologies, identity, and intergroup violence were also related highly with one another, while controlling for political ideology, as shown in Table 1.
### Table 1: Correlations, Means, and Standard Deviation among measured variable: Study 1

<table>
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*p ≤ .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001

To further examine the relationship between White nationalist ideologies, racial entitlement, and identity scatter plots were produced as shown in Figures 5 and 6. The relationship between White nationalist ideologies and racial entitlement is fairly linear. Particularly, Whites who exhibited high levels of racial entitlement were more likely to endorse White nationalist ideologies, and those who were low on one tended to be low on the other (Figure 6). Regarding White identity, the pattern of the scatter plot was asymmetrical at different levels of White nationalist ideologies. Whites spanned the range of racial identity at low levels of White nationalist ideologies, but Whites tended to have higher racial identity at high levels of White nationalist ideologies, as shown in Figure 5. This suggests that having a high White identity does not mean endorsement of White nationalist ideologies. The results from the partial correlation suggests Hypothesis I was supported.
Figure 5: Scatterplot Displaying Correlation Between Racial Identity and White Nationalist ideologies: Study 1

Figure 6: Scatterplot Displaying Correlation Between Racial Entitlement and White Nationalist ideologies: Study 1
Hypothesis II investigated whether racial entitlement strengthened the relationship between identity and White nationalist ideologies. A moderation analysis controlling for political ideology was conducted to test whether the relationship between racial identity and White nationalist ideologies was strengthened by racial entitlement using SPSS’s PROCESS Model 1 (Hayes, 2013). The interaction between racial identity and racial entitlement was not significant ($b = 0.06, SE = 0.07, t = .87, p = .38$), indicating that the relationship between racial identity and White nationalist ideologies was not moderated by racial entitlement. There was a significant main effect of racial identity on White nationalist ideologies ($b = .31, SE = .11, t = 2.94, p < .01$), indicating that the higher racial identity was associated with higher endorsement of White nationalist ideologies. Additionally, there was a significant main effect of racial entitlement on White nationalist ideologies ($b = 0.55, SE = 0.09, t = 6.86, p < .001$, indicating that the higher racial entitlement was associated with higher endorsement White nationalist ideologies. See Figure 7.
Figure 7: Moderation of the effect of Identity on White Nationalist Ideologies at values of the moderator Racial Entitlement: Study 1

Note: b’s correspond to unstandardized beta coefficients of racial identity predicting White nationalist by racial entitlement. *p ≤ .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Findings indicate that racial entitlement did not moderate the relationship between identity and white nationalist ideologies. Instead, entitlement is behaving like a main effect as opposed to a moderator, meaning that racial entitlement is affecting White nationalist ideologies outside of identity. These results suggest that Hypothesis II was not supported.

Lastly, for Hypothesis III we predicted that racial entitlement will partially mediate the relationship between White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence. To test this hypothesis, a mediation analysis controlling for political ideology was conducted using SPSS’s PROCESS Model 4 (Hayes, 2013). The relationship between White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence was significant, $F(2, 149) = 64.02$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .46$. Specifically, results
showed that there was a significant total effect between White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence ($B = .75, p < .001$), as well as the path between White nationalist ideologies and racial entitlement; $B = .54, p < .001$, and racial entitlement to intergroup violence; $B = .85, p < .001$). The direct effect of the relationship between White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence remained significant but was diminished when racial entitlement was included in the model ($B = .29, p < .001$). This suggests that when accounting for racial entitlement a partial mediation occurred, $F(3, 148) = 106.28, p < .001$, $R^2 = .68$. Furthermore, White nationalist ideologies were indirectly related to support for intergroup violence through racial entitlement: $\beta = .43$, SE = 0.06, 95% CI [0.32, 0.57]; see Figure 8. Results indicate that racial entitlement partly accounts for the relationship between white nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence, suggesting that racial entitlement is an important factor linking White nationalist ideologies with intergroup violence. The results suggest that Hypothesis III was supported.

**Figure 8:** Standardized regression coefficients for the relationship between White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence through racial entitlement: Study 1.

![Diagram](image)

*Note. Analysis controlled for political ideology.
*p ≤ .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.*
Study 1 Discussion

Study 1 built on prior research investigating White nationalism and indicated that the variables of racial entitlement, identity, White nationalist ideologies, and intergroup violence were related to one another, supporting Hypothesis I. Additionally, turning towards the research questions, results indicated that White Americans could have a high White identity and not endorse White nationalist ideologies. In fact, those with high White identity varied on the scale for White nationalist ideologies. This provides evidence in support of models such as Helms’ (1993) that indicate having a high White identity can be related to either White supremacy or allyship. However, it also challenges prior research that suggests having a high White identity directly relates to racial extremism (Moffitt & Rogers, 2022). Furthermore, for Hypothesis II, racial entitlement did not strengthen the relationship between identity and White nationalist ideologies. Instead, racial entitlement acted independently from identity to influence White nationalism, indicating that both are strong, independent predictors of White nationalist ideologies. Results suggest that Whites who endorse White nationalism tend to have a strong attachment to their racial identity, however, those with a high racial identity did not automatically endorse White nationalism. Interestingly, Whites who had a high racial entitlement also tended to endorse White nationalist ideologies.

With racial entitlement relating highly with White nationalist ideologies, it was important to understand how it affected intergroup violence from endorsers of White nationalism. The significant indirect effect suggests that racial entitlement plays a key role in White nationalist ideologies leading to intergroup violence. These findings are consistent with prior literature on entitlements’ relation to aggression and violence. For instance, Madfis (2014) found that entitlement was a driving factor for mass shooters. However, racial entitlement partially
accounted for the relationship between White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence, suggesting that racial entitlement is not the only factor to consider for understanding intergroup violence among racial extremists.

Though this study added to the literature of intergroup relations and extremism, there were some limitations. The present study’s sample size was small and thus may have been underpowered in performing the moderation of entitlement on identity and White nationalist ideologies. Thus, the results must be interpreted with this limitation in mind. Study 2 improves upon this limitation by increasing the sample size. Additionally, Study 1 used a single item to investigate intergroup violence; this is a limitation since it is difficult to account for psychological constructs within a single item. In Study 2, we expanded upon the measure of intergroup violence.

**Study 2**

For Study 2, I examined how identity interacts with entitlement to predict White nationalist ideologies using an expanded survey that includes a more detailed measure of White nationalism and intergroup violence. Similar to Study 1, this study was developed strictly to examine White nationalism using a larger sample. The goal of this study is to replicate findings from Study 1 and see if new items added to these scales will affect our results. I expanded the White nationalism scale to a total of 11-items, the additional items were intended to capture other aspects of White nationalism that the 4-item measure did not capture previously, such as anti-Semitism. I included 2 more items measuring support for violence.

**Study 2 Methodology**

**Participants**

In this study, 358 White Americans were recruited from CloudResearch/M-Turk to take an online survey for $1.50. Participants were 56% female and had a mean age of 43.70
(SD=13.56) and 34% identified as liberal, 13% identified as moderate, and 53% identified as conservative. Similar to Study 1, conservatives were oversampled.

**Procedure**

Participants completed a 20- 25-minute survey via CloudResearch/MTurk. The order of measures and the order of items within each measure were randomized. Finally, participants completed a demographics section that included a political ideology measure. These measures were part of a larger survey on extremist ideology.

The survey was conducted entirely online, allowing participants to take the survey at any location of their choosing. During participation, participants had the option to skip any questions except the attention check questions. Attention check questions were innocuous questions that ensured participant's active attention during the survey (e.g., "In America, if you are paying attention, please select slightly disagree"). Participants were informed within the information sheet that attention checks questions require correct answers and failure to answer an attention check question correctly would result in their immediate removal from the research without compensation.

**Materials**

All questions were measured using the following 7-point scale unless noted otherwise: 1=Strongly disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Slightly disagree; 4=Neutral; 5=Slightly agree; 6=Agree; 7=Strongly agree.

**Racial Identity**

The same racial identity scale (Phinney, 1992) from Study 1 was used, and it was highly reliable (α=.92).
Racial Entitlement

The racial entitlement scale is the same scale from Study 1 ($\alpha = .91$). See Appendix A.

White Nationalist Ideology

The White Nationalist Ideology scale (Reyna, 2022b) is similar to the scale from Study 1 with a few added items to make a 11-items scale. Items include, “Whites should band together to support policies that ensure a White majority.”, “The government should prioritize immigration from predominantly White European countries.”, “Jews control the American economy more than they should.”, “Whites in the United States are being replaced by the influx of other racial/ethnic groups.”, This scale was highly reliable ($\alpha=.94$).

Intergroup violence

A 3-item measure to examine intergroup violence was developed. “Sometimes it is justified to use violence to achieve political goals in this country.” The next two items were originally a part of the White Nationalist Ideology scale but were taken out due to the items pertaining more towards use of violence than ideology. Those items were “Violence is a regrettable but understandable reaction to demographic changes in America.”, and “In order to maintain White status it is sometimes necessary to use violence towards racial/ethnic minority groups.” This scale was reliable ($\alpha=.72$)

Political Ideology

Similar to Study 1, political ideology was measured via a 7-point scale with a single item. “How would you characterize your political views overall?” (1=Very liberal, 2=Liberal, 3=Somewhat liberal, 4=Moderate/centrist, 5=Somewhat conservative, 6=Conservative, 7=Very conservative).
Attention Check.

There was one attention check item included in the survey: “My race/ethnicity, if you are paying attention choose ‘disagree’”. Participants needed to select the requested response to be considered “attentive”. If the participants failed the attention check, they were automatically removed from the survey via a fail out rule set up in Qualtrics.

Study 2 Results

Hypothesis I examined whether the variables of racial entitlement, racial identity, White nationalist ideologies, and intergroup violence positively related with one another. A partial correlation analysis controlling for political ideology was conducted to view the relationship between the variables shown in Table 2. Similar to Study 1, correlations revealed that each variable was highly related to one another. Specifically, racial entitlement among Whites related highly with White nationalist ideologies related moderately with identity and related moderately with intergroup violence. Furthermore, White nationalist ideologies, identity, and intergroup violence were also related with one another, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Correlations, Means, and Standard Deviation among measured variable: Study 2

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</table>

*p ≤ .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001
To look further into the relationship between White nationalist ideology, racial entitlement, and identity scatter plots were produced as shown in Figures 9 and 10. Regarding the relationship between White nationalist ideologies and racial entitlement is fairly linear. Particularly, Whites who exhibited high levels of racial entitlement were more likely to endorse White nationalist ideologies, and those who were low on one tended to be low on the other (Figure 10). Regarding White identity, the pattern of the scatter plot was asymmetrical at different levels of White nationalist ideologies. Whites spanned the range of racial identity at low levels of White nationalist ideologies, but Whites tended to have higher racial identity at high levels of White nationalist ideologies, as shown in Figure 9. This suggests that having a high White identity does not mean endorsement of White nationalist ideologies. Similar to Study 1, the results from the partial correlation suggests Hypothesis I was supported.

**Figure 9**: Scatterplot Displaying Correlation Between Racial Identity and White Nationalist ideologies: Study 2
Hypothesis II predicted that racial entitlement would strengthen the relationship between identity and White nationalist ideologies. A moderation analysis controlling for political ideology was conducted to test whether the relationship between racial identity and White nationalist ideologies was strengthened by racial entitlement using SPSS’s PROCESS Model 1 (Hayes, 2013). Unlike Study 1, racial entitlement significantly moderated White identity’s relationship with White nationalist ideology, as predicted ($b = 0.07$, $SE = 0.03$, $t = 2.36$, $p = .01$). These results differ from Study 1, in which entitlement did not strengthen the relationship between identity and White nationalist ideologies. In this study, a spreading interaction between racial entitlement, identity, and White nationalist ideologies occurred, indicating that as racial identity increased, so did White nationalist ideology. This trend was especially strong the more a White individual endorsed racial entitlement. The simple slope of racial identity on White nationalist ideologies was significant; there was a difference of the simple slope on racial identity
and White nationalist ideologies at the low levels of racial entitlement ($b = .16, SE = 0.06, t = 5.61, p < .001$) and at high levels of racial entitlement ($b = .32, SE = 0.05, t = 3.36, p < .001$). The relationship (i.e., slope line) between White identity and White nationalism gets steeper for those high in racial entitlement and less steep so for those low in entitlement, as shown in Figure 11. Suggesting that as racial entitlement and racial identity increased among Whites the more likely they endorsed White nationalist ideologies in comparison to those with decreased levels of racial entitlement and racial identity. These results suggest that our Hypothesis II was supported.

**Figure 11:** Moderation of the effect of Identity on White Nationalist Ideologies at values of the moderator Racial Entitlement: Study 2

![Figure 11](image)

*Note: $b$’s correspond to unstandardized beta coefficients of racial identity predicting White nationalist by racial entitlement. *$p \leq .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.*

Lastly, Hypothesis III predicted that racial entitlement will partially mediate the relationship between White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence. A mediation analysis
controlling for political ideology was conducted using SPSS’s PROCESS Model 4 (Hayes, 2013). The relationship between White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence was significant, $F(2, 354) = 107.64, p < .001, R^2 = .38$. Specifically, results showed that there was a significant total effect between White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence ($B = .56, p < .001$), as well as the path between White nationalist ideologies and racial entitlement; $B = .64, p < .001$, and racial entitlement to intergroup violence; $B = .22, p < .001$). The direct effect of the relationship between White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence remained significant but was diminished when racial entitlement was included in the model ($B = .42, p < .001$). This suggests that when accounting for racial entitlement a partial mediation occurred, $F(3, 353) = 78.87, p < .001, R^2 = .40$. Furthermore, White nationalist ideologies were indirectly related to support for intergroup violence through racial entitlement: $\beta = .16, SE = 0.06, 95\% CI [0.05, 0.28]$; (See Figure 12). Similar to Study 1, findings indicate that racial entitlement partly accounts for the relationship between White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence. This suggests that racial entitlement is an important component linking White nationalist ideologies to intergroup violence. These findings support Hypothesis III.
**Study 2 Discussion**

The current study built upon the findings from Study 1. Like Study 1, it explored the effect of racial entitlement among White Americans and their support of White extremism and intergroup violence. This study builds on Study 1 by increasing the sample size and expanding upon the measures of White nationalism and intergroup violence, gaining higher construct validity. Furthermore, similar to Study 1, this study expanded upon existing literature of White nationalism and contributed to the understanding of which factors can impact the rise of White extremism in America.

Study 2 replicated results from Study 1, indicating that the variables of racial entitlement, identity, White nationalist ideologies, and intergroup violence were related to one another, supporting Hypothesis I. Additionally, high White identity varied on the scale for White nationalist ideologies, providing evidence in support of models such as Helms’ (1993) that indicate having a high White identity can lead to either racist ideologies or allyship.
Contrary to Study 1, for Hypothesis II, racial entitlement did strengthen the relationship between identity and White nationalist ideologies, supporting our hypothesis. Racial entitlement interacted with identity. These results may be related to addressing the previous limitations in Study 1 (i.e., low sample size and potential low construct validity). Though a moderation occurred, it is important to note that Study 1’s discovery of racial entitlement and identity operating independently is not a foregone conclusion. We can make inferences that although racial entitlement and identity can interact with one another, the relationship between the two constructs may have multiple manifestations in their relation and interaction of White nationalist ideologies. For example, racial entitlement may act as a mediator to the relationship of identity and White nationalist ideologies, which needs to be considered.

Lastly, with racial entitlement relating highly with White nationalist ideologies, it was important to understand how it affected intergroup violence among racial extremists. Similar to Study 1, Hypothesis III was supported. The significant indirect effect suggests that racial entitlement plays a key role in White nationalist ideologies leading to intergroup violence. These findings are consistent with prior literature on entitlements’ relation to aggression and violence. For instance, Kunst & Obaidi (2014) found that relative deprivation which can be brought on from feelings of aggrieved entitlement led to violent extremism in protection of one's status. However, racial entitlement only partially accounted for the relationship between White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence, suggesting that racial entitlement is not the only factor to consider for understanding intergroup violence.

This study added to the literature of intergroup relations and extremism and addressed limitations from Study 1. Study 2 also built upon the first study’s research by increasing the sample size and adding additional items to the White nationalism scale and intergroup violence
scale. Though the present study added to the literature, there were limitations to consider. With consideration for racial entitlement acting as a main effect and a moderator Study 3 expands upon the first two studies by increasing the sample size from a quota sample and conducting the same analysis to investigate if previous results replicate.

**Study 3**

Study 3 was a part of a larger research project that explored how extreme social upheaval (the Covid-19 pandemic and the racial protests surrounding the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, MN) influences the support for upending democratic norms and civil liberties. This study expands upon our research by increasing our sample to over 1800 participants. Due to this study being on a different topic, it had shortened versions of our key variables. The goal of Study 3 is to replicate findings from Study 1 and 2 on a larger sample that did not focus on White nationalism. By including this study in the dissertation, I am able to determine if the measures and hypotheses replicate in another research context using a larger national sample.

**Study 3 Methodology**

**Participants**

Initially, this study recruited a racially representative, quota sample through Dynata (a global market research firm) consisting of 2,913 Americans (63% White, 17% Hispanic, 12% Black, 5% Asian, 3% other) as usable data. However, for the purpose of this dissertation, only White participants were included in a quota sample of 1835 White Americans. Participants were compensated $2-5 in the form of their chosen incentive (cash, gift cards, or reward points, based on how they set up their Dynata account).
Procedure

Participants took a 30-35 minute survey and filled out measures of perceptions of existential threat, status quo change, white nationalist ideologies, willingness to oppress outgroups (e.g., political outgroups, racial outgroups), willingness to engage in extreme collective action (e.g., intergroup violence), and demographic questions (e.g., age, gender). However, for this study we will only focus on the measures that explored racial identity, White nationalist ideology, racial entitlement, and intergroup violence. The order of items within each measure were randomized.

The survey was conducted entirely online, allowing participants to take the survey at any location of their choosing. During participation, participants had the option to skip any questions except the attention check questions. Attention check questions were innocuous questions that ensure participant's active attention during the survey (e.g., "If you are paying attention, please select slightly disagree"). Participants were informed within the information sheet that attention checks questions require correct answers and failure to answer an attention check question correctly would result in their immediate removal from the research without compensation.

Materials

All questions were measured using the following 7-point scale unless noted otherwise:
1=Strongly disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Slightly disagree; 4=Neutral; 5=Slightly agree; 6=Agree; 7=Strongly agree.

Racial Identity

To measure racial identity, a single item from the Racial Identity Scale (Phinney, 1992) was used: “To what extent is being a member of your racial/ethnic group important to your
identity.” (1 = Not at all important to my identity, 4 = somewhat important to my identity, 7 = Extremely important to my identity).

**Racial Entitlement**

To measure racial entitlement, 5-items were chosen from a previous factor analysis of the larger scale selecting the top loading of items which includes: “I feel I am more deserving of good things than others because of my race/ethnicity.”, “Because of my race/ethnicity great things should come to me.”, “If a boat was sinking, people of my race/ethnicity deserve to be on the first lifeboat.”, “People of my race/ethnicity deserve better things in life than others.” (α=.94)  

*Note:* The factor analysis was conducted prior to the dissertation for an unrelated research topic.

**White Nationalist Ideology**

For the White nationalist ideology scale (Reyna, 2022b), the same scale as in Study 1 was used. (α=.80).

**Intergroup violence**

Intergroup violence was measured via a single item, “In order to maintain White status it is sometimes necessary to use violence towards racial/ethnic minority groups.” This item was originally part of the White Nationalist Ideology scale but was taken out due to the item reflecting support for violence, a key outcome variable in this study.

**Political Ideology**

Similar to Study 1, Political ideology was measured via a 7-point scale with a single item. “How would you characterize your political views overall?” (1=Very liberal, 2=Liberal, 3=Somewhat liberal, 4=Moderate/centrist, 5=Somewhat conservative, 6=Conservative, 7=Very conservative).
Attention Check.

There was one attention check item included in the survey: ‘Most police, if you are paying attention choose ‘Somewhat Disagree’.”. Participants needed to select the requested response to be considered “attentive”. If the participants failed the attention check, they were automatically removed from the survey via a fail out rule set up in Qualtrics.

Study 3 Results

Hypothesis I examined whether the variables of racial entitlement, racial identity, White nationalist ideologies, and intergroup violence positively related with one another. A partial correlation analysis controlling for political ideology was conducted to view the relationship between the variables shown in Table 3. Correlations revealed that each variable was highly related to one another. Specifically, racial entitlement among Whites related highly with White nationalist ideologies, related moderately with identity, and highly related with intergroup violence. Furthermore, White nationalist ideologies, identity, and intergroup violence were also related highly with one another, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Correlations, Means, and Standard Deviation among measured variable: Study 3

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*p ≤ .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001
To look further into the relationship between White nationalist ideology, racial entitlement, and identity a scatter plot was produced as shown in Figures 13 and 14. The relationship between White nationalist ideologies and racial entitlement is fairly linear. Similar to Studies 1 & 2, Whites who exhibited high levels of racial entitlement were more likely to endorse White nationalist ideologies, and those who were low on one tended to be low on the other (see Figure 14). Regarding White identity, the pattern of the scatter plot was asymmetrical at different levels of White nationalist ideologies. Whites spanned the range of racial identity at low levels of White nationalist ideologies, but Whites tended to have higher racial identity at high levels of White nationalist ideologies, as shown in Figure 13. This suggests that having a high White identity does not mean endorsement of White nationalist ideologies. Similar to Study 1 & 2, the results from the partial correlation suggests Hypothesis I was supported.

**Figure 13: Scatterplot Displaying Correlation Between Racial Identity and White Nationalist ideologies: Study 3**
For Hypothesis II, we investigated whether racial entitlement strengthened the relationship between identity and White nationalist ideologies. A moderation analysis controlling for political ideology, was conducted to test whether the relationship between racial identity and White nationalist ideologies was strengthened by racial entitlement using SPSS’s PROCESS Model 1 (Hayes, 2013). Similar to Study 1, The interaction between racial identity and racial entitlement was not significant ($b = 0.01$, $SE = 0.01$, $t = 1.24$, $p = .21$), indicating that the relationship between racial identity and White nationalist ideologies was not moderated by racial entitlement. There was a significant main effect of racial identity on White nationalist ideologies ($b = .11$, $SE = .01$, $t = 8.91$, $p < .001$), indicating that the higher racial identity was associated with higher endorsement of White nationalist ideologies. Additionally, there was a significant

Figure 14: Scatterplot Displaying Correlation Between Racial Entitlement and White Nationalist ideologies: Study 3
main effect of racial entitlement on White nationalist ideologies ($b = .59, SE = 0.02, t = 27.59, p < .001$), indicating that the higher racial entitlement was associated with higher endorsement of White nationalist ideologies. See Figure 15.

**Figure 15:** Moderation of the effect of Identity on White Nationalist Ideologies at values of the moderator Racial Entitlement: Study 3

![Graph showing moderation of effect of racial entitlement on White nationalist ideologies](image)

*Note:* $b$’s correspond to unstandardized beta coefficients of racial identity predicting White nationalist by racial entitlement. *$p \leq .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.*

Although the slopes were not parallel, the interaction did not reach significance. There was a starker difference in those with high endorsement of racial entitlement versus lower endorsement of racial entitlement, in which we see that higher racial entitlement was related to higher endorsement of White nationalist ideologies.

Similar to Study 1, we found that racial entitlement did not moderate the relationship between identity and white nationalist ideologies. Instead, entitlement behaved like a main effect.
as opposed to moderator, meaning that racial entitlement is affecting White nationalist ideologies outside of identity. Although racial entitlement and identity both relate to white nationalist ideologies, the interaction between entitlement and identity together did not have a major effect on White nationalist ideologies. These results suggest that our Hypothesis II was not supported.

Lastly, Hypothesis III predicted a full mediation of racial entitlement for the relationship between White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence. A mediation analysis, controlling for political ideology, was conducted using SPSS’s PROCESS Model 4 (Hayes, 2013). The relationship between White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence was significant, \( F(2, 1828) = 590.24, p < .001, R^2 = .39 \). However, when accounting for racial entitlement a partial mediation occurred, which was significant, \( F(3, 1827) = 668.61, p < .001, R^2 = .52 \), see Figure 16. Specifically, results showed that there was a significant total effect between White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence \( (B = .60, p < .001) \), as well as the path between White nationalist ideologies and racial entitlement; \( B =\.56, p < .001 \), and racial entitlement to intergroup violence; \( B =\.48, p < .001 \). The direct effect of the relationship between White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence remained significant but was diminished when racial entitlement was included in the model \( (B =\.33, p < .001) \). This suggests that when accounting for racial entitlement a partial mediation occurred, \( F(3, 1827) = 668.13, p < .001, R^2 = .52 \). Furthermore, White nationalist ideologies were indirectly related to support for intergroup violence through racial entitlement: \( \beta =\.30, SE = 0.02, 95\% CI [0.25, 0.35] \); (See figure 16). Findings indicate that racial entitlement partly accounts for the relationship between White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence. This suggests that racial entitlement is an important component linking White nationalist ideologies to intergroup violence.
Similar to Study 1 & 2, we found that racial entitlement only partly accounts for the relationship between White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence, supporting Hypothesis III. This suggests that racial entitlement is a major component of White nationalist ideologies leading to intergroup violence; however, there are still other factors driving White nationalists to violence that need to be investigated.

**Study 3 Discussion**

The goal of Study 3 was to examine if results replicated from Study 1 & 2 using a larger quota sample. Study 3 built upon the previous two studies by increasing the sample size and investigating how the constructs of racial entitlement, White nationalist ideologies, identity, and intergroup violence still related to one another with better sampling. This study explored the effect of racial entitlement among White Americans and their support of White extremism and intergroup violence. This study allowed greater understanding in how entitlement, identity, and
White nationalism interact with one another, which was imperative due to the dissimilar results from the previous two studies.

The results from Study 3 indicate that the variables of racial entitlement, identity, White nationalist ideologies, and intergroup violence were related to one another, even with the cut down of the scales, supporting Hypothesis I. Additionally, as in Studies 1 & 2, results indicated that White Americans can have a high White identity and not endorse White nationalist ideologies. In fact, an asymmetrical pattern was presented in which Whites spanned racial identity at low levels of White nationalist ideologies, but Whites with high levels of racial identity were high in endorsement of varied in their endorsement of White nationalist ideologies. Providing evidence in support of models such as Helms (1993) and setting up the question of what can constitute a healthy White identity. However, it also challenges prior research that suggests having a high White identity relates to White nationalist ideologies. This research suggests that the relationship might be more nuanced.

Interestingly, similar to Study 1, for Hypothesis II, racial entitlement did not strengthen the relationship between identity and White nationalist ideologies. Though an interaction did not occur, the model did have potential of an interaction of identity and racial entitlement, though not significant. This may be on account of potential low construct validity in the measures. Instead, racial entitlement acted independently from identity, suggesting that both are strong indicators of White nationalist ideologies. Results suggest that Whites who endorse White nationalism tend to have a strong attachment to their racial identity, however, those with a high racial identity did not automatically endorse White nationalism. Interestingly, Whites who had a high racial entitlement also tended to endorse White nationalist ideologies. These results provide insight on how racial entitlement can manifestations differently in relation to White nationalist
ideologies. In which it can act both independently and together with racial identity on the effect of White nationalism. Further considerations for different manifestations of entitlement on extremism need to be investigated for future research.

Furthermore, when investigating how it affected intergroup violence among endorsers of White nationalism, similar to studies 1 & 2, the significant indirect effect suggests that racial entitlement plays a key role in White nationalist ideologies leading to intergroup violence. These findings are consistent with prior literature on entitlements’ relation to aggression and violence, such as the prior research conducted by Madfis (2014) and Kunst & Obaidi (2020) who found entitlement to be a driving factor for violence. However, racial entitlement only partially accounted for the relationship between White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence. This suggests that racial entitlement is not the only factor to consider for understanding intergroup violence among racial extremists.

Though this study added clarity to the previous two studies and literature on intergroup relations and extremism, there were some limitations. This study was a part of a larger study that did not focus on White nationalism, though the larger study provided sampling, it came with the sacrifice of room for full measurements. With this limitation items were cut for each variable, possibly indicating low construct variability. Even so, Study 3 built on the construct of racial entitlement by expanding the sample and seeking replication from the first two studies, and the patterns were largely consistent with the prior two studies.

**General Discussion**

The current study built upon prior research investigating White Americans’ endorsement of White nationalist ideologies. Specifically, it explored the effect of racial entitlement among White Americans and their support of White extremism and intergroup violence. This study is
the first to explore the impact of racial entitlement on extremism. Furthermore, this study was able to add on to existing literature that examines White identity in relation to White nationalism. Overall, this study contributed to prior literature and to psychology’s understanding of what factors can impact the rise of White extremism in America.

In the studies presented, I sought to determine the relationship between racial entitlement, identity, White nationalist ideologies, and intergroup violence; and understand how identity and entitlement related to White nationalism separately (Hypothesis I). I also investigated whether entitlement strengthens the relationship between a White American’s identity and their support for White nationalist ideology (Hypothesis II). Finally, I tested White nationalist ideologies' effect on intergroup violence when accounting for racial entitlement to determine if racial entitlement is an important link between violence (Hypothesis III).

**Evaluating Hypotheses and Research Questions**

**Hypothesis I**

Hypothesis I predicted that racial identity, racial entitlement, intergroup violence, and White nationalism will relate positively with one another. There was support for Hypothesis I across all 3 studies. All of these variables were found to have significantly related positively with one another, after controlling for political ideology. Though this study is the first to investigate the relationship between entitlement and White nationalist ideologies, findings were consistent with previous research that found that identity related with White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence (Armenta, 2022; Reyna et al., 2022a). Furthermore, Hypothesis I helped answer the research questions “Does racial entitlement positively correlate with White nationalist ideologies?”; “Is racial entitlement more of a factor in White nationalist ideologies than White identity?”; “Can White individuals have a high White identity and not endorse White nationalist
ideologies?”. Across all three studies, findings suggest that, although each variable was related with White nationalist ideologies, racial entitlement had a higher correlation in comparison with identity. Additionally, we found that White individuals can still have a high White identity and not endorse White nationalist beliefs.

**Hypothesis II**

Hypothesis II predicted the association between identity and White nationalist ideologies will be moderated by racial entitlement, such that as White identity increases so will an individual’s White nationalist ideologies, this trend will be especially strong the more a White individual endorses racial entitlement. Hypothesis II was supported in Study 2 but only partially supported in Studies 1 & 3. In all three studies there was a significant difference between participants with high endorsement of racial entitlement versus those with low endorsement of racial entitlement on their endorsement of White nationalist ideologies. However, only in Study 2 did we find that racial entitlement strengthened the relationship between White identity and White nationalist ideologies. This suggests that entitlement and identity were acting independently of one another but still affecting White nationalist ideologies in Studies 1 & 3. Findings may be a result of variability in the scales of each study (Study 2 had the most detailed measures), or perhaps entitlement plays such a role in White nationalist ideologies that it can manifest as a main effect, moderation, and a possible mediation once tested. The direct relationship between identity and White nationalist ideologies was consistent with prior literature on racial identity’s relation to White racial extremism. However, findings do suggest that Whites who have a strong attachment to their identity do not necessarily endorse White nationalist ideologies, however, White nationalist do need to have a strong attachment to their identity. These results partially answered the question “Does racial entitlement strengthen the relationship
between White identity and White nationalist ideologies?” Future research should replicate the pattern from Study 2 using more developed measures as was done in Study 2 to see if that might be important for detecting a moderation.

**Hypothesis III**

Hypothesis III states the association between White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence will be partially accounted for by racial entitlement, such that the endorsement of White nationalist ideologies and support for intergroup violence will in part be due to a sense of racial entitlement. Hypothesis III was supported. Across all three studies racial entitlement partially, but significantly, accounted for the relationship between White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence. This finding was consistent with previous literature that found that entitlement is an important factor in aggression and mass violence (Madfis, 2014; Kunst & Obaidi, 2020). Hypothesis III answered the question “Does racial entitlement account for the relationship between White nationalist ideologies and intergroup violence?”

**Overview**

The current research sought to build upon prior literature by examining which factors link a White American’s endorsement of White nationalist beliefs and support for intergroup violence and extremism. This research is important as America and the world experiences a rise in extremism and intergroup violence perpetrated by Whites (Golec de Zavala et al., 2009; Marchlewksa et al., 2018; Yustisia et al., 2019). With the fear of cultural changes to the status quo (Hage, 2012; Patriot Front, 2020) and the mainstreaming of extremist theories such as Great Replacement Theory (Fight White Genocide, 2017; Stormfront, 2013), White Americans have found themselves holding tighter to their racial identity as a need for protection from societal status loss (Bowman et al., 2022; Hogg et al., 2013; Reyna et al., 2022a). Identity plays a major
role in White nationalism and with the perceived threat of societal changes and feelings of uncertainty, many White folks start to solidify their group memberships into “we” for their ingroup and “other” for the outgroup, leading to more extremism in their perceived need for protection (Bai & Federico, 2021; Gaudette et al., 2021). The narrative of “we” versus “other” can create animosity and feelings of deservedness for the status quo to stay the same, which can lead the ingroup to views the “other” as less than deserving of similar status, resources, or rights (Endevelt et al., 2020; Lange et al., 2019). Racial entitlement among White Americans may occur when certain norms and privileges are threatened, resulting in discriminatory practices and lower support for basic human rights of marginalized groups (Endevelt et al., 2020), and dehumanization of, and support for, harsh treatment of immigrants (Evdevelt et al. 2020; Harris et al., in preparation; Smeekes et al., 2015). Similar to identity, entitlement and feelings of deservedness can trigger a need of protection or retributive justice for groups that seek to right a wrong through violence. Yet, there is still a gap in the literature on the impact that entitlement may have on intergroup relations and extremism.

Implications

Implications for Extremism

The current studies focused on examining the proposed effect of entitlement related to extremism and violence. From the dissertation we can assert that not only does racial entitlement affect intergroup relations and extremism but allows us to reevaluate identity’s impact on White nationalism. Entitlement has been shown to contribute to feelings of aggression and negative outcomes and perceptions towards the outgroup (Golec de Zavala et al., 2012; 2016). Looking back at prior literature, it is presented that feelings of relative deprivation (Feather, 2015; Kunst & Obaidi, 2022), cultural shifts (Zarate et al., 2019), and fear of the Great Replacement (Obaidi
et al., 2022; Stormfront, 2013) could be seen as a sense of violation towards a group's identity. As such with aggrieved entitlement, when a sense of violation occurs that contradicts one’s identity, status, or exaggerated “greatness”, motivation to “right” a “wrong” against the group can lead high-status groups to seek retributive justice through violent means. Findings from the present study show how feelings of racial entitlement can account for intergroup violence from White nationalist groups, similar to aggrieved entitlement. Specifically, the measure on intergroup violence included in the dissertation centered around Whites' support for violence when trying to maintain status and reaction towards demographic changes. The measure supported claims from prior research indicating that status loss and cultural shifts can be a predictor of violence among extremist groups. Furthermore, the current study added to prior literature by examining and finding that a White nationalist support to enact violence is partly related to feelings of deservedness. Understanding that entitlement impacts support for violence due to cultural shifts and potential status loss allows researchers to identify potential gaps in extremism and intergroup literature. Lastly, these findings imply that the understanding of what contributes to feelings of entitlement (like status loss) can be imperative in the development of extreme versions of White identity (White nationalism).

**Implications for White Identity**

In each study, identifying highly with one’s White race was not a correlational relationship to White nationalist ideologies. Looking back at Helm’s model for White identity, she presented six stages that affect whether a White individual may develop a “positive” or “negative” identity. For instance, to achieve a “positive” identity, the final phase—*autonomy*—refers to someone feeling comfortable with their White identity, which may manifest as an individual with high identity but low feelings of entitlement. This can be an individual
perceiving their own privilege but rejecting racism. Contrariwise, a White individual who has difficulty moving past the *reintegration* phase—refers to when feelings of guilt, anxiety, and denial may be formed into feelings of anger towards people of color—which could lean towards a “toxic” form of White identity and possibly racial extremist ideology. Suggesting that a negative White identity can manifest from an individual’s feelings of guilt. Findings support Helm’s model of achieving a “healthy” identity among Whites, however, how to achieve this “positive” identity needs to be assessed further. Previous models assert a healthy White identity is dependent on acknowledgment of racism and possible feelings of shame (Helms, 1993; Howard 2004). However, the latter is a non-starter for most White people and can be used as a recruitment strategy for extremism (Stormfront, 2017). Theorizing that achieving a “healthy” White identity is dependent on low levels of racial entitlement, I argue that efforts to develop this identity needs to focus on lessening feelings of deservedness to lessen feelings of threat towards cultural change and status shifts.

The overall findings of this dissertation suggest that, contrary to previous literature, identifying strongly with Whiteness is not a guaranteed path to extremism; but feelings of group deservedness because one’s Whiteness is a driver towards White racial extremism. This suggests that, though identity can play a role in a White nationalism, it does not necessarily contribute to the belief that one’s group is more deserving or better than other racial groups. If researchers want to understand the development of White nationalist ideologies, racial entitlement and other forms of entitlement (aggrieved, group, individual) needs to be considered in intergroup relations.
Strengths & Limitations

The current studies added to the foundation of existing literature on extremism, which can help inform and expand future research related to intergroup relations. This dissertation adds to the literature of intergroup relations by examining the construct of entitlement and feelings of deservedness, which has been related to mass shooters (Madfis, 2014), aggression (Durrheim et al., 2011), and outgroup perceptions (Golec de Zavala et al., 2012), however, has limited examination in the context of White racial extremism (Endevelt et al., 2020; Golec de Zavala et al., 2019). Even so, with consideration for prior literature conducted by Endevelt and colleagues (2020) on group entitlement, the present study was able to support findings of entitlement impacting support for intergroup violence, similar to Evendelt’s finding of stricter punishment and support for lower human rights to defend against potential status loss and cultural shifts. Furthermore, prior studies investigating collective narcissism - an exaggerated belief of ingroup greatness which can affect feelings of deservedness – will benefit from the current research findings on identity and entitlement working independently from one another in relation to extremism. In which, it opens avenues for future collective narcissism research to investigate whether it is the deservedness piece of narcissism that might be a primary driver (and less so the need to recognition on one’s identity) --at least when it comes to extremism. All three studies were able to show racial entitlement’s relation to identity, White nationalist ideologies, and intergroup violence. This research, being the first of its kind, opens the door for future consideration on entitlement’s impact.

Next, all three studies employed the same analyses, which allowed for replication and solidifying the relationship of the variables to one another. Even so, a potential limitation is that each study did have different parameters in methodology, including sample size and
measurements. With consideration for future studies, establishing consistent measurements for each variable could clarify the construct and future replication. Though, it is also a testament that similar results were produced regardless of this variation between the studies, which provides support for the findings.

Another potential limitation of these studies is when asking participants to think about their racial identity, there was no guarantee that they were strictly thinking of their White racial identity. Instead, they may have thought of their national heritage identity, such as American, German, or Italian. Whites in America may not be particularly attached to their racial identity (i.e. 30% - 40% percent identify with their Whiteness; Illings, 2019; Jardina, 2019) and thus may refer to their identity as their national or ancestral identity. This can impact the measures of identity as well as entitlement if one feels deserving based on their (e.g., German) heritage. That said, future research needs to include a question that checks participants’ definitions of their racial identity to ensure greater accuracy of the data.

Lastly, a limitation that needs to be considered is the analysis of each study. The analysis did not include a mediation model for the relationship between identity and White nationalism, when accounting for racial entitlement. Not including this additional analysis results in limited understanding of how racial entitlement may affect the relationship of identity and White nationalism. Though the dissertation was able to understand whether or not racial entitlement can act as a moderator, and as a main effect independent from identity, the study was not able to examine how much racial entitlement may account for the relationship between the two variables. Future research needs to consider additional analysis to accurately assess the relationship of racial entitlement on extremism and intergroup relations.
Future Directions

As mentioned, the dissertation found that a high White identity does not always lead to White extremist ideologies. These findings assist prior research in understanding contributors to White identity. Future research needs to consider what factors enable one to develop a “healthy” White identity and what may lead to a “toxic” White identity. If racial entitlement and feelings of deservedness are more of a factor than previously thought, then studies need to place efforts towards understanding the effect of entitlement towards intergroup relations and the development of group identity.

The dissertation also led to implications on extremism. Specifically, findings showed how support for intergroup violence among Whites was partly accounted for by entitlement for maintaining status and a reactance towards demographic changes. These findings support prior research suggesting that when a sense of violation occurs that contradicts one’s identity, status, or exaggerated “greatness”, motivation to “right” a “wrong” against the group can lead high-status groups to seek retributive justice through violent means. A sense of violation can coincide with beliefs of victimhood for one’s self or group (Reyna et al, 2022a). For researchers to understand the relation between entitlement and violence, future studies need to investigate feelings of victimization among White extremist that may be evoked from entitlement and perceived violations.

As mentioned, a limitation of these studies was when asking participants to think about their “racial/ethnic” identity, there was no guarantee that they were strictly thinking of their White racial identity (as opposed to an ethnic or national identity). To rectify this, future research needs to consider additional methodologies to separate out the effects of White (racial) identity.
vs. National identity (e.g., Italian; German). For instance, including a follow-up question that ask participants to indicate what identity they were thinking about, would be beneficial. Additionally, changes to the racial identity scale may be necessary, such as including additional items that center around White identity, possibly eliminating the word “ethnic” so that participants only think about their “racial” identity. Furthermore, the original racial identity scale was not created with White people in mind, so changing of wording and adding additional items might be a necessity when investigating White identity.

Future research should include an experiment manipulating racial entitlement. By manipulating racial entitlement, researchers can examine the causal impact that it can have on identity, intergroup perceptions, and behaviors. For instance, in the current study the majority of participants were fairly low in racial entitlement, which is a positive, but needs to be examined further in terms of why some participants are low and others are high. By investigating the casual impact of racial entitlement researchers will be able to make inferences on what may heighten racial entitlement and what will lower entitlement, and its downstream effects. Understanding the fluctuation of racial entitlement may allow for future interventions on extremist ideology. Furthermore, researchers could also manipulate different manifestations of group entitlement across feelings of deservedness for one’s racial group or deservedness for themselves due to their race. By understanding the individual and group manifestations of racial entitlement it may allow us to understand extremism from group-based motivations and lone wolf motivations.

Additionally, future research should investigate how racial entitlement manifests differently for Whites versus people of color. Racial entitlement among Whites can lead to negative outcomes towards people of color; however, racial entitlement may not be the same for people of color. With Whites in America being the dominant group and entitlement relating to
fear of losing current power and status, we can theorize that entitlement for people of color be the drive to acquiring power, status and equal rights due to being a low-status group. Prior literature and history as seen with civil rights movements, or the integration of schools (Kluger, 2011). I can be argued that feelings of deservedness for equity can arise after taking note of the unequal treatment and limited privileges and rights one’s group has in comparison to White Americans (Carter, 2011). By understanding how racial entitlement may manifest differently among majority and minority groups, researchers can begin investigating what leads racial entitlement to have negative versus positive outcomes.

**Conclusion**

With increased endorsement of racial extremism and acts of violence associated with reactance to cultural change and deservedness to maintain status (Saini, 2019; Wenzel et al., 2008), it is important for researchers to understand how entitlement can impact White folks and lead to domestic terrorism. The current research was able to advance psychological research on intergroup relations, with findings suggesting entitlement is a major component of extremism. Furthermore, the research allowed additional avenues in our understanding of White identity and it’s influence on White nationalism and potential to gaining a “healthy” White identity. With the rise of extremism, the role of racial entitlement is imperative in helping us understand and thus mitigate radicalization and political group violence.
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Appendix A: Full Scales from Studies 1 – 3

Racial Entitlement Scale

1. "I feel I am more deserving of good things than others because of my race/ethnicity."
2. "Those of my race/ethnicity should have access to more opportunities (e.g., jobs, education, housing) because we have more to offer."
3. "People of my race/ethnicity deserve better things in our life than others."
4. "Because of my race/ethnicity great things should come to me."
5. "If a boat were sinking, my race/ethnicity deserves to be on the first lifeboat."
6. "I do NOT necessarily deserve special treatment based on my race/ethnicity." (Reversed)
7. "I deserve respect due to my race/ethnicity."
8. "I do NOT feel entitled to more benefits due to my race/ethnicity." (Reversed)
9. "I believe I deserve the advantages given to members of my race/ethnicity."
10. "If I lost a job to a person of a different race/ethnicity, I would feel cheated, even if they were equally qualified."

*Note.* The scale was used for all three studies.

White Identity Scale

1. I feel good about my cultural or racial/ethnic background.
2. I feel a strong attachment towards my own racial/ethnic group.
3. I have a clear sense of my racial/ethnic background and what it means for me.
4. I have a lot of pride in my racial/ethnic group.
5. I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to.
6. I have a strong sense of belonging to my own racial/ethnic group.
7. I understand pretty well what my racial/ethnic group membership means to me.
8. In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my racial/ethnic group.
9. I have spent time trying to find out more about my racial/ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.
10. I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs.
11. I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my racial/ethnic group membership.
12. I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own racial/ethnic group.

*Note.* Studies 1 & 2 used the full scale, Study 3 used the second item.
White Nationalism Scale

1. I am sympathetic to organizations/groups that bring attention to White concerns.
2. White American culture is what makes this country great.
3. One of the problems with America is the decline of Whiteness.
4. Multiculturalism is the biggest threat to White America.
5. In order to maintain White status, it is sometimes necessary to use violence towards racial/ethnic minority groups.
6. Whites should band together to support policies that ensure a White majority.
7. My race/ethnicity is genetically more superior than others.
8. Violence is a regrettable but understandable reaction to demographic changes in America.
9. The government should prioritize immigration from predominantly White European countries.
10. Jews control the American economy more than they should.
11. Whites in the United States are being replaced by the influx of other racial/ethnic groups.
12. In an ideal society, men have more power than women.
13. No multiracial society can be a truly healthy society.

Note. The first four items were used in Study 1, all 11 items were used in Study 2, and the first four items were used in Study 3.