The Race of a Criminal Record:
How Incarceration Colors Racial Perceptions

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Abstract

This study examines the effect of incarceration on racial classification. In the U.S., racial disparities in incarceration are widely discussed and debated. We extend this conversation by exploring whether incarceration functions as a social cue when observers classify someone's race. We find that there is a contextual effect of incarceration on the perception of one's race, using longitudinal data with repeated measures of how respondents were racially classified by interviewers. Interviewers are less likely to perceive currently incarcerated respondents as white even if they were classified as white in the previous year. Respondents who were classified as black in the previous year are more likely to remain so if currently incarcerated. These effects are relatively persistent; for example, previously incarcerated respondents who were classified as black have more stable racial classifications than the never incarcerated. Further, having ever been incarcerated is associated with similar changes in racial self-identification. The implications of these findings for research on race and inequality are discussed.

Some scholars have argued that social institutions, such as the criminal justice system, do not simply reflect contemporary notions of "race" but actively create them, both by affecting the experiences of some racial populations and not others, and by shaping the images, stereotypes and discourses around what race signifies (Wacquant 2002). In this view, race is not a fixed or intrinsic characteristic of individuals, but a marker of complex and changeable status relationships (Omi and Winant 1994; Saperstein 2008). An especially famous example of how a change in status – and contact with the criminal justice system, in particular – can affect one's race is the darkening of O.J. Simpson's mug shot by *Time* magazine following his 1994 arrest for double homicide. As Richeson and Trawalter (2005) note,

> "…the image of O.J. Simpson as a 'criminal' or 'murderer' somehow needed to be Blacker than O.J. Simpson the adored professional athlete and movie star. This 'Blackening' of O.J. Simpson after his arrest may not have occurred solely on the cover *Time*, however. Becoming the prime suspect in two brutal murders may have 'Blackened' Simpson in the minds of the American public as well." (p. 517)

We examine the possibility that the link between criminality and racial perceptions is not simply anecdotal or associational, but causal, using unique data from the 1979 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth that includes repeated measures of the respondents' race as perceived by the survey interviewers, as well as the respondent's racial/ethnic self-identification at two points in time. We find that incarceration affects both how respondents racially identify themselves and how they are racially classified by interviewers. Respondents who are or have been incarcerated are both more likely to identify and be perceived as black, and less likely to identify and be perceived as white.

These findings provide further illustration that Americans associate blackness with negative traits, in general (e.g., Greenwald et al. 1998) and with criminality, in particular (e.g., Blair et al. 2004, Oliver et al. 2004). They also support social psychological descriptions of

group-making and categorization processes whereby individuals who act counter to (positive) group stereotypes are not considered full-fledged members of the group.[1] All of this suggests a vicious cycle in which racial inequalities in the present trigger stereotypical expectations that reproduce inequality in the future.

Race and crime in context

Most research on race in the United States treats race as an intrinsic characteristic of individuals, a fixed group membership ascribed at birth and based on one's ancestry. This practice has been critiqued on both theoretical and methodological grounds by numerous scholars (e.g., Martin and Yeung 2003; Saperstein 2008; Zuberi 2000). Empirically, researchers have shown that different methods of measuring race yield different results in the estimates of fertility, mortality and disease prevalence rates, as well as analyses of income disparities and medical treatment. This occurs not only because of differences in population counts, but because inconsistencies between different measures of race are associated with both the outcomes of interest (e.g., Campbell and Troyer 2007) and other sociodemographic characteristics of the individual (Saperstein 2006; Telles 2002).

It also has been demonstrated that racial self-identification alone can be highly variable and context specific. As Harris and Sim (2002) show, this includes significant differences between asking teens to report their race at school and at home. The definition of race also varies by country of origin (e.g., Davis 2001; Rodriguez 2000), and self-reports in surveys are affected by everything from the ethnoracial composition of social networks (Vaquera and Kao 2006) and neighborhoods (Xie and Goyette 1997) to the way the question is worded and the category

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[1] See Richeson and Trawalter (2005) and Kunda and Thagard (1996) for reviews on "subtyping."

options offered (Farley 2002; Snipp 2003). Further, the racial identification of young adults has been shown to change over time, perhaps partly in response to how others perceive them (Doyle and Kao 2007). The most famous example of how certain identities or racial categories become more (or less) important over time is the extraordinary growth in the American Indian population in the United States after 1960, far beyond what could be attributed to natural increase alone (Nagel 1995; Snipp 1986). Scholars find similar effects for reporting Irish ancestry in the United States (Hout and Goldstein 1994) and for "whitening" in Brazil (de Carvalho et al. 2004; Schwartzman 2007).

What specific factors are associated with the racial classifications of others has been subject to far less scrutiny. At the macro-level, Omi and Winant (1994) argue that the process through which racial categories are "created, inhabited, transformed and destroyed" is linked to struggles over the distribution of resources and rewards in society. There is also some micro-level work on racial perception in social psychology, which we discuss below. But the dearth of work in general is surprising given that an individual's material well-being is more likely to be affected through external classification (see Ahmed et al. 2007 for an exception). While there may be a dialectical relationship between identities and the racial classifications of others (e.g., Nagel 1994), the practice of overt discrimination is presumed to hinge on one's appearance, not on how one identifies in a survey (cf. Telles and Lim 1998). To begin filling this gap in the literature, we focus our analysis on predictors of racial classification, specifically whether a change in status – in the case, incarceration – affects how one's race is perceived by others.

The social consequences of incarceration

Rates of incarceration in the United States quadrupled from the early 1970s to 2000, a phenomenon with little precedent historically or globally (Wacquant 2005a). This led to a similar boom in studies of the effects of incarceration on individuals, families and communities. Scholars have documented a range of deleterious effects on everything from employment (Pager 2003; Pager and Western 2005) and voting rights (Behrens et al. 2003) to family and community ties (Patillo et al. 2004) and individual and community health outcomes (Thomas and Torrone 2006). For example, former convicts are less likely to get married (Huebner 2007) and have greater difficulty finding a job (e.g., Pager 2003) than never incarcerated individuals. This occurs, in part, because having a criminal record, particularly a narcotics conviction, increasingly disqualifies individuals from receiving a host of government benefits, such as educational Pell grants, housing assistance and food stamps (see Wacquant 2005b for a review).

During the same period, rates of incarceration and the magnitude of its consequences became greater for blacks than for any other group (Tonry 1995; Wacquant 2005a). In 2000, the incarceration rate for young black men was nearly 10 percent, compared to just 1 percent for white men (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2001). For men, the lifetime cumulative probability of being incarcerated stands at 6 percent for whites, 17 percent for Latinos and 32 percent for blacks, based on projections from data in 2001 (Bonczar 2003). These rates can be partly explained by differences in the socioeconomic characteristics and family and neighborhood contexts between blacks and other groups, but racial disparities in rates of arrests (Kirk 2008) and the likelihood of being sentenced to prison (Crutchfield et al. 1994) remain even after controlling for such factors. Further, even after being released, the "mark" of a criminal record has proven to be more indelible for blacks than it is for whites (Pager 2003).

Some scholars argue that these racial disparities are both the result of previous discrimination and a mechanism for maintaining inequality in the United States. For example, Wacquant (2002) argues that the criminal justice system is only the most recent 'peculiar institution' to "define, confine and control" African Americans. That is, that incarceration does not simply reflect contemporary racial disparities but is a vehicle for "race making." He suggests that the centuries-old association with blackness and crime makes it possible for politicians and law enforcement to target the black population without explicitly saying so, and the present-day limits on the rights of ex-convicts serve to maintain the denigrated status of blacks in American society. This creates a vicious cycle of poverty, incarceration and "civic death" that shapes the racial landscape. However, whether incarceration and the association between blacks and crime also affect the definition or racial categorization of individuals has yet to be explicitly explored.

The social psychology of racial categorization

As noted above, the empirical evidence that suggests incarceration might play a role in determining how an individual's race is perceived largely comes from experimental studies in social psychology. Research on implicit attitudes and cognitive stereotyping demonstrates that the process of racial perception and categorization is not always conscious or motivated, and functions similarly regardless of whether individuals hold explicitly racist beliefs or strong personal racial identities (e.g., Greenwald et al. 1998; Richeson and Trawalter 2005). While this means racial prejudice, in the most basic sense, is widespread, it does not imply that such prejudice is an inevitable result of brain function. As Eberhardt and colleagues (2004) note:

> "… although visual processes may reinforce stereotypic associations, the associations themselves are the consequences of widely shared cultural understandings and social patterns … as these understandings change, the

consequences of visual processes will as well. New associations may render different aspects of the visual environment relevant and expose perceivers to a different world from the one they currently have the capacity to see." (p. 891)

How this process of seeing, and then categorizing, works is particularly relevant to our study. We concentrate here on research that examines how cultural understandings can affect racial perception and categorization through the activation of stereotypic associations.

The stereotypical link between blacks and criminality is well established, and has been shown to affect people's memory of events (Allport and Postman 1947; Oliver et al. 2004), their likelihood of shooting someone believed to be holding a weapon in a video game (Correll et al. 2002), their attitudes toward punitive public policies (Chiricos et al. 2004), and even criminal sentencing (Blair et al. 2004; Goff et al. 2008). This research shows that when people are primed to think of blacks, they are more likely to subsequently think "criminal." We are interested in whether the phenomenon works in reverse, if primed to think of criminals – in this case, by interviewing someone in a prison – are people more likely to classify someone as black?

Eberhardt et al. (2004) report results from the first experimental studies to test the hypothesis that the association between blacks and crime is bidirectional. In particular, they find that white male undergraduates primed with images of crime-related objects (guns, knives, handcuffs, fingerprints, etc.) are more attentive to black faces than white faces in a subsequent visual processing task than subjects who are not primed to think of crime. They also primed a group of local police officers with crime-related words (violent, arrest, shoot, etc.) and find that they, too, are more attentive to black faces when performing a similar task. Further, when the officers were asked to recall the face with which they were presented in the visual processing task, those primed to think of crime were more likely to recall the face as being more stereotypically black than the face with which they were actually presented. Thus, the authors

argue that "just as Black faces and Black bodies can trigger thoughts of crime, thinking of crime can trigger thoughts of Black people" (Eberhardt et al. 2004: 876). Our study extends this work by taking this question out of the realm of subliminal priming and computerized images and into everyday interactions.

Hypotheses

Given the stereotypic link between blackness and crime and previous research demonstrating that racial self-identification can be fluid and context-specific, we expect that respondents will be:

1) less likely to identify as white in 2002 if they have ever been incarcerated, regardless of how they identified in 1979, and

2) more likely to identify as black in 2002 if they have ever been incarcerated, regardless of how they identified in 1979.

Similarly, given research in social psychology suggesting that the association between blackness and crime is bidirectional and affects the perceptions of others, we expect survey interviewers will be:

3) less likely to classify currently incarcerated respondents as white, regardless of how they were perceived in the previous year, and

4) more likely to classify currently incarcerated respondents as black, regardless of how they were perceived in the previous year.

In examining perceived race, we also explore whether or not the effect of incarceration on racial classification remains when the survey interview is not being conducted in the context of a prison. Our hypotheses regarding the direction of change in racial classification are the same

as above: respondents who had previously been perceived to be white will be less likely to be consistently classified as white over time, and respondents who had previously been perceived to be black will be more likely to be consistently classified as black over time compared to otherwise similar respondents who were never incarcerated. We also expect stronger effects for the likelihood of "staying" black among the previously incarcerated because of the differential treatment black and white ex-convicts receive in America society (e.g., Pager 2003).

In addition to experiencing higher rates of incarceration, (self-identified) black Americans are also less likely to be married, have lower average incomes and fewer years of completed education than white Americans (Fischer and Hout 2006). The black population is also more concentrated in the South, and in central cities. We control for these respondent characteristics to determine whether or not differential patterns of classification may be better attributed to these factors rather than incarceration, *per se*. We also control for demographic characteristics of the interviewer – including race, gender, age and education – because of research demonstrating interviewer effects on survey responses generally (e.g., Freeman and Butler 1976, Krysan and Couper 2003), and on the interviewer's perception of the respondent's skin tone specifically (Hill 2002). For a variety of reasons, we expect that interviewers who self-identify as black will be more likely to classify their respondents as black – likewise for interviewers who self-identify as white.[2] However, we do not expect interviewer characteristics to explain away the added contextual effect of incarceration on racial classification. We also expect some, but not all, of the gross effect of incarceration on racial classification to be explained away by the respondents' other demographic characteristics. This would occur, in part,

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[2] Our reasoning here draws on research suggesting that blacks do not exhibit the same pattern as whites in racially categorizing disliked in-group or out-group members (Richeson and Trawalter 2005), as well as the possibility that interviewers are aware that they are typically race-matched to respondents and so might assume that racially ambiguous respondents are members of their same race.

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because the more closely a respondent's characteristics match the stereotype of a particular racial category the more readily, and presumably more consistently, he or she will be classified (Richeson and Trawalter 2005).[3]

Data and Methods

The 1979 cohort of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth is a nationally representative sample of 12,686 young men and women who were 14 to 22 years of age when first surveyed in 1979. Respondents were eligible to be interviewed every year thereafter, until 1994, when interviews began occurring biennially. Data collection is ongoing, and the last publicly available wave is 2004. To examine how incarceration impacts racial perceptions, we draw on data from 1979 to 2002, the most recent year in which racial data was collected.

The NLSY includes a variety of questions regarding racial and/or ethnic origin, some of which are asked of the respondent and some are coded by the interviewer.[4] The respondents self-reported their "origin or descent" in 1979, as well as whether they are of Hispanic origin and the "race or races" they consider themselves to be in 2002. The interviewers also classified the respondents by race in each survey year from 1979 to 1998. We make use of both types of data.

In 1979, respondents were handed a card with 28 possible origin or descent responses, including categories such as "Black, Afro-American or Negro," "English," "Cuban," and

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[3] For example, a poor, unwed mother would be more likely to be classified as black (and be classified more quickly) because she fits the general stereotype Americans have of blacks than would a rich, well-educated business woman.

[4] Among all available measures of race/ethnicity, the NLSY user's guide recommends that researchers use the data on race derived from the household screener in 1978 because it is what is used to calculate the survey weights (NLS 2006: Table A.3.1). Race/ethnic data on the respondent gathered during the initial household screening was coded by the interviewer. It is not clear to what extent previous researchers have followed this recommendation because few specify the source of the racial data they use.

"Vietnamese." NLSY coded up to six responses. In 2002, following federal standards for collecting data on race/ethnicity (OMB 1997), respondents were asked two separate questions: one about Hispanic origin and one about race; the latter allowed for multiple mentions among the six categories. We collapse responses for each year into three binary variables for reporting "white," "black" and "other."[5] Though simplified, this coding scheme allows for comparisons both over time and to the interviewer's racial classification. Respondents who offered multiple mentions have "yeses" on more than one of these variables.

Interviewers were instructed to classify the respondent's race once the interview was completed. Thus, they had knowledge of a range of information about the respondent, from their income and education, to their employment and marital history. Interviewers were not given any special instructions as to how to classify the respondents by race (NLS 2006), and the categories available to them were: "black," "white," and "other." Of the 160,567 person-year observations where respondents have racial classifications in consecutive survey years, 9,588 observations (6 percent) are described by a different race than in the previous person-year.[6]

These changes in racial classification over time are treated by the NLSY, and presumably by most researchers, as "errors." However, consistent with previous research that compares

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[5] In 1979, "white" is not on the list of origin or descent responses. Instead, respondents selected from European ethnic/national categories, such as "Irish," "French," "Portuguese" and "Russian." We collapse these into a single "European" category that is then compared to self-identified "Whites" in 2002. Thus, our analyses do not count reporting "Greek" in 1979 and "White" in 2002 as a change in identification over time. We did separate Europeans into Northwestern (e.g., English, French, German) and Southeastern (e.g., Italian, Russian, Greek) because of research suggesting they were racialized differently in the United States until the mid-20th century (Jacobsen 1999), but there was little difference in the likelihood of change in racial/ethnic identification between the two groups. Similarly, for 1979 and 2002, we aggregate American Indian, Asian and Hispanic/Latino responses into a residual "other" category. This is done for purposes of comparison across the various measures of race, but also because our hypotheses regarding the effects of incarceration are not specific to changes in racial identification or classification among the "other" groups, only to changes from white to nonwhite or black to nonblack and vice versa.

[6] In referring to the previous year, we are referring to the previous survey year, thus after 1994 the comparison is to the interviewer's classification from two calendar years prior. Also, the 1987 survey was conducted by telephone so it does not include the interviewer's classification of the respondent's race. Therefore, the 1988 racial classifications are also compared to the data from two calendar years prior.

interviewer classified and self-identified measures of race (Ahmed et al. 2007; Campbell and

Troyer 2007; Saperstein 2006), we argue that the changes should not be dismissed.[7]

The measure of incarceration that we use as our primary independent variable is whether

the respondent was interviewed while in jail or prison. This information is recorded under "Type

of Residence" at the time of the interview. By extension, our measure of previous incarceration

is whether the respondent was ever interviewed while in prison. This likely underestimates the

number of incarcerated respondents because it misses those who were incarcerated for spells in

between survey waves and/or those who were not located for interviewing (or refused to be

interviewed) because they were incarcerated.[8] Some respondents are missing data on their type

of residence at the time of the survey; we remove these cases from our analyses.

To determine whether or not our descriptive findings (shown below) are robust to

alternate explanations, we estimate a series of logistic regressions introducing control variables

for a variety of respondent and interviewer characteristics. For the respondent, these controls

include identifying as Hispanic in 1979, gender, marital status, urban residence and region of

residence, all coded as dummy indicator variables (for identifying as Hispanic, being female,

being married, living in an urban area and living in the South, respectively). We also include the

respondent's years of education, per capita household income (logged) and age as continuous

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[7] Even if the inconsistencies were caused by actual coding errors, such as marking category 1 when the interviewer "meant" to mark category 2, we argue that it is noteworthy that these "errors" occur more frequently among some types of respondents than others.

[8] We also do not take into account the duration of an individual's incarceration. We argue that the context of prison affects the probability that one will be racially classified one way or the other, not necessarily that one's racial classification is always the same before being incarcerated and always the same during incarceration as well as after being released. Thus, we are interested in what occurs each time the individual is interviewed in prison. It is possible that a longer spell in prison might be more likely to alter an individual's personality or presentation of self in such a way as to influence their racial classification. If so, then we would capture both a change in racial classification in year 3 of an incarceration spell, as well as the two previous years in which the individual's racial classification did not change while in prison. This makes our estimates more conservative, suggesting that in some ways we may be underestimating the effect of incarceration on racial classification.

variables. Interviewer characteristics introduced as controls include race (self-reported as white,

black, or other), gender (an indicator variable for being female), education and age.[9] Descriptive

statistics on each of these characteristics are reported in Table 1, averaged over all person-years.

<<Table 1 about here>>

While the respondents were sampled to be a nationally representative, it is worth noting

that the NLSY interviewers are overwhelmingly female (92 percent), white (83 percent) and

highly educated (39 percent college graduates).[10] These characteristics are typical of American

survey interviewers generally, but it is unclear to what extent their racial classifications

generalize to the population as whole. Work in social psychology suggests that categorization

might differ by race (Richeson and Trawalter 2005); however, other studies examining

interviewer-classified race report that controlling for interviewer characteristics did not have a

substantive effect on the results (Ahmed et al. 2007; Campbell and Troyer 2007).

A significant number of cases are missing data on many of the control variables, in

particular on income, where 42 percent of incarcerated respondents are missing data. Rather than

use only cases with full information, we generate dummy variables for whether data is missing or

not, recode missing data to zero and include both the standard controls and the indicators for

missing data in our models. This allows us to keep all observations without having to worry

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[9] We also have information on whether the interviewer had interviewed the same respondent in previous years. There is a significant amount of missing data (because the interviewer's identification number is often missing), but when we include this as a control it does not alter the substance of our findings. A cursory look at the raw data indicates that there are cases in which the same interviewer classified the same respondent as different races in different years.

[10] However, it should also be noted that it is not clear whether respondents were selected for the "black" and "Hispanic" oversamples based on self-report or interviewer classification. This begs the question of how sampling decisions should be made and what it means to have nationally representative estimates for racial populations more generally. For this reason, we do not use post-stratification weights in any of our models. Given that we are making comparisons between racial populations, the survey weights would be more of a hindrance to our analyses than a help anyway.

about biases associated with imputation.[11] Finally, we include dummy variables for the year of interview in each model. These effects account for secular trends in "whitening," "darkening" or "othering" respondents over time that may be caused by societal changes in the definition of race (e.g., see Omi 2001).

Results

We begin by examining whether incarceration impacts racial self-identification, extending previous research that suggests self-reported race is sensitive to social context. As noted above, we postulate that respondents who are or have been incarcerated will be more likely than never-incarcerated individuals to identify as black and less likely to identify as white.

Self-reported race

Cross-tabulations. Table 2 compares self-reported race/ethnicity in 1979 and 2002, by whether the respondents were ever incarcerated during the period. In Panel A, for example, we find that among individuals who reported a European origin in 1979, 95 percent of those who were not incarcerated self-identified as white, while among those who were incarcerated just 81 percent did so. Similarly, of those who reported European ancestry in 1979, 2 percent of those who were not incarcerated reported being black in 2002, while among those who had been incarcerated 8 percent reported being black in 2002. The differences for respondents who self-

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[11] As income is the variable that is most often missing, we can also take advantage of the panel structure of the data to impute income based only on lagged and leading values of income. Using this imputed value of income (either with or without a mean scalar correction for bias) provides similar results to those presented.

identified as black in 1979 are smaller than those for Europeans and are not statistically

significant, but they are in the expected direction.[12]

<<Table 2 about here>>

Of course, given that respondents could provide multiple racial/ethnic responses in both

1979 and 2002, what looks like somebody changing from 1979 to 2002 could simply due to them

being in multiple categories in both 1979 and 2002. We address this issue in Panel B by

presenting the same cross-tabulation in a slightly different format, comparing the 2002 racial

identifications of those who did *not* self-report as a particular origin group. For example, in Panel

A, respondents reporting that they were black also may have reported that they were European,

but Panel B shows changes in racial identification for all individuals who did not say that they

were European. We find that among those who did not report a European origin category in

1979, 21 percent of never-incarcerated respondents consider themselves white, compared to 9

percent of those who were ever incarcerated. Among those who did not identify as black in 1979,

5 percent of respondents who were subsequently incarcerated identified as black in 2002,

compared to only 1.5 percent of those who were not subsequently incarcerated.

These descriptive findings support both of our initial hypotheses about changes in racial

identification. Next we estimate a series of logistic regression models to examine whether these

results remain when controlling for other factors that may affect both incarceration and racial

identification.

Multivariate analysis. Our first set of models estimates the likelihood of identifying as

either white (vs. black and other) or black (vs. white and other), controlling for incarceration

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[12] Given that ancestry and race are not synonymous, it could be that members of particular European origin groups both have higher crime rates are more likely to self-identify as black. An analysis of the original origin codes suggests that this is not the case; the effect holds across more fine-grained origin groups.

history and ethnic origin identification in 1979. For both models, we then introduce the

interviewer controls as a group, followed by both the interviewer and respondent controls, to

examine whether or not they account for the main effect of incarceration on racial identification.

Coefficients represent the log odds of identifying as either white or black, depending on the

model. Positive coefficients mean the respondent was more likely to identify as the given race;

negative coefficients mean the respondent was less likely to do so.

Table 3, Panel A shows that having been incarcerated leads to a decrease in the likelihood

that an individual will subsequently identify as white. This effect holds when interviewer

characteristics are controlled for, and though slightly reduced by the inclusion of respondent

characteristics, it remains relatively large and statistically significant.[13] Panel B shows that

incarceration increases the likelihood of identifying as black, and that this effect holds when

interviewer controls are introduced. Accounting for other characteristics of the respondents, such

as marital status and region of residence, reduces the effect of incarceration on identifying as

black to statistical insignificance (though it is relatively large and in the expected direction).

<<Table 3 about here>>

These findings suggest that incarceration does cause changes in racial identification, and

that the effect operates primarily through making individuals see themselves as not quite white,

rather than as more black.

Perceived Race

Having established that self-reports of race are sensitive to incarceration, we now turn to

examining whether incarceration also affects how other people perceive the respondents.

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[13] Coefficients for the control variables, for these and all the models that follow, are reported in the Appendix tables.

External classifications are particularly important to consider as we would expect perceived race to figure prominently in discrimination in labor markets, housing markets, marriage markets and other arenas. We examine both whether racial perceptions will be altered when the survey interview occurs inside a prison, and whether the effect of incarceration persists even after the respondents have been released.

Cross-tabulations. We find a statistically significant relationship between racial classification and incarceration status for both current and previously incarcerated individuals. Table 4 illustrates how perceived race varies from one survey year to the next for individuals of differing incarceration status. Panel A compares changes in racial classification between individuals who were incarcerated at the time of the interview and those who were not. Currently incarcerated respondents who were perceived to be white in the previous year are less likely to be classified as white (and more likely to be classified as other) than individuals who are not currently incarcerated. For example, among respondents who were perceived to be white in the previous year, 96 percent of non-incarcerated respondents are classified as white the following year, while just 90 percent of incarcerated respondents remain white. That is, 1 in every 10 respondents who was perceived to be white last year and is currently incarcerated is not classified as white in the current year. Among respondents who were perceived to be black in the previous year, currently incarcerated respondents are more likely to be perceived as black and marginally less likely to be perceived as white than those who were not incarcerated.

<<Table 4 about here>>

Panel B follows the same logic as Panel A, but compares individuals who have been previously incarcerated to those who were never-incarcerated. This demonstrates whether or not

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incarceration has a lasting impact on racial perceptions. Previous incarceration could conceivably affect racial classification in three ways: 1) if the interviewer knows the respondent was incarcerated, 2) if incarceration changed the respondent's "presentation of self" (Goffman 1963), and 3) indirectly, through the effect of incarceration on other racial categorization cues, such as income.

Indeed, Panel B shows that among those who were perceived as white in the previous year, respondents who have been incarcerated are less likely to be perceived as white than respondents who were never incarcerated. Likewise, among respondents perceived as black in the previous year, those who were incarcerated at some point in the past are more likely to be perceived as black, and less likely to be perceived as white. These descriptive results strongly support our hypotheses regarding the effect of incarceration on racial classification.

Multivariate analysis. We further test our hypotheses using logistic regression models, first comparing currently incarcerated respondents to those not incarcerated, and then comparing previously incarcerated respondents to the never-incarcerated. As with the earlier self-report models, if the baseline effect of incarceration demonstrated in the cross-tabulation (and again in the initial models below) is reduced to zero or statistical insignificance, then it is not incarceration *per se* that causes changes in racial classification over time. If the main effect of incarceration remains significant in each of the models, then we conclude that being in prison (or having been in prison) can change how one is perceived racially, net of the other factors.

<<Table 5 about here>>

Comparing across the models that predict being classified as white (see Table 5, Panel A), we find that introducing interviewer characteristics does not substantially change the effect

of current incarceration on perceived race. Adding controls for respondent characteristics cuts the effect of incarceration roughly in half. Nevertheless, the finding that incarcerated individuals are less likely to be seen as white, even if they were perceived to be white in the previous year, remains statistically significant. We find similar effects across the models predicting being classified as black (see Table 5, Panel B), though in the final model the effect of incarceration is no longer statistically significant.

The series of models examining the effect of previous incarceration on racial classification reveal the same basic pattern (see Table 6). Accounting for interviewer characteristics does little to change the effects of incarceration, but adding respondent characteristics reduces the magnitude of the effects for both whites and blacks. However, our hypotheses are still supported because the effect of incarceration remains statistically significant even in the final models.

<<Table 6 about here>>

As logistic regression coefficients can be difficult to interpret, it is useful to translate these results into predicted probabilities. While the probabilities of a given classification vary depending on the characteristics of the hypothetical individuals being compared, in general, they suggest that respondents who are or were previously incarcerated are approximately 1 percent more likely to be perceived as black and 1 percent less likely to be perceived as white than otherwise identical respondents.[14] Though this effect is small, it is nonetheless striking because it

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[14] For example, we can use as our hypothetical case two 20-year-old unmarried men who graduated from high school, live in a rural area not in the South, earn average wages and were being interviewed in 1980 by a 44-year-old white woman with a high school degree. If both were perceived as white the previous year, the one who was not incarcerated would be classified as white 98 percent of the time, compared to 97 percent of the time for the one who was incarcerated.

controls not only for the respondents' socioeconomic characteristics, but also for their perceived

race in the previous year. To put it into perspective, consider that currently nearly 6 million

people in the United States have ever been incarcerated (Bonczar 2003). Our results suggest that

as many as 60,000 of these current or former prisoners are seen as black as a result of being in

prison.[15]

Discussion

Taken together, these analyses illustrate not only that race is "socially constructed" but

that penal institutions play an important role in racializing Americans. Previous work shows that

racial self-identification is sensitive to both survey and social context. Our study goes further,

demonstrating that a change in social status results in a change in racial identification. In

addition, we extend research on the fluidity of self-identity to perceived race, which also varies

over time and in patterned ways.

The fact that the effect of incarceration remained statistically significant in four of our six

final models demonstrates that the power of prison to "make race" does not operate as a top-

down project of the state, or dominant group, alone (cf. Wacquant 2002, 2005b). Race is not

simply socially constructed and cemented – until the next historical epoch or Supreme Court

decision comes along – it is constantly reconstructed and affirmed in everyday interactions

between individuals (cf. Garfinkel 1967; Omi and Winant 1994). While previous micro-level

research finds that parents' income, education and other characteristics affect the classification

of their children's race (e.g., Xie and Goyette 1997), this can still lead to a view that once race is

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[15] It should be noted that our models suggest that incarceration affects the probability that an individual will be classified one way or the other, not that it (necessarily) effects a single, permanent change in perceived race.

socially defined, it becomes a (socially defined) fixed attribute of the individual. We argue instead that racialization is an ongoing process, or a way of seeing the world (Brubaker et al. 2004). Our analysis demonstrates that one's race is not only changeable, it is inextricably tied to both social status and material well-being, and similarly so for both self-identity and other-perception.

To further explore this phenomenon, we examine an alternative explanation of our results, discuss how perceived and self-reported race are related to other social factors besides incarceration, and address the potential bias of omitted variables. We conclude by considering the role that racial perceptions play in reproducing inequality.

Are these errors?

One alternate explanation that remains to be accounted for is the possibility of interviewer error. That is, it could be that race is actually a fixed individual attribute, and that interviewers are simply making mistakes when recording the respondents' race. We do not believe that interviewer error is driving our results for several reasons. First, by definition, measurement error should be random; it should be distributed relatively evenly across groups making it difficult to detect the "signal" of an effect of interest from the general "noise." To find support for our hypotheses requires exactly the opposite: "misclassification" would have to occur more frequently for some groups rather than others, and in the correct direction.

Second, it is possible that, if asked, the interviewers might explain a "miscoding" as being the result of error when it was instead affected by the non-conscious activation of stereotypical associations. For example, Richeson and Trawalter (2005) argue that people have more difficulty categorizing admired blacks (e.g., Martin Luther King Jr.) and disliked whites

(e.g., Jeffrey Dahmer) by race because they do not fit the stereotypes of their respective racial groups. The authors find, across a series of studies, that it takes white undergraduates the least amount of time to categorize disliked blacks and the longest amount time to categorize disliked whites. Further, they find that subjects "miscategorize" disliked whites at a higher rate than either admired whites (e.g., John F. Kennedy) or admired blacks, while disliked blacks are miscategorized at the lowest rate of all. With respect to our study, this suggests that non-conscious stereotypes would lead interviewers to be more likely to categorize disliked "whites" (i.e., criminals) as black, and less likely to categorize disliked "blacks" as anything but black.

Finally, interviewers also recorded their perception of respondent's gender in each survey year, and we would expect that if racial changes were merely indicative of interviewer error, misclassifications of gender and race would occur at similar rates.[16] However, we find that gender does not vary from one year to the next nearly as much as race. Only one-quarter of one percent (0.27 percent) of the sample experiences changes in perceived gender from one year to the next, while nearly 6 percent change racial classification from one year to the next. Even if we think that there would be twice as many errors on race as on gender (because there is only one "mistake" choice for gender, as opposed to two for race), this is still a sizable discrepancy.

Other characteristics related to racial perceptions

The results in Tables 5 and 6 suggest that the effect of incarceration on racial identification and classification is largely independent of interviewer characteristics. Thus, our conclusion that incarceration affects racial perception is not sensitive to who is collecting or recording the data. However, several interviewer characteristics have a significant effect on the

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[16] Of course, given that gender is also a socially constructed, we expect that changes in gender are also unlikely to simply reflect interviewer error.

direction of racial classification (see Tables A.3 to A.6). For example, as expected, interviewers who identify as black are more likely to classify respondents as black, and less likely to classify them as white. Similarly, having a black interviewer also increases the likelihood that the respondent will identify as black, though it does not affect the likelihood that the respondent will identify as white (see Tables A.1 and A.2).

Turning to the respondent characteristics, respondents who are living in an urban area or in the South are more likely to be classified as black, and less likely to be classified as white, as are respondents who are single or have less income. This reflects the demographic profile of the black population, as expected. In supplementary analyses, we add the respondent controls to the models one at a time, to see which characteristics drive down the prison coefficients. We find that adding income accounts for the largest drop in effect of incarceration status (both current and previous incarceration, for both blacks and whites), and that introducing the control for marital status also reduces the effect of incarceration. This suggests both that poor, unmarried people are more likely to be incarcerated and that income and marital status have become stereotypically associated with some races and not others.

By and large, the respondents' characteristics have the same effects on self-reported race that they do on interviewer-classified race. So for example, being unmarried, living in an urban area, and living in the south are all associated with an increased likelihood of identifying as black and a decreased likelihood of identifying as white. Higher income increases the likelihood of identifying as white, but does not affect the likelihood of identifying as black. As before, we can examine which respondent characteristics are responsible for the diminished effect of incarceration on self-identified race by adding them to the model one at a time. Here too, the results are similar to those for interviewer-classified race, with marital status and income driving

the differences. Interestingly, while introducing controls for income had a greater impact on the effect of incarceration in the racial classification models, marital status caused a greater reduction in the effect of incarceration on self-identification. This suggests that though interviewers and respondents use similar cues in their racial categorization decisions, they might give them different weight.

Omitted variable bias

It is also possible that there are other omitted variables that are driving our results. In particular, previous research shows that other characteristics not recorded in the survey such as skin tone, facial features and names are linked to racial identification and classification (Bertrand and Mullanaithan 2004; Maddox 2004). While we cannot control for these variables explicitly, to the degree that they do not vary over time, we can account for them using fixed effects regression. These models can be thought of as providing an estimate of the effect of incarceration on race that takes into account everything about a person that does not change across time. In essence, we are comparing within a particular individual how incarceration affects racial perceptions.

The results of these models suggest that even once we have accounted for all time invariant individual characteristics, incarceration still impacts both racial identification and classification (see Tables A.7 and A.8). Interestingly, in models of self-identified race, accounting for these time invariant factors reduces the effect of incarceration on identifying as black (but not white) to insignificance; while for models of interviewer-classified race, accounting for these time invariant factors reduces the effect of incarceration on perceived whiteness (but not blackness) to insignificance.

One possible explanation for this pattern is that incarceration is more closely linked to whiteness in the realm of identity, and blackness in the realm of perception. However, this conclusion pushes the limits of what can be concluded from our data, and should be examined in future research. What we can conclude is that even once we have accounted for all individual characteristics, whether explicitly measured in the survey or not, incarceration still has an effect on both perceived and self-reported race.

Real-world consequences for racial inequality

According to social psychologists, "categorization involves the match between the object in need of categorization and a stored 'image'" that is representative of the category in question (Richeson and Trawalter 2005:518). Using unique longitudinal data on racial identification and classification, we show that convicted criminals are less likely to match the image Americans have of "whites" than the image Americans have of "blacks" – even when the individual in question previously identified as European or was perceived to be white the previous year. Net of all other factors, simply coming into contact with the American criminal justice system can change the way an individual's race is perceived in all too expected and enduring ways.

This (re)vision of race has important consequences for the maintenance of inequality. When asked, 95 percent of survey respondents imagined a typical drug user to be African American (Burston et al. 1995, cited in Beckett et al. 2005). If Americans are conditioned to think not just that blacks are criminals, but that criminals are blacks (or at least not white), it suggests that racial profiling may be an almost automatic reflex:

> "Bidirectional associations function as visual tuning devices – directing people's eyes, their focus and their interpretations of the stimuli with which they are confronted. ... In a crime-obsessed culture, for example, simply thinking of crime

can lead perceivers to conjure up images of Black Americans that 'ready' these perceivers to register and selectively attend to Black people who may be present in the actual physical environment." (Eberhardt et al. 2004: 877)

A study of racial disparities in drug use and arrests in Seattle, Washington provides further evidence for this perspective. Beckett et al. (2005) show that who police officers "saw" as drug dealers and in which neighborhoods they chose to look had dramatic effects on the racial composition of drug arrests in the city. They argue that racialized imagery related to the crack epidemic conditioned officers to think of drug possession as a particularly "black" crime, such that white drug sellers and buyers could conduct their business in broad daylight without drawing attention from the police.

It is also important that researchers recognize the effects of race and incarceration may operate in both directions for methodological reasons, particularly given that having been incarcerated affects one's self-identification as well as the racial classifications made by others. Both race and a criminal background have significant effects on a host of life outcomes but, to the extent that ever-incarcerated individuals tend to "darken" themselves, using the self-identities from standard surveys will misconstrue the relationships – not to mention misidentify the causal mechanism.

In sum, our research shows that actual racial disparities in incarceration are exacerbated by stereotypical associations about the types of individuals who commit and/or are punished for committing crimes. Race is not just an input into the criminal justice system but an output, creating a vicious cycle that relies on present-day stereotypes and disparities to produce the racialized inequality of tomorrow.

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Table 1. Descriptive statistics.

Key Variables
Percent incarcerated	1.3
Percent previously incarcerated	2.2
Percent ever incarcerated	5.3
Percent perceived white	67.5
Percent perceived black	26.9
Percent perceived other	5.7
Percent identifying as European in 1979	58.8
Percent identifying as black in 1979	24.3
Percent identifying as other in 1979	26.7
Percent identifying as white in 2002	58.7
Percent identifying as black in 2002	30.2
Percent identifying as other in 2002	12.6

Respondent Controls
Percent female	49.5
Mean per capita household income	$33,150
Percent married	41.2
Mean age	27.5
Mean years of education	12.4
Percent southern	38.8
Percent urban	78.6

Interviewer Controls
Percent identifying as white	82.9
Percent identifying as black	12.8
Percent identifying as other	4.4
Percent less than high school education	1.3
Percent high school graduate	21.2
Percent some college/Vocational degree	38.9
Percent college degree or more	38.6
Percent Female	91.9
Mean age	49.7

Note: Statistics for person-years. Current and previous incarceration do not sum to "ever incarcerated" because the latter is based only on cases present in the 2002 sample, while the former are averaged across the entire study period (1979-2002). Racial/ethnic identifications do not sum to 100 percent due to multiple mentions.

Table 2. Self-reported race and ethnicity in 1979 and 2002, by incarceration history.

Panel A. The percentage of people who reported a particular race in 2002, by whether they mentioned a particular ethnic origin in 1979 and whether the respondent was ever incarcerated.

Ethnic Origin 1979	Race 2002	Not Incarcerated	Incarcerated	Difference
	White	95.0	81.3	-13.8*
European	Black	2.4	8.0	5.6*
	Other	3.9	10.7	6.9*
	White	1.4	.8	-0.6
Black	Black	98.3	98.8	0.5
	Other	2.5	.8	-1.7†
	White	58.2	38.8	-19.4*
Other	Black	4.3	9.1	4.8*
	Other	40.4	52.1	11.7*

Panel B. The percentage of people who reported a particular race in 2002, by whether they did not mention a particular ethnic origin in 1979 and whether the respondent was ever incarcerated.

Ethnic Origin 1979	Race 2002	Not Incarcerated	Incarcerated	Difference
	White	20.5	9.2	-11.3*
Not European	Black	59.1	73.7	14.6*
	Other	22.4	17.5	-5.0*
	White	83.6	60.3	-23.3*
Not Black	Black	1.5	5.0	3.5*
	Other	16.3	34.7	18.4*
	White	61.6	22.8	-38.8*
Not Other	Black	37.6	75.1	37.5*
	Other	1.9	2.4	0.5

† p<.10,* p<.05,** p<.01

Table 3. Logistic regression models predicting racial identification by incarceration history, NLSY 2002

Panel A: Identified as white

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Ever in prison	-1.07**	-1.10**	-0.74**
(standard error)	(0.23)	(0.22)	(0.22)
Identified as European in 1979	4.94**	4.96**	4.85**
	(0.14)	(0.15)	(0.16)
Identified as Hispanic in 1979	1.62**	1.65**	1.70**
	(0.22)	(0.23)	(0.24)
Constant	-2.06**	-1.76**	8.11
	(0.11)	(0.62)	(11.69)
Interviewer characteristics		X	X
Respondent characteristics			X
N (persons)	7718	7718	7714

Panel B: Identified as black

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Ever in prison	1.16**	1.16**	0.59
(standard error)	(0.38)	(0.39)	(0.39)
Identified as Black in 1979	8.06**	8.08**	8.07**
	(0.24)	(0.25)	(0.29)
Identified as Hispanic in 1979	-0.66†	-0.66	-0.92*
	(0.39)	(0.43)	(0.41)
Constant	-4.03**	-4.24**	-27.15
	(0.16)	(0.79)	(31.98)
Interviewer characteristics		X	X
Respondent characteristics			X
N (persons)	7718	7718	7714

Note: Standard errors for all models account for clustering within interviewers and respondents.
† $p<.10$,* $p<.05$,** $p<.01$

Table 4. Perceived race in previous and current year by incarceration status.

Panel A. Current Incarceration

Race last year	Race this year	Not Incarcerated	Incarcerated	Difference
	White	95.9	89.6	-6.3**
White	Black	.5	.5	.0
	Other	3.6	9.9	6.3**
	White	1.4	.7	$-.7^{\dagger}$
Black	Black	98.2	99.0	.8*
	Other	.5	.3	-.2
	White	44.7	49.6	4.9
Other	Black	2.2	2.3	.0
	Other	53.1	48.1	-5.0

Panel B. Previously Incarcerated.

Race last year	Race this year	Not Incarcerated	Incarcerated	Difference
	White	95.8	91.7	-4.1**
White	Black	.5	.8	.3
	Other	3.7	7.5	3.8**
	White	1.3	.5	-.8**
Black	Black	98.2	99.2	1.0*
	Other	.5	.3	-.2
	White	45.2	39.9	-5.4
Other	Black	2.3	3.4	1.1
	Other	52.5	56.7	4.2

Note: Previous incarceration is restricted to those currently not incarcerated.

† p<.10,* p<.05,** p<.01

Table 5. Logistic regression models predicting racial classification by current incarceration status, NLSY 1979-1998

Panel A: Classified as white

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
In prison	-0.67**	-0.74**	-0.33*
(standard error)	(0.14)	(0.14)	(0.13)
White in previous year	5.49**	5.41**	5.24**
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)
Constant	-1.86**	-2.32**	-2.29**
	(0.13)	(0.30)	(0.56)
Interviewer characteristics		X	X
Respondent characteristics			X
Year fixed effects	X	X	X
N (person years)	134622	134622	134622

Panel B: Classified as black

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
In prison	0.49*	0.56**	0.23
	(0.20)	(0.19)	(0.20)
Black in previous year	9.02**	8.92**	8.57**
	(0.10)	(0.09)	(0.09)
Constant	-5.19**	-5.24**	-5.64**
	(0.17)	(0.35)	(1.04)
Interviewer characteristics		X	X
Respondent characteristics			X
Year fixed effects	X	X	X
N (person years)	134622	134622	134622

Note: Standard errors for all models account for clustering within interviewers and respondents.
[†] p<.10,* p<.05,** p<.01

Table 6. Logistic regression models predicting racial classification by previous incarceration, NLSY 1979-1998

Panel A: Classified as white

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Previously in prison	-0.66**	-0.65**	-0.35**
	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)
White in previous year	5.48**	5.39**	5.22**
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.08)
Constant	-2.17**	-2.57**	-2.84**
	(0.13)	(0.31)	(0.48)
Interviewer characteristics		X	X
Respondent characteristics			X
Year fixed effects	X	X	X
N (person years)	160387	160387	160387

Panel B: Classified as black

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Previously in prison	0.67**	0.67**	0.42*
	(0.15)	(0.16)	(0.17)
Black in previous year	9.08**	8.96**	8.60**
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)
Constant	-5.12**	-5.15**	-5.05**
	(0.13)	(0.31)	(0.74)
Interviewer characteristics		X	X
Respondent characteristics			X
Year fixed effects	X	X	X
N (person years)	160387	160387	160387

Note: Standard errors for all models account for clustering within interviewers and respondents.
[†] p<.10,* p<.05,** p<.01

Table A.1. Logistic regressions predicting identifying as white
by incarceration history, respondent and interviewer controls, NLSY 2002

	Interviewer controls	Respondent controls	Both
Ever in prison	-1.10**	-0.72**	-0.74**
	(0.22)	(0.22)	(0.22)
Identified as European in 1979	4.96**	4.84**	4.85**
	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.16)
Identified as Hispanic in 1979	1.65**	1.70**	1.70**
	(0.23)	(0.23)	(0.24)
Female interviewer	-0.50		-0.50
	(0.33)		(0.33)
Interviewer age	-0.00		-0.00
	(0.01)		(0.01)
Interviewer some college	0.45		0.48
	(0.33)		(0.32)
Interviewer college grad	-0.13		-0.15
	(0.30)		(0.28)
Black interviewer	-0.40		-0.33
	(0.31)		(0.33)
Other interviewer	-0.11		0.04
	(0.42)		(0.44)
Female		0.02	0.02
		(0.09)	(0.09)
Married		0.58**	0.59**
		(0.09)	(0.09)
Logged Income		0.07*	0.07*
		(0.03)	(0.03)
Education		0.03	0.03†
		(0.02)	(0.02)
Age		-0.47	-0.52
		(0.57)	(0.57)
Urban		-1.04**	-1.06**
		(0.15)	(0.15)
South		-0.07	-0.12
		(0.18)	(0.17)
Constant	-1.76**	6.68	8.11
	(0.62)	(11.79)	(11.69)
N (persons)	7718	7714	7714

Notes: Standard errors for all models account for clustering within interviewers and respondents.
All models contain dummies variables for year (omitted=1980) and for missing variables. †
p<.10,* p<.05,** p<.01

Table A.2. Logistic regressions predicting identifying as black
by incarceration history, respondent and interviewer controls, NLSY 2002

	Interviewer controls	Respondent controls	Both
Ever in prison	1.16**	0.58	0.59
	(0.39)	(0.38)	(0.39)
Identified as Black in 1979	8.08**	8.05**	8.07**
	(0.25)	(0.28)	(0.29)
Identified as Hispanic in 1979	-0.66	-0.95*	-0.92*
	(0.43)	(0.39)	(0.41)
Female interviewer	-0.12		-0.23
	(0.37)		(0.36)
Interviewer age	-0.00		-0.00
	(0.01)		(0.01)
Interviewer some college	0.20		0.14
	(0.38)		(0.39)
Interviewer college grad	0.32		0.34
	(0.43)		(0.43)
Black interviewer	0.90*		0.99**
	(0.39)		(0.34)
Other interviewer	-0.38		-0.54
	(1.20)		(1.12)
Female		0.15	0.14
		(0.20)	(0.19)
Married		-1.23**	-1.23**
		(0.18)	(0.18)
Logged Income		-0.08	-0.08
		(0.05)	(0.05)
Education		-0.06	-0.06
		(0.04)	(0.04)
Age		1.13	1.21
		(1.55)	(1.57)
Urban		0.69*	0.68**
		(0.27)	(0.26)
South		1.27**	1.34**
		(0.23)	(0.24)
Constant	-4.24**	-25.32	-27.15
	(0.79)	(31.58)	(31.98)
N (persons)	7718	7714	7714

Notes: Standard errors for all models account for clustering within interviewers and respondents. All models contain dummies variables for year (omitted=1980) and for missing variables. † p<.10,* p<.05,** p<.01

Table A.3. Logistic regressions predicting classification as white by current incarceration, respondent and interviewer controls, NLSY 1979-1998

	Interviewer controls	Respondent controls	Both
In prison	-0.74**	-0.23†	-0.33*
	(0.14)	(0.14)	(0.13)
White in previous year	5.41**	5.31**	5.24**
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)
Female interviewer	0.23		0.24
	(0.17)		(0.18)
Interviewer age	0.01*		0.01*
	(0.00)		(0.00)
Interviewer less than HS	-0.30		-0.37†
	(0.24)		(0.20)
Interviewer some college	-0.05		-0.07
	(0.13)		(0.13)
Interviewer college grad	0.11		0.09
	(0.12)		(0.12)
Black interviewer	-1.22**		-1.14**
	(0.12)		(0.13)
Other interviewer	-0.44		-0.38
	(0.42)		(0.38)
Hispanic in 1979		0.10	0.13
		(0.17)	(0.16)
Female		-0.00	-0.02
		(0.04)	(0.03)
Married		0.49**	0.47**
		(0.03)	(0.03)
Logged Income		0.12**	0.11**
		(0.01)	(0.01)
Education		0.04**	0.04**
		(0.01)	(0.01)
Age		-0.07†	-0.07†
		(0.04)	(0.04)
Urban		-0.51**	-0.49**
		(0.07)	(0.07)
South		-0.51**	-0.49**
		(0.08)	(0.08)
Constant	-2.32**	-1.79**	-2.29**
	(0.30)	(0.50)	(0.56)
N (person years)	134622	134622	134622

Notes: Standard errors for all models account for clustering within interviewers and respondents. All models contain dummies variables for year (omitted=1980) and for missing variables. † p<.10,* p<.05,** p<.01

Table A.4. Logistic regressions predicting classification as black by current incarceration, respondent and interviewer controls, NLSY 1979-1998

	Interviewer controls	Respondent controls	Both
In prison	0.56**	0.14	0.23
	(0.19)	(0.21)	(0.20)
Black in previous year	8.92**	8.66**	8.57**
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)
Female interviewer	-0.31		-0.46
	(0.27)		(0.29)
Interviewer age	0.01		0.01†
	(0.00)		(0.00)
Interviewer less than HS	-0.04		0.06
	(0.39)		(0.31)
Interviewer some college	0.02		0.03
	(0.11)		(0.11)
Interviewer college grad	-0.10		-0.06
	(0.11)		(0.11)
Black interviewer	1.29**		1.22**
	(0.19)		(0.19)
Other interviewer	-0.57*		-0.23
	(0.26)		(0.30)
Hispanic in 1979		-1.60**	-1.56**
		(0.31)	(0.30)
Female		0.02	0.05
		(0.06)	(0.05)
Married		-0.55**	-0.53**
		(0.05)	(0.05)
Logged Income		-0.10**	-0.10**
		(0.02)	(0.02)
Education		-0.03*	-0.03*
		(0.01)	(0.01)
Age		0.11	0.10
		(0.07)	(0.07)
Urban		0.47**	0.44**
		(0.08)	(0.08)
South		0.58**	0.59**
		(0.08)	(0.07)
Constant	-5.24**	-5.74**	-5.64**
	(0.35)	(0.93)	(1.04)
N (person years)	134622	134622	134622

Notes: Standard errors for all models account for clustering within interviewers and respondents. All models contain dummies variables for year (omitted=1980) and for missing variables. † $p<.10$,* $p<.05$,** $p<.01$

Table A.5. Logistic regressions predicting classification as white by previous incarceration, respondent and interviewer controls, NLSY 1979-1998

	Interviewer controls	Respondent controls	Both
Previously in prison	-0.65**	-0.33**	-0.35**
	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)
White in previous year	5.39**	5.30**	5.22**
	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.08)
Female interviewer	0.26		0.29
	(0.17)		(0.18)
Interviewer age	0.01*		0.01*
	(0.00)		(0.00)
Interviewer less than HS	-0.22		-0.30
	(0.26)		(0.24)
Interviewer some college	-0.01		-0.03
	(0.13)		(0.13)
Interviewer college grad	0.12		0.09
	(0.12)		(0.12)
Black interviewer	-1.26**		-1.18**
	(0.12)		(0.13)
Other interviewer	-0.57		-0.51
	(0.40)		(0.37)
Hispanic in 1979		0.11	0.16
		(0.17)	(0.16)
Female		-0.03	-0.04
		(0.03)	(0.03)
Married		0.49**	0.48**
		(0.03)	(0.03)
Logged Income		0.13**	0.13**
		(0.01)	(0.01)
Education		0.04**	0.03**
		(0.01)	(0.01)
Age		-0.04	-0.04
		(0.03)	(0.03)
Urban		-0.52**	-0.48**
		(0.08)	(0.07)
South		-0.52**	-0.50**
		(0.08)	(0.08)
Constant	-2.57**	-2.44**	-2.84**
	(0.31)	(0.38)	(0.48)
N (person years)	160387	160387	160387

Notes: Standard errors for all models account for clustering within interviewers and respondents. All models contain dummies variables for year (omitted=1980) and for missing variables. † p<.10,* p<.05,** p<.01

Table A.6. Logistic regressions predicting classification as black by previous incarceration, respondent and interviewer controls, NLSY 1979-1998

	Interviewer controls	Respondent controls	Both
Previously in prison	0.67**	0.41*	0.42*
	(0.16)	(0.17)	(0.17)
Black in previous year	8.96**	8.70**	8.60**
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)
Female interviewer	-0.28		-0.45†
	(0.23)		(0.25)
Interviewer age	0.01		0.01†
	(0.00)		(0.00)
Interviewer less than HS	-0.25		-0.12
	(0.42)		(0.33)
Interviewer some college	-0.04		-0.03
	(0.11)		(0.10)
Interviewer college grad	-0.18†		-0.14
	(0.11)		(0.10)
Black interviewer	1.30**		1.24**
	(0.17)		(0.18)
Other interviewer	-0.68**		-0.31
	(0.24)		(0.28)
Hispanic in 1979		-1.72**	-1.67**
		(0.29)	(0.28)
Female		0.05	0.06
		(0.05)	(0.05)
Married		-0.56**	-0.54**
		(0.05)	(0.05)
Logged Income		-0.12**	-0.12**
		(0.02)	(0.02)
Education		-0.03*	-0.03*
		(0.01)	(0.01)
Age		0.07	0.07
		(0.05)	(0.05)
Urban		0.53**	0.48**
		(0.08)	(0.08)
South		0.62**	0.63**
		(0.07)	(0.07)
Constant	-5.15**	-5.16**	-5.05**
	(0.31)	(0.64)	(0.74)
N (person years)	160387	160387	160387

Notes: Standard errors for all models account for clustering within interviewers and respondents. All models contain dummies variables for year (omitted=1980) and for missing variables. † $p<.10$,* $p<.05$,** $p<.01$

Table A.7. OLS regression models predicting racial indentification
by incarceration history, NLSY 1979 and 2002

Panel A: Identified as white

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Ever in prison	-0.10**	-0.06**	-0.04*
(standard error)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.017)
Identified as European in 1979	0.81**	0.77**	
	(0.009)	(0.011)	
Identified as Hispanic in 1979	0.23**	0.22**	
	(0.021)	(0.021)	
Constant	0.12**	0.20**	0.53**
	(0.009)	(0.055)	(0.036)
Interviewer characteristics		X	X
Respondent characteristics		X	X
Respondent fixed effects			X
N (person years)	15436	15436	20294

Panel B: Identified as black

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Ever in prison	0.02*	0.01	0.01
(standard error)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.006)
Identified as black in 1979	0.97**	0.95**	
	(0.003)	(0.005)	
Identified as Hispanic in 1979	-0.01**	-0.02**	
	(0.00)	(0.00)	
Constant	0.02**	0.01	0.23**
	(0.002)	(0.020)	(0.013)
Interviewer characteristics		X	X
Respondent characteristics		X	X
Respondent fixed effects			X
N (person years)	15436	15436	20294

Notes: Coefficients are interpretable as percentages. Standard errors for models without fixed
effects account for clustering within interviewers; fixed effects models account for clustering
within respondent. Fixed effects models have more observations because they do not lose
cases due to missing values on self-reported race/ethnicity in 1979.
† p<.10,* p<.05,** p<.01

Table A.8. OLS regression models predicting racial classification
by incarceration history, NLSY 1979-1998

Panel A: Classified as white

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Ever in prison	-0.04**	-0.02**	-0.004
(standard error)	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.01)
White in previous year	0.87**	0.84**	
	(0.01)	(0.01)	
Constant	0.10**	0.08**	0.63**
	(0.01)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Interviewer characteristics		X	X
Respondent characteristics		X	X
Respondent fixed effects			X
Year fixed effects	X	X	X
N (person years)	160387	160387	177633

Panel B: Classified as black

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Ever in prison	0.007**	0.004**	0.004*
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)
Black in previous year	0.98**	0.97**	
	(0.001)	(0.002)	
Constant	0.01**	0.003	0.28**
	(0.001)	(0.007)	(0.010)
Interviewer characteristics		X	X
Respondent characteristics		X	X
Respondent fixed effects			X
Year fixed effects	X	X	X
N (person years)	160387	160387	177633

Notes: Coefficients are interpretable as percentages. Standard errors for models without fixed effects account for clustering within interviewers; respondent fixed effects models account for clustering within respondent. Fixed effects models have more observations because they do not lose cases due to missing values on perceived race in the previous year. † $p<.10$,* $p<.05$,** $p<.01$