Chapter 8 - The Hooded Elephant: David Duke's White Majority

Former Ku Klux Klansman David Duke won a strong majority of Louisiana's white vote in three statewide elections: a 1990 U.S. Senate race, a 1991 gubernatorial open primary, and a 1991 gubernatorial runoff. This consistent success poses a troubling puzzle for political scientists. How could Duke do so well now that the Black Belt which once rewarded racial appeals has dwindled in voting power? The anecdotal evidence suggests that Duke was able to expand beyond the traditional constituency of race-baiting candidates (Kelso 1991; Walsh and O'Byrne 1991). As the late Walker Percy warned, "Don't make the mistake of thinking David Duke is a unique phenomenon confined to Louisiana rednecks and yahoos. He's not. He's not just appealing to the old Klan constituency, he's appealing to the white middle class" (quoted in Powell 1992, 12).

Although white support for Duke was fairly solid in the old segregationist strongholds, he drew many of his votes from outside the rural Black Belt constituency. Consider exit poll results from Duke's last gubernatorial run. The *New York Times* Poll (1991) estimated that the 55% of whites who supported Duke included 48% of those who attended college and 43% of those with family incomes exceeding $50,000.[1] He received more votes in the 1991 primary from wealthy, suburban Jefferson Parish (50,607, or 12.4 percent of his total) than he did from 35 others combined (49,739). Therefore, Duke hooked in many whites who seldom rub elbows with blacks, who seldom compete with blacks for jobs, and who share electoral districts and political subdivisions with very few black voters. This conclusion, if accurate, calls into question the decades-old truism that proximity to

[1] By contrast, Crespi (1971, 128) found during the 1968 presidential election that only 26 percent of college-educated Southerners and 33 percent of those with incomes exceeding $10,000 admitted being attracted to Alabama Gov. George Wallace's candidacy, even though Wallace swept the Deep South in that election.

blacks causes whites to exhibit racial hostility.

But the empirical literature as applied to Duke's candidacy is divided. Susan Howell (1994, 200) analyzes survey data from each of the three statewide Duke campaigns and finds that, controlling for relevant personal characteristics, an individual's professed support for Duke bears little relation to the surrounding parish's black population.[2] Judging from her findings, the white backlash hypothesis does not hold for contemporary Louisiana.

On the other hand, Giles and Buckner (1993) implicitly challenge the generality of the anecdotal evidence from Duke's campaign. They present a parish-level (i.e., county-level) Ordinary Least Squares regression in which black density is correlated with the white vote for Duke after controlling for relevant demographic characteristics, and conclude that whites still respond to the racial context of their community.

So which finding is correct? Was Duke's support driven by whites who frequently contact blacks in their communities and perceive them to be threatening? Or was his support the result of hostility to blacks that stems from unchallenged stereotypes and racial isolation rather than exposure? This chapter criticizes the racial-threat interpretation of the Duke election data as presented by Giles and Buckner (1993). In particular, I present evidence for three conclusions regarding their model:

1. Measurement error, omitted variable bias and improper assumptions hurt the model's performance and strengthen the apparent racial-threat effect.

2. Clumping adjacent parishes in with the largest cities when measuring black density significantly strengthens the apparent racial-threat effect. The strong support for Duke among Louisiana's suburban whites cannot be explained by their proximity to urban blacks, since they supported his candidacy notably more than whites living within the cities themselves.

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[2] Indeed, for the Senate election she finds that whites are significantly less likely to support Duke when they live in high-black parishes.

3. Because Louisiana parishes vary widely in size, performing a straight aggregate-level regression weights the behavior of voters unequally. If we wish to understand how individuals respond to the racial dynamics of their community, the Giles and Buckner (1993) model is inappropriate. If we wish to understand why Duke did so well, their model is inappropriate. When the distribution of whites is considered using Generalized Least Squares, the racial-threat hypothesis does not hold up; indeed the effect of high black density seems to be less support for Duke in the state's urban areas.

My disagreement with Giles and Buckner (1993) stems from their suggestion that Duke's white majority behaved in a manner consistent with the traditional white-backlash hypothesis (albeit in a watered-down form). On the other hand, my evidence does not support a purely psychological approach to racial conservatism either. The Duke vote follows systematic geographical patterns: high in the Black Belt and in predominantly white suburbs and small towns, low in cities and in populist rural areas. I doubt such a strong finding reflects a political movement driven primarily by ignorance, or even migration. My argument is that Louisiana's white enclaves are distinctive for a combination of two reasons: they are heavily white, facilitating development of a "white middle class" ideological outlook, and yet they are close enough to a large black population that the racial side to those values becomes politically relevant. Such a claim depends upon investigating competing explanations for suburban distinctiveness. This chapter therefore ends by applying Louisiana's 1990 Senate election returns to the interactive hypotheses developed in Chapter 5.

A New Baseline Specification

Using data provided by Giles and Buckner (1993), I was able to replicate their results exactly

(Voss 1996a, 1,158).[3] However, their model has four sources of measurement error that will be removed in my analysis. With the exception of age and racial composition, Giles and Buckner (1993, 706n) used 1980 Census data for their demographic variables, which were the best available when they conducted the analysis. They miscoded both unemployment rates and median income. The authors also used voter registration and turnout data that did not correspond exactly to the elections studied, although such data are available.[4]

Finally, they based their estimates of the white vote on two questionable assumptions, both of which slipped in while computing their dependent variable, white support for Duke. For their measure, Giles and Buckner merely divided Duke's total number of votes by the number of whites in the parish. The numerator presumes that no black voters supported Duke's candidacy, whereas surveys estimated that Duke won 2% of the black vote. This faulty decision biases the results in favor of a white backlash finding (see the subsection on "Informed Assumptions" in Chapter 6). The denominator includes all whites who refrained from voting for Duke, including not only those who strongly opposed him, but also white Duke supporters who nevertheless failed to reach the polls. This questionable decision biases the level of Duke support downward in parishes with lower voter turnout, relative to those with high turnout, even if varying turnout rates have little to do with racial attitudes.[5]

Most of these measurement problems were easy to repair. They simply required gathering the 1990 census data, from the U.S. Census Bureau sources listed in the references, and coding the

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[3] Details on the data are reported in Giles and Buckner (1993), or are available in a more-explicit technical appendix accessible at the author's web page. All variables, except voting and registration data, came from four U.S. Census Bureau sources indicated in the References. The number of observations reported is 63, and not 64, because Cameron Parish could not be included in either their analysis or mine due to missing data.

[4] Parish-level registration figures were provided quickly and courteously by Elsie Cangelosi with the Louisiana Department of Elections, 504-925-7885.

[5] Duke supporters in some counties might have lower efficacy than those in others, with the level of turnout determined more by their optimism than the strength of their sympathies.

Table 8-1: Beyond the Giles and Buckner Model

Dependent Variable: the estimated percentage of white voters choosing Duke

Explanatory Variables	Model A (Baseline)	Model B (Cultural)	Model C (Unclumped)	Model D (Interactive)	Model E (GLS)
Racial density: % black among registered voters	*0.41* *(.10)*	*0.37* *(.08)*	*0.19* *(.08)*	*0.44* *(.11)*	*0.50* *(.15)*
Median white family income ($1,000s)	0.20 (.35)	0.08 (.28)	0.05 (.32)	0.17 (.30)	0.30 (.33)
% high-school grads, whites 25+ years old	-0.11 (.24)	-0.45 (.20)	-0.39 (.23)	-0.52 (.22)	-0.60 (.21)
% whites in labor force unemployed	0.70 (.75)	0.32 (.61)	-0.07 (.68)	0.08 (.64)	0.04 (.76)
% of population in an urban locale	-0.12 (.04)	-0.07 (.03)	-0.08 (.04)	0.08 (.06)	0.10 (.05)
% population born outside the South	-0.16 (.28)	-0.38 (.23)	-0.48 (.26)	-0.31 (.25)	-0.18 (.21)
% whites who came of age post-VRA	-0.28 (.20)	0.08 (.17)	0.08 (.20)	-0.38 (.19)	-0.05 (.19)
% French-speaking		-0.52 (.09)	-0.58 (.11)	-0.58 (.10)	-0.61 (.10)
*Interaction: % urban * racial density*				*-0.006* *(.002)*	*-0.008* *(.002)*
Intercept	70.75 (18.39)	84.22 (14.97)	90.88 (17.30)	93.05 (16.08)	94.79 (16.23)
observations	63	63	63	63	63
Adjusted R^2	0.49	0.67	0.58	0.64	0.65
Root MSE	6.7	5.3	6.0	5.6	5.1

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. Dependent variable aggregated from precinct-level EI estimates. Weighted regression uses the parish's number of white registered voters. The first two models use a racial density measure in which all metropolitan parishes get a weighted average of the metro black density. If the interaction is removed from Model E, the racial density coefficient becomes negative.

variables appropriately. The only difficult task was recovering a defensible measure of Duke's white support in each parish. Conceptually I want Duke's number of white votes, as a proportion of the total white electorate in each parish–but unlike my predecessors I am unwilling to use either Duke's entire vote as a numerator or all eligible whites as a denominator.

Louisiana provided my solution for the denominator. The state collects and reports voter turnout by race, so I know exactly how many whites showed up at the polls in each parish. That left estimating how many of those white voters supported Duke. As discussed in the previous chapter, the ecological inference method implemented by Gary King's software package EI estimates racial behavior accurately when conducted on precinct-level voting data. I therefore divided Louisiana into six politically relevant regions,[6] and conducted an ecological analysis on each region in turn. The regional results are interesting, and I discuss them later in the chapter, but for now I restrict my attention to parish-level estimates of Duke's white support computed from EI's precinct-level figures.[7] I also restrict my discussion to the 1990 Senate election. The white backlash pattern was weaker in the gubernatorial contests, so the Senate election gives it a sporting chance. However, all results reported in this chapter are closely parallel to what I found for the gubernatorial contests; the choice of example did not effect my findings or conclusions.

Table 8-1, Model A, replicates the Giles and Buckner (1993) regression model, but incorporating the above-mentioned corrections. Notably, the model is much less successful at predicting Duke's support among actual voters than it was predicting his support among everyone

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[6] I started with the nine political regions delimited by Howard (1971, 2), but collapsed three of them (North LA Hills, Central Pine Hills, Macon Ridge) into a single North Louisiana Hills category, and two (South LA bayou, Southwest Louisiana) into a single South Louisiana category.

[7] Giles and Buckner (1993) did not adjust the standard errors in their analysis, either to reflect the measurement error in their dependent variable, or to reflect the different sample sizes present from one parish to the next. Currently, no method is available to incorporate both sources of error simultaneously. This research only takes on one task, which is to represent the sampling error through weighted least squares. Future research probably should incorporate parish-level measures of estimation uncertainty as well, which King (1997, 156-57) describes but his ecological inference software EI does not automate.

eligible (Giles and Buckner 1993; Voss 1996a, 1158). The implication is that the model's success in part hinged on predicting turnout, rather than raw variation in voter support. Parishes with heavier white in-migration wind up just as supportive of Duke as those with larger native populations, once we stop assuming those who stayed home were against Duke. White income also no longer reveals a direct, independent effect on the Duke vote. Indeed, aside from the racial density measure, only the level of urbanization provides any clear assistance: Duke's support was greatest in rural areas.

Giles and Buckner (1993) also omit from their model one component crucial for understanding racial politics in Louisiana: the cultural differences between North and South Louisiana. Although historians debate the source of South Louisiana's relative tolerance on race relations–whether French culture, hegemony of the Catholic Church or the political economy of sugar-cane production–the evidence that such a difference exists is unquestionable, and frequently has found its way into the political science literature (Fenton 1960, chap. 4; Fenton and Vines 1957; Mathews and Prothro 1963b; Wright 1987, 23).

Since French Catholicism correlates with both Duke support and black density in a parish, its omission biases the racial density coefficient. I use the percentage of people who speak French in the parish, as reported from the 1990 census, to capture these cultural differences.[8] This number is not large enough to influence election results directly, yet the influence of French Catholicism in South Louisiana extends even to the Protestant residents of the region (Dauphine 1993).

Table 8-1, Model B, reports the result of removing the measurement error, omitted variable bias and untenable assumptions documented above. The French variable coefficient is quite large with a small standard error. The effect of these changes is a solid improvement across most indicators. The explained variance rises to 67 percent, and the average error drops to 5.3 percentage points.

Since Model 2 represents the basic Giles and Buckner model with (presumably) inoffensive

[8] Taken from U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1993a, indicator 310009 as a percentage of indicator 30001.

corrections, a brief exploration of the results is in order before proceeding. Other things being equal, a 22 percentage-point increase in registered voters who are black (i.e., a change in the black density variable of two standard deviations) from one parish to the next on average accompanies an 8.2 percentage-point increase in Duke's support among registered whites.[9] Although this coefficient already seems small, given the wide variation in Duke vote across parishes (mean 63; standard deviation 9.6), it nevertheless represents a statistically significant, positive difference as predicted by the white-backlash hypothesis.

The Effect of Clumping City Data

Giles and Buckner (1993, 705n) treat metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) differently from other parishes for their analysis. Rather than give each parish in an MSA its own racial density measure, they clump adjacent parishes in with Louisiana's four biggest cities (New Orleans, Shreveport, Baton Rouge and Alexandria). For each MSA, Giles and Buckner compute the weighted average of parish black density and use this value for all parishes in the MSA. The effect in almost all cases is to decrease the apparent proportion of a central city population that is black while sharply increasing the proportion of African Americans attributed to adjacent areas.

They cite as authority for this decision an article by Fossett and Kiecolt (1989, 825), which argued that city residents respond to the entire urban context rather than the racial balance in their particular governmental subdivisions. Although Fossett and Kiecolt do not establish this sensitivity to municipal conditions empirically, they do show that clumping race in their analysis of 1972 survey data produced evidence for the racial-threat hypothesis outside the South.

Giles and Buckner (1993) do not report the effect of this measurement decision. Yet the

[9] Note that the hypothetical 50 percent change in racial density discussed by Giles and Buckner (1993, 708) represents the gap between the most black and least black parish; parishes generally had far less variation amongst them.

academic literature on Southern politics would not lead us to suspect a big difference, since it presents little evidence for racial voting among suburbanites. Race issues historically have pitted blacks and upper-status moderates against working-class and rural whites (Bartley and Graham 1975, chap. 3). Also, Giles (1977) found Southern evidence for the racial-threat hypothesis in 1972 without clumping, as did Glaser (1994) more recently with some measures of racial hostility.

So if clumping suburban parishes with the cities produced a major change in regression estimates, that could indicate substantively interesting changes in the dynamics of Southern politics. Model C in Table 8-1 is identical to Model B, except it uses unaltered parish-level measures. The racial density coefficient plummets to 0.185. A 26 percentage point (two standard deviation) change in the density measure on average only accounts for a 4.8 percentage-point change in Duke's support, which is quite limited considering the wide variation in that variable across parishes. Clumping made a real difference in the estimated effect of racial proximity.

The Problem with Clumping

Is this clumping specification wrong? Before we can identify the proper "context" for a racial-threat model, we must pin down what threat a numerically large minority is supposed to represent. As Kinder and Mendelberg (1995, 420) write, "Proximity represents the possibility of everyday commerce and exchange between whites and blacks. It is not the same as threat, and should not be confused with it." Different theoretical models of threat imply different specifications. Chapter 5 discussed different backlash models, as well as a few psychological models, extensively; no need to review that discussion here. However, a brief review shows that the specification Giles and Buckner (1993) used does not make much sense for any of them.

In classic treatments by Key (1984), Mathews and Prothro (1963b) and Blalock (1967, 150-54), the concern is mainly political. The more blacks in an election district, the more discrimination and

white mobilization needed to maintain white power. With such a conception of Racial Threat, the MSA is clearly not an appropriate context. Parish and municipal offices do not unite entire MSAs, and legislative district borders tend to separate predominantly black inner cities from the white suburbs and towns surrounding them.[10] Indeed, probably only statewide elections throw together voters in these adjacent parishes.

Perhaps the perceived threat is cultural. As Merelman (1994) argues, racial conflict increasingly has revolved around issues of "cultural capital"–the value attached to cultural traits that are unequally distributed across racial groups–rather than economic or political issues (see also Sowell 1994). These battles are fought out in the universities, which draw from a geographically dispersed constituency. They are fought out in the schools, policy for which is set at the state level and in local school boards. They are fought out in the media outlets, which have audiences spanning much more than single metro areas. Most of all, they are fought out in the neighborhood. The MSA is not the primary site of this developing cultural conflict.

Finally, perhaps the threat is economic competition, as discussed by Blalock (1967, 147-50). The more blacks in a labor market, for example, the more they seem to threaten white job opportunities. The more blacks able to move into a particular neighborhood, the more they seem to threaten white property values. Since the Office of Management and Budget considers economic integration with the central city when conferring MSA status to a county, this presumably serves as a proxy for that concept, although not a precise one.

Yet even granting this, collapsing data for metropolitan areas is undesirable. First, inner-city blacks are not clearly more threatening economically to suburban whites than are rural blacks to rural whites in adjacent parishes. Not only are rural Southerners *more* likely to cross county borders for

[10] MSA status usually means that half a county's population resides against the border of the central city parish, which seems an adequate definition of suburb on this level of aggregation.

Table 8-2: Voting in Metropolitan Statistical Areas

Residuals Broken Down by Urban Area for Senate Race

City Area	Parish	% Black	PCI Gap	% Whites Voting Duke	Cultural Model Errors	Errors w/o Clumping	GLS Errors	Nearness Model Errors
New Orleans	Orleans*	55.15	$13,646	29.24	6.24	10.17	0.42	0.84
	St. Tammany	8.73	$8,549	36.79	-0.84	-4.84	-1.48	0.88
	Jefferson	13.05	$7,513	38.72	-3.74	-6.88	-1.04	0.52
	St. Bernard	4.12	$5,834	49.79	-6.37	-11.75	-3.70	0.27
Baton Rouge	E. Baton Rouge*	28.38	$9,762	34.94	-1.05	1.33	-0.48	-0.67
	W. Baton Rouge	34.68	$6,409	48.50	-3.88	0.12	-0.40	1.44
	Ascension	21.86	$6,637	44.68	2.21	3.45	2.30	3.51
	Livingston	5.60	$5,514	46.80	-1.47	-4.24	-6.49	-4.68
Shreveport	Caddo*	30.83	$10,092	34.36	3.03	4.46	2.88	1.44
	Webster	28.13	$6,103	47.47	-0.34	0.11	0.32	-0.95
	Bossier	14.50	$7,706	38.30	-6.65	-9.05	-4.43	1.81
Alexandria	Rapides*	23.84	$6,550	35.69	-0.86	0.90	0.80	-1.11
	Grant	13.68	$4,384	40.90	5.10	5.16	1.55	4.71

NOTE: A positive error means that the prediction was too high; a negative term means the prediction was too low. For example, in the Cultural Model for Orleans Parish Duke received 6.24% less support from white voters than predicted. Percent black is the percent of registered voters who are black. "PCI Gap" is the difference between white per capita income and black per capita income.

* The central city parish of the greater metropolitan area.

a job than urban ones,[11] suburban whites benefit from the cultural barriers to black participation in "advanced capitalist" industries (Merelman 1994, 3-4). That two areas are economically integrated does not mean racial job markets overlap much more than usual. Second, clumping implies that, in greater metropolitan areas, white voters living in black city neighborhoods experience a racial environment identical to that felt by whites living in all-white suburbs, which does not comport with Carsey's (1995) findings for New York City or with my own observations in Louisiana. Whites are not unaware of blacks in neighboring parishes, to be sure, but to treat whites living in St. Bernard Parish (95% white) as though a third of their neighbors were black is absurd.

In sum, none of these racial-threat mechanisms justifies clumping at the MSA level. Nor do the defenders of this technique offer an alternative for which parish borders are fully permeable around a city and impermeable elsewhere, as the alteration implies. Lacking a compelling reason to use the method, what are its costs? Aggregating throws away information. The parish is a meaningful political subdivision in Louisiana, and necessary to capture the political backlash hypothesis. Clumping also complicates interpretation of the statistical model, since observations are not all at the same level. Finally, it artificially reduces variation in the independent variable for select areas. From a methodological standpoint, it's just a bad idea.

Of course, measures of fit for the unadjusted model are not as strong. Clumping the racial data, while methodologically clumsy, still captures a pattern contained within the errors from Model C. The question is whether this works for spurious reasons. Evidence that it does shows up in Table 8-2. Nothing in the justification for clumping MSA data would lead us to expect the pattern revealed in the metropolitan parishes–which is that whites in parishes ringing each city systematically supported Duke more than whites *in the cities themselves*. The cities usually contain larger black

[11] In Louisiana, the Pearson's correlation coefficient between a parish's urban population percentage and the percentage of people who work in the county is .23. For the 11-state South, it is .34. Rural dwellers thus are more likely to cross county borders than urbanites, contrary to the conventional image of bedroom suburbs providing workers for impoverished cities. The suburbanization of service-sector jobs allows many whites to remain within their own domain.

populations, but fewer pro-Duke whites, that the surrounding parishes.

Consider the case of New Orleans whites, who in every way fit the profile of people who should succumb to the "black threat." They live in a majority-black city where they have lost control of the primary political offices. The city is mired in crime and poverty, social problems thought to exacerbate racial strife. Yet they showed little sympathy for Duke's tough talk, notably less than in the suburban parishes of Jefferson, St. Tammany and especially St. Bernard. The same can be said of Caddo Parish (Shreveport's Cedar Grove was shaken by race riots in the late 1980s) relative to Bossier or Webster, and East Baton Rouge relative to Livingston or Ascension. The pattern even appears, to a lesser extent, among other cities that do not form metropolitan areas: Calcasieu Parish (Lake Charles) relative to Beauregard; Lafayette relative to Acadia (analysis not shown).[12]

This pattern does not disappear from the regression residuals. Even after clumping all parishes in an MSA together, Model B tends to overpredict Duke's support among central-city whites and underpredict it for whites in adjacent MSA parishes (especially true with Orleans, St. Bernard and Bossier). Clumping is unable to capture the heavy suburban affinity for Duke. The pattern is even stronger, of course, when the model is run on unaltered data (again, see Table 8-2).

So Duke's dramatic support in the suburbs cannot be passed off as the same old Racial Threat writ large, a result of white sensitivity to the larger urban context. The racial-threat phenomenon simply does not apply within Louisiana's urban areas. If anything, the pattern appears to be reversed. Whites who have the most contact with blacks showed less enthusiasm for David Duke than those cloistered in the more homogenous suburbs. This fits with Carsey (1995), who finds that neighborhood isolation (not integration) made whites less likely to vote for David Dinkins in New York City and Harold Washington in Chicago, other things being equal. It fits with Kinder and

[12] The problem with these parishes, relative to the established "metropolitan" ones in the table, is that the adjacent counties are not clear commuter locations. Interstate 10 would aid Lafayette workers who wished to live in Acadia Parish, however.

Mendelberg (1995), who find that whites with more black neighbors and coworkers are less likely to politicize their prejudices. It even fits reasonably well with Glaser (1994), who finds, looking at Southern survey respondents, that prejudice is generally not correlated with county black density.[13]

If I am correct that the racial dynamic in Louisiana's more urban areas is opposite of that found in the small rural parishes, one way to test this hypothesis is to allow the racial density coefficient to vary according to level of urbanization. This can be implemented fairly simply by adding an interaction term to the equation, racial density multiplied by the percent urban. Table 8-1, Model D, my final OLS model, contains this new variable. Although the racial density coefficient is now large again, the interaction term is negative and significant. That is, in Louisiana's small, rural parishes the racial-threat pattern still holds, but among the more urban parishes that have the bulk of Louisiana voters, the racial density coefficient is negative–the fewer blacks in the community, the more likely that whites supported David Duke.

OLS Wrong for Grouped Data

Although Giles and Buckner (1993, 704) issue a disclaimer before presenting their analysis that the findings may be subject to "an ecological fallacy," they proceed to discuss results heedless of the danger. The racial-threat hypothesis is clearly an attempt to describe how individuals respond to the power balances and racial interactions within their community.[14] Yet the model presented by Giles and Buckner is particularly inappropriate for this, because it uses the parish as unit of analysis.

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[13] Glaser (1994) also finds on almost every question that suburbanites were more likely to report prejudice than other Southerners after appropriate controls, a result that sometimes achieved statistical significance. Curiously, though, he does find Racial Threat effects on what he considers the more political survey questions. It is not clear why my results differ from his, since his analysis uses individual-level data, relies on survey responses rather than tangible voting behavior, controls for suburban residence and self-reported ideology, and uses data from the entire South. Nevertheless, the few questions for which he does find Racial Threat effects are not notably more compatible with David Duke's campaign themes than are the others.

[14] This is not to argue that aggregate data are inappropriate for testing Racial Threat. On the contrary, given the sensitive and highly politicized role of race in our culture, I am sympathetic to claims that aggregate data are more reliable than surveys.

Unlike voting districts, parishes and counties have highly varied population sizes and highly varied numbers of registered whites. Tensas, the parish with fewest registered whites, had 2,286 in 1990. Jefferson, with the most, had 181,644 registered whites–more than were found in Louisiana's 27 smallest parishes combined (out of 64). Eight parishes contain about half of the state's registered white voters. Ecological analysis is especially risky with such units, because it gives disproportionate weight to the behavior of individuals in the smallest parishes at the expense of those elsewhere.

Indeed, the decision to use parish-level OLS might explain why Giles and Buckner (1993) contradict Howell (1994, 200). Since she is analyzing survey data produced using randomly selected voters, her results are implicitly weighted by size of parish.[15] On the other hand, the coefficient reported by Giles and Buckner for their racial density variable is a poor proxy for the parameter we really care about, a mathematical representation of how individuals respond to the racial context of their community.

The result of using OLS regression on grouped data, a specific type of heteroskedasticity violation, has been documented elsewhere (Kennedy 1985, 104; Kmenta 1986, 366-72; Palmquist 1993, 31-33). The coefficients are inefficient and their standard errors biased. In terms of measures of fit, the regression standard error is biased and the coefficient of determination almost certainly inflated. The solution to this problem also has been established. Since the variance of each observation is not constant, but probably is inversely proportional to the number of units within that group, we can use Generalized Least Squares. For each parish we simply multiply the values on

[15] See Howell (1994, 202) for details on the survey methodology, directed by the University of New Orleans' Survey Research Center. Her reported response rate is probably no worse than is found in national news surveys, used frequently by political scientists (Brady and Orren 1992, 62-64; also see Voss, Gelman and King 1995, 101-12).

each variable (including the constant term) by the square root of white registered voters.[16]

A Generalized Least Squares model appears in Table 8-1, Model E. Notably, in parishes with no urbanized areas the estimated effect of racial density is quite large and highly significant. On the other hand, as a parish becomes more urban, this coefficient drops sharply, as is indicated by the interaction term. For parishes that are at least 64% urban, which describes 16 of 64, the estimated effect of racial density is *negative*, contrary to the white backlash hypothesis. Indeed, this is true for the average Louisiana resident.[17]

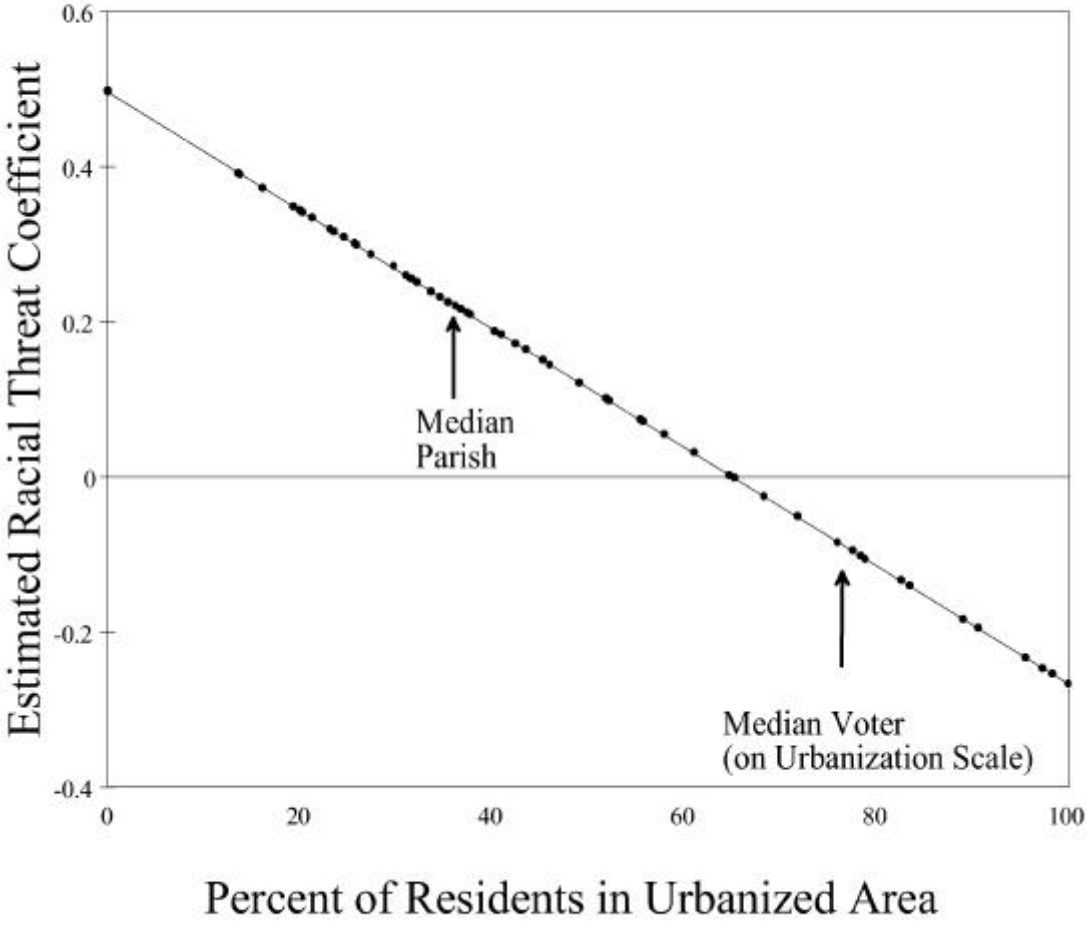
Figure 8-1 portrays a graphical representation of how the estimated coefficient changes across levels of urbanization. The slanted line on the figure represents coefficient estimates; each dot signifies an actual parish with the given level of urbanization. The horizontal line in the figure is the point at which the coefficient estimate becomes negative. Among the less urbanized parishes with few voters, a small racial-threat effect shows up. The coefficient for the median parish ranked by urbanization is 0.206, as indicated by the top arrow on the figure. Among the 16 most urbanized parishes (i.e., 64.2% of more), which also tend to hold the most white voters (i.e., 56.2%), the estimated effect of black density is negative. The other arrow, labeled "Median Voter," indicates the center of gravity when distribution of voters rather than parishes is considered–half of registered whites vote in the few parishes to the right of the arrow, where the effect of proximity contradicts

[16] Using this simple Weighted Least Squares technique requires assuming that voting behavior is independent within each grouping, once the various explanatory variables are controlled. Certainly neighbors discuss politics, and influence each other. Certainly advertisements run in some places but not in others. Certainly campaign appearances vary in frequency from place to place. The logical extreme of this assumption is not supportable, and naturally the more desirable approach would be to try modeling the weights explicitly rather than assuming each parish constitutes a fully independent sample. However, this mild contamination from one person to the next is certainly not enough to treat parishes as single units. The variance among precincts with few whites was much higher than among those with more, for example, which would not be true if the dependence were strong.

[17] If the interaction term is removed, forcing a single coefficient for racial density from the GLS regression, the coefficient is quite small (–.03), and in the wrong direction! Therefore the average Louisiana voter does not exhibit a Racial Threat reaction.

How does this new model perform? Standard measures of fit are not relevant now, since we have intentionally sacrificed the parish-level predictive benefits of OLS in order to adjust for heteroskedasticity–that is, to improve predictions at the individual level. But we can compare directly how this model performed for Louisiana's MSAs against the Giles and Buckner (1993) version with specification problems removed (Table 8-1, Model B). Table 8-2 shows that the new GLS model with its interaction term almost always outpredicts their model with its clumped black

Figure 8-1: Effect of Urbanization on the Racial Threat Coefficient



Note: Each dot represents one Louisiana parish. The coefficient estimates are drawn from Table 8-6, Model E, which allowed the racial density coefficient to vary linearly with the percentage of a parish's residents living in urbanized areas.

density variable in these parishes–only Livingston Parish gets notably worse with the new model. Because of the weighting, three of the four central-city estimates come within a percentage point of the true vote.[18]

The Gubernatorial Campaigns

So far this treatment has discussed all findings in terms of Duke's support in the 1990 Senate election. But Duke ran two gubernatorial campaigns a year after the Senate race. Is the racial-threat effect equally weak for those elections? As Giles and Buckner (1993, 711n) indicate, even their specification of the racial-threat model does not perform as well for Duke's gubernatorial campaigns. The same was true in my replications–evidence against the traditional backlash pattern was even stronger in the gubernatorial case (Voss 1996a). Two substantive reasons for this difference suggest themselves. First, whereas Duke's Senate opponent, J. Bennett Johnston, was a moderate Democrat from North Louisiana, his top opponent in both gubernatorial elections was former Gov. Edwin Edwards, a liberal affiliated with the French Catholic portion of South Louisiana. Second, Duke's background with the Ku Klux Klan and his attachment to the dissemination of Nazi literature were more highly publicized in the gubernatorial election (Amend 1992). Therefore, the apparent racial-threat effect, while strong in an election with few issues other than race, weakens when other political cleavages are prominent and when voter information about the campaign is more extensive.

Summarizing the Critique of Giles and Buckner

Superficially, my findings appear to contradict those of Giles and Buckner (1993). Whereas they observe a traditional white backlash pattern, I have been able to show that this finding relied on methodological choices that confused the results. Giles and Buckner have thrown out, for urban

[18] Of course, the dependent variable is really a set of ecological estimates; I refer to those numbers as truth only in the context of the regression model.

areas, most of the variation in the racial density variable. Not only have they lost all variation within cities, they've reduced variation across them, giving all the metropolitan parishes a black density between 20 to 30 percent. They also weighted rural parishes too heavily in the analysis by using OLS. Their model thus ignores much of the information contained in Louisiana's most populous areas, throwing away information from the five parishes that provided Duke with half of his gubernatorial primary votes.

I proposed using the restored parish-level data, and have constructed a model appropriate to this data set. This new model has two primary features: (A) It allows the estimated effect of racial density on support for Duke to vary across levels of urbanization, and (B) It weights each parish proportionally by the number of registered whites who might have voted for Duke, thereby deriving a better estimate of the individual-level parameters. This model is more desirable than theirs on methodological grounds.

Even more important, however, is the additional theoretical purchase this approach offers. Giles and Buckner (1993) offer no insight why David Duke won so many white votes–almost every demographic measure in their model has, in the last 25 years, moved in a direction that would cut into support for race baiting. On the other hand, my model encompasses a mechanism that probably spawned Duke's anachronistic success: the growth of racially conservative suburbs. My findings show–contrary to the racial threat hypothesis–that Duke did not build up his urban support among whites in the racially diverse cities (which have been shrinking). Rather, he won disproportionate support within the white suburbs, where the population has increased in the last few decades. It is this phenomenon that produces my central findings, all of which either refute or supplement those of my predecessors:

1. A high concentration of African Americans in a white voter's parish did not, on average, increase the probability the voter would support Duke.

2. An urban white's probability of voting for Duke decreased, on average, as proximity to African Americans increased. Given how many whites reside in Louisiana's urbanized areas, their contrary behavior overwhelms the lingering "racial threat" effect found in small, rural parishes.

3. The bulk of David Duke's support came from urbanized areas, especially suburbs, that were once thought to have little interest in such candidates.

The white backlash hypothesis fails in contemporary Louisiana, particularly in the urbanized areas that constitute part of the "New South." However, it would be premature at this point to reject a materialist approach to racial polarization, and accept in its place a psychologically oriented interpretation such as the contact hypothesis. Certainly the evidence has falsified any white backlash logic based upon mere proximity, and therefore I take issue with the suggestion that this is just a diluted continuation of the Solid South pattern observed by V.O. Key. The political geography of race relations clearly has changed from what those early researchers apparently observed.

On the other hand, my research also calls into question the psychological approaches. The white backlash pattern appears absent, but only until I add in an interaction for urbanization. It then becomes evident that Duke's support follows a clear and meaningful geographic pattern: highest in the Black Belt rural parishes, high in the suburbs, lower everywhere else. This does not comport with the naive Symbolic Racism approach, or with research equating "self interest" with simple proximity patterns (Kinder and Sanders 1996, ; Sears, Hensler and Speer 1979). It suggests that the politics of white backlash survives, but in a mutated strain–perhaps driven by cultural or economic competition rather than localized political antipathies.

The findings thus far are compatible with what I call the Cultural Backlash model. The proximity pattern thrives in areas of low urbanization, but washes out or even reverses in more metropolitan locales. These results could mean that voters in white suburban enclaves still feel threatened culturally by blacks in Louisiana, despite sharing neighborhoods or job markets with few

members of that group. On the other hand, a few other arguments outlined in Chapter 5 also comport with such a pattern. The remainder of this chapter thus delves deeper into the urban-rural dichotomy. Can competitor(s) to the Traditional Backlash and Naive Symbolic Politics approaches explain away suburban exceptionalism? I begin with a precinct-level analysis, to show that the urban-rural dichotomy partly survives even at that lower level of aggregation. Using parish-level explanatory measures is not the cause. I then turn to the remaining hypotheses from Table 5-1, seeing which hold up in face of the data.

Precinct-Level Analysis

Parishes are politically meaningful, but they are also quite large. Much of cultural conflict takes place at a more intimate level: in neighborhood schools, eateries, parks, public facilities. The true source of racial antipathies may be negative interpersonal interactions (Rieder 1985, 58). Statewide or national issues may still evoke the most intense feelings from whites with the greatest resentment against race-driven policies. They may feel they have the most to lose. Several scholars have implied that neighborhood data, for which precincts serve as a decent proxy, would be most desirable when searching for backlash if available (Giles 1977, 413n; Wright 1977, 499).

Earlier in the chapter, I analyzed parish-level estimates of the white Duke support. These figures came from six regional analyses, which also produced estimates of the Duke vote at both the regional and the precinct levels. The regional estimates appear in Table 8-3, along with similar estimates from Goodman's ecological regression.[19]

[19] As the table indicates, EI almost consistently estimated a lower black Duke vote than ecological regression did, with rates quite similar to that reported in exit polls. The one troubling sign might be the high rate estimated for blacks in the North Louisiana Hills (i.e., more than 6% of voters). However, Duke's average vote in the all-black precincts was quite high, much higher than found in the homogeneous black precincts elsewhere, so the estimates seem feasible.

Table 8-3: Aggregate Estimates of the Regional Duke Vote

REGION				EST'D DUKE VOTE		w/ CHANGE IN % BLACK	
	Parishes	Whites	% Black	Whites	Blacks	White Vote	Black Vote
North Louisiana Planter	10	255,752	28.5	60.0	1.4	-0.02	-0.00
				0.1	0.2	0.02	0.00
South LA Plains & Bayous*	18	470,938	20.0	55.2	2.9	0.03	-0.00
				0.1	0.5	0.01	0.00
South LA Planter	8	112,027	32.7	63.4	2.3	0.05	-0.01
				0.4	0.8	0.02	0.00
North Louisiana Hills**	18	163,986	25.4	65.5	6.5	-0.14	-0.01
				0.4	1.3	0.02	0.00
Urban New Orleans	2	290,700	35.4	54.5	1.3	-0.18	-0.00
				0.2	0.3	0.01	0.00
Florida Parishes	8	298,307	22.7	60.4	1.2	-0.00	-0.00
				0.1	0.3	0.02	0.00

NOTE: Reports white and black voting estimates for Louisiana's six political regions, resulting from six separate runs of King's ecological inference software EI. The method uses precinct-level data to generate regional estimates. Regional categories were adapted from the nine reported by Howard (1971, 2). Standard errors for the regional estimates appear under the estimates. The last two columns report the linear shift in Duke's support as a precinct's population of registered voters become more black, with a standard error on those slopes.

* Includes South Louisiana Bayou and Southwest Louisiana, both equivalently unfavorable for Duke

** Includes North Louisiana Hills, Central Pine Hills, and Macon Ridge, all highly favorable for Duke

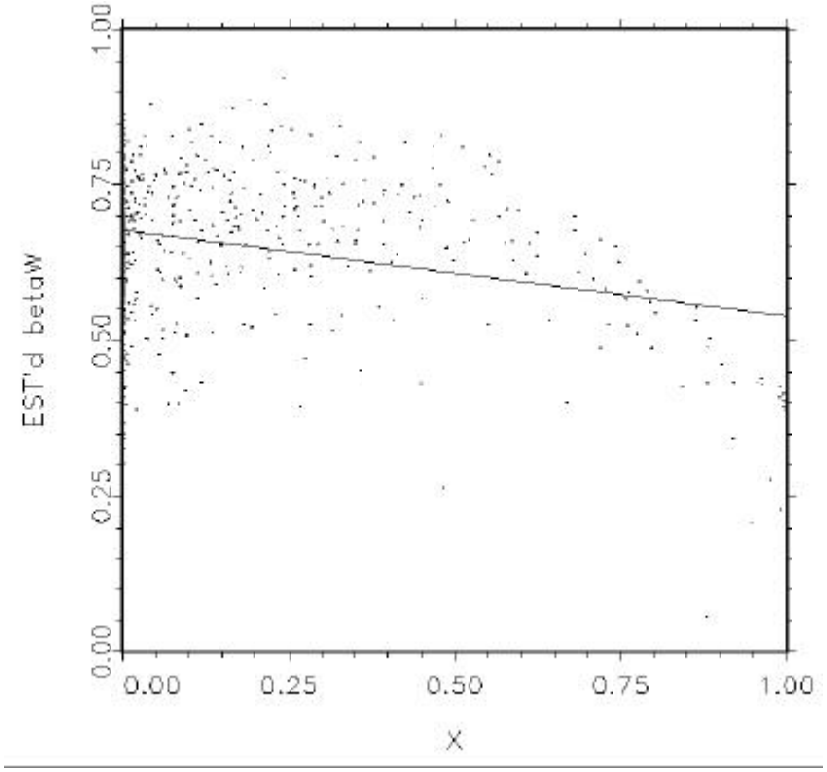
King's solution to the ecological inference problem allows precinct-levels estimates to vary with racial context, as discussed in the previous chapter. If whites in mixed-race precincts are more likely to back a candidate like Duke than those in all-white areas, his approach can pick that up. The second-to-last column in Table 8-3 therefore shows how Duke's white vote changed in each region, on average, as precinct black density rose. Only South Louisiana's less urbanized precincts follow a white backlash pattern. Duke's vote rose about half a percentage point, on average, for every 10 percentage point increase in the black population–a minor, but statistically significant, result. The backlash pattern was even smaller, although still significant, for the South Louisiana Plains and Bayous. The North Louisiana hills follow a different sort of backlash pattern. On average, Duke's white support is *lower* as a precinct's racial density climbs. However, this masks a curvilinear pattern, in which Duke performs worst in both the high-black areas and in the mostly white populist areas from which Huey Long sprang.[20] Figure 8-2 shows the shape, with each dot representing one precinct, and a line to capture the trend. Finally, the New Orleans area directly contradicts the white-backlash logic, with Duke's support decreasing fairly steadily as a precinct's black population rises. The overall results do not indicate that the negligible contextual effect observed at the parish level becomes any stronger at the neighborhood level.

The Interactive Hypotheses

My Chapter 4 discussion of Southern race relations suggested that competition over political power, and especially that over desegregation, has faded in the South. Contemporary racial struggle centers on cultural primacy, and to a lesser extent economic advantage. David Duke was savvy enough to identify the stakes involved. He promised to preserve what people understood to be "white middle class" prerogatives–defense of their pocketbooks against the undeserving poor (the

[20] I allowed my EI estimation to model that pattern explicitly, one that did not appear elsewhere in the state.

Figure 8-2: White-Backlash Pattern in the North Louisiana Hills



NOTE: Each dot in the graph represents one North Louisiana Precinct. The vertical axis indicates the estimated white vote for Duke; the horizontal axis indicates the black density among registered voters in the precinct. The downward sloping line indicates that Duke's support tends to drop in diverse precincts, so the only backlash effect appears in precincts under 25% black.

"class" part), resistance to group-based attempts to promote blacks at the expense of whites (the "white" part), respect for their values against both dismissive elites and abusive rabble (the "middle" part). All of these forces come together in suburban life, where the white middle class subculture often dominates.[21]

Evidence presented earlier in this chapter shows that, as expected, Duke performed disproportionately well in suburban areas. This finding is compatible with the Cultural Backlash hypothesis I favor, and not with the traditional approach to proximity. However, before embracing the particular explanation that predominantly white suburbs and small towns set off a unique subculture defined in part by their whiteness, I need to falsify some of the competing hypotheses. That is the purpose of this section.

Status Inequality

Several theories introduced in Chapter 5 suggest that the backlash pattern should vary depending upon the economic status of a particular area. The Contact hypothesis, applied to Duke's vote, would mean that whites in a racially mixed parish should oppose Duke, compared to those in a whiter parish–but only when status is fairly equal. When black socioeconomic resources fall relative to that of whites, contact loses its beneficial impact (Miller and Brewer 1984b). The Colonizer Backlash hypothesis, meanwhile, suggests that proximity will breed racial conservatism where the local economy seems built on racial exploitation, as represented by socioeconomic inequality within the population. The effect will lessen as economic status becomes similar, and therefore the benefits of racial distinctiveness more heavily curtailed. The Hard Times hypothesis, finally, implies that whites with lower average status will see nearby blacks as an economic threat, and therefore respond to Duke's appeals, whereas in parishes with a larger economic gap the threat

[21] This is not to take away from the high variance found in suburbs around the country, and even in the South, only to recognize a central tendency (Wirt et al. 1972, 25-33).

felt from black proximity disappears.

Table 8-4: Observable Implications Tested By A Status-Gap Interaction

HYPOTHESIS	SIGN EXPECTED	
	Density Variable	Interaction w/ Status Gap
Contact Hypothesis	–	+
Colonizer Backlash	0	+
Hard Times Backlash	+	–

These alternate hypotheses are fairly easy to test within terms of the data, although the instrument is admittedly blunt. Each merely requires an interaction term added to the core model, black density multiplied by some measure of the status gap between blacks and whites. For the Contact hypothesis, the black density coefficient should be negative but the interaction positive–Duke's vote dropping with proximity, but only when the social gap is narrow; contact in the face of severe inequalities would reverse the pattern. For the Colonizer hypothesis, the black density coefficient should be small but the interaction significantly positive–proximity unimportant when the local economy is not built on exploitation, but contributing to Duke's support as the social gap gets wider. For the Hard Times hypothesis, the black density coefficient should be positive but the interaction term negative–proximity fuels Duke's support when blacks and whites share a competitive social standing, but loses its impact or even reverses when white status advantages insulate them from racial competition. Table 8-4 summarizes these expectations.

I used several status variables in the course of my analysis, including: education rates (both college and high school), per capita income, unemployment and poverty rates. Two of the interaction terms, that for high-school education and unemployment rates, were unable to redeem

the density coefficient.[22] The remainder, however, uniformly turned up results compatible with the Hard Times Backlash hypothesis. Proximity with blacks enhanced Duke's voting support where white and blacks shared similar incomes, similar poverty rates, and similar college-graduation rates. The more white status rose above typical black conditions in a parish, however, the less the proximity mattered. In locales where relative white status is particularly high, such that we might characterize the local job market as a "split labor market," whites are less supportive of Duke as the African-American population climbs. Table 8-5 first presents the previous results using an urbanization interaction (i.e., Model A here is the same as Model D from Table 8-1). It then follows with one example of this Hard Times analysis, using the gap in per capita income (Model B).

I can add one other test of the Hard Times hypothesis, which builds on white socioeconomic status rather than the difference. White perceptions of threat may hinge less on the resources that blacks enjoy, and more on how vulnerable they are regardless of the black population's status. A poorer white population might embrace scapegoating such as Duke promoted, regardless of the objective conditions suffered by black neighbors, whereas a wealthy white population might feel more generous simply because they can enjoy such a luxury. The third model in Table 8-5 includes an interaction of racial density and white per capita income (although I tried each of the five status measures used for the gap variables). Once again, the Hard Times hypothesis succeeds. Among parishes with a low white per capita income, those in close proximity to blacks (e.g., the Black Belt parishes) tended to support David Duke more than those in whiter parishes (e.g., the populist hills). Among the richest parishes, however, proximity bore little relation to the Duke vote.

It is important to understand how the Hard Times findings can be reconciled with the urbanization findings, since they come from the same data. The former may seem to contradict my

[22] Presumably, high-school education no longer sets off whites for status advantages, and so has become politically irrelevant. Unemployment rates, meanwhile, do not reflect the conditions experiences by the bulk of blacks and whites who make up the electorate, and sociotropic voting may be limited.

Table 8-5: Reconciling the Interactive Hypotheses

Dependent variable: the estimated percentage of white voters choosing David Duke

Explanatory Variable	Model A (Cultural)	Model B (Hard Times)	Model C (Hard Times)	Model D (Contact)	Model E (Competing)
Racial density: % black among registered voters	*0.44* *(.11)*	*0.44* *(.21)*	*0.91* *(.29)*	*0.22* *(.13)*	*0.54* *(.17)*
Median white family income ($1,000s)	0.17 (.30)	0.47 (1.2)	1.89 (1.2)	-0.06 (.35)	0.34 (.39)
% high-school grads, whites 25+ years old	-0.52 (.22)	-0.56 (.25)	-0.70 (.24)	-0.35 (.23)	-0.61 (.24)
% whites in labor force unemployed	0.08 (.64)	-0.58 (.83)	-0.09 (.82)	-0.36 (.83)	-0.04 (.79)
% of population in an urban locale	0.08 (.06)	-0.03 (.04)	-0.03 (.04)	-0.05 (.04)	0.08 (.06)
% population born outside the South	-0.31 (.25)	-0.19 (.24)	-0.02 (.24)	-0.30 (.24)	-0.11 (.24)
% whites who came of age post-VRA	-0.38 (.19)	-0.07 (.19)	0.03 (.19)	-0.07 (.21)	-0.10 (.21)
% French-speaking	-0.58 (.10)	-0.65 (.11)	-0.66 (.10)	-0.73 (.11)	-0.62 (.11)
*Interaction: % urban * racial density*	*-0.006* *(.002)*				*-0.006* *(.003)*
*Interaction: personal income * racial density*		*-0.05* *(.02)*	*-0.07* *(.02)*		*-0.01* *(.02)*
*Interaction: % migrants * racial density*				*-0.009* *(.004)*	*-0.001* *(.005)*
Intercept	93.05 (16.08)	107.98 (18.42)	91.33 (18.77)	103.83 (17.67)	98.45 (17.91)
observations	63	63	63	63	63
Adjusted R^2	0.64	0.60	0.63	0.58	0.63
Root MSE	5.6	5.5	5.2	5.6	5.2

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. Dependent variable aggregated from precinct-level EI estimates. Weighted regression uses the parish's number of white registered voters. The first income interaction uses the gap between white and black income. The second uses just white per capita income. The last model, which throws all three hypotheses against each other, returns to the gap.

emphasis on suburban conservatism, since the stereotypical form of economic competition pits working class white ethnics against urban blacks who threaten their already marginal social status. What reconciles the two results is that, at least within parish data, the *biggest* status gaps actually appear in the metropolitan areas, and within those in the cities (see Table 8-2). If blacks with similar status are more threatening because of their ability to compete, the cities are least likely to feel the bite. It is in rural areas, where many whites operate in the same labor market, that blacks and whites approach economic parity. The model indicates that proximity did not fuel Duke's white support in places with the greatest gap, but this is compatible with my claim that metropolitan areas contradict the old backlash phenomenon.[23]

I cannot be certain, however, whether it *explains* the pattern. Ideally, I would like to distinguish between cultural and economic sources of conflict, but the models used above cannot parse out the various qualities that set metropolitan areas apart. I cannot be sure whether the racial proximity effect survives in rural areas because of slow-changing mores, or because blacks are more competitive economically. I cannot be sure whether the racial proximity effect fails in metropolitan areas because white cultural orientations fuel backlash even in places where blacks are scant, or because urban whites are simply most insulated from economic competition with the many blacks in their locality. Doing this requires throwing the Cultural Backlash and Hard Times models against each other, which I will do shortly. All I can conclude, at this point, is that the tests presented in this subsection have helped falsify two hypotheses, as operationalized here: the Contact Hypothesis and the Colonizer Backlash hypothesis.

[23] It is worth noting that, while I discuss the status gap in terms of economics, the model using education rates was slightly more successful (judging from the model fit). It may not be accidental that education, which comes closest to a cultural resource, has the most explanatory power.

The Migration Effect

The earlier discussion makes clear that *something* must distinguish suburban whites from central-city whites other than proximity to the same African-American population. Direct political competition is obviously not the cause, nor is immediate proximity. Thus far my leading candidates are cultural or economic backlash, both of which impact rural areas differently than metropolitan ones. Giles and Buckner (1996) offer a psychological explanation: Over the years suburbs have attracted whites who are most "sensitive" to race. That is, both my model and theirs might be guilty of omitted variable bias–racial sensitivity is negatively correlated with proximity to blacks, is positively correlated with vote for Duke, and is causally prior to urban residency patterns. This is a plausible argument. Racism certainly has an unexplainable randomness, and like-minded whites might gather in cloistered neighborhoods over time.

The argument builds on a common perception, which is that whites have fled the central cities for racially pure suburbs because they wanted to escape blacks. At the aggregate level, it is easy to see why "white flight"would be an appealing explanation: many whites are racist; lots of whites have moved out of cities; lots of whites have moved into suburbs. Unfortunately, connecting those phenomena requires an inferential leap, because we do not know for sure whether racist whites are dramatically more likely to move to the suburbs. Certainly "white flight" has decimated the cities of their white population, but it is not clear how many of those whites were motivated by racial antipathy, as opposed to opportunities elsewhere or the social ills that accompany neighborhood change.

There are many reasons to move from city to suburb, only one of which is intolerance of racial diversity (as witnessed by the growing black population in Southern suburbs). This is especially true when one considers that the United States is a mobile society, so people need not restrict their relocations within a given metropolis. Very few outsiders moving to the New Orleans area could

be doing so as a means of *lowering* the minority population around them, yet they may favor suburban parishes for their school systems, physical facilities, abundant greenery, or lower crime rates. This is not an idle point, since often a large chunk of a parish's population hails from far away. Half the whites in Bossier Parish, part of Shreveport's suburban ring, were born outside of Louisiana, and a fifth outside the South. A third of New Orleans whites are not from Louisiana, and a fifth are not native Southerners. Nor would we expect them to pick up the racism of any native neighbors, since the recent evidence suggests that outsiders do not pick up local attitudes when they move South (Rice and Pepper 1997, 87). Racist whites, meanwhile, may have many reasons to stay in a racially mixed city, including their own financial limits (Rieder 1985, 173), a nearby job, a desire for exciting night life, or attachment to the familiar physical environment (Rieder 1985, 71-87).

The observable implications of the migration argument are difficult to test without detailed panel data, which I lack for the current study. However, one observable implication is that the reverse-proximity effect should be stronger where whites have had more opportunity to sort themselves out, and weaker where the population is more stable. I already have a variable in the model indicating the percentage of whites who moved into Louisiana from outside the region, but that primarily captures the parish's susceptibility to old-fashioned Southern mores. My intent now is just to represent instability, so my measure will be the percentage of whites who are from outside the *state*.

When the effect of racial density is allowed to shift with instability, it again reappears in the data (see Table 8-5, Model D). Parishes with a below average number of white migrants reveal a weak backlash pattern, whereas those above average on the variable show the opposite trend. I doubt these effects really stem from the selection bias underlying choice of residence. Not only is the effect comparatively weak, but a similar interaction using non-Southerners gets stronger results.

Much more likely that we are seeing the same phenomenon exposed several times already: metropolitan areas, which have the greatest number of migrants from outside Louisiana, simply do not follow a backlash pattern. However, three hypotheses from Chapter 5 now have survived falsification.

The Three Surviving Models

I now have three possible explanations for why proximity to blacks would not produce backlash among metropolitan whites. One is that, economically, they do not face as much competition from nearby blacks compared to rural whites. Another is that metropolitan parishes have more population instability, so that racially sensitive whites are better able to select residences that reflect their attitudes. A third is an outgrowth of the Cultural Backlash hypothesis: suburbs in a metropolitan area are exceptional in their racial conservatism *ceteris paribus*, but not as a direct outgrowth of economic competition, nor as a result of mere self-sorting by psychological orientation. Rather, it is precisely their residence in "white upper middle class" enclaves, precisely their residence in a predominantly white environment, that encourages whites to favor a tough-talking candidate like Duke.

The best way to test this, within the bounds of these data, is to throw those three hypotheses up against each other directly in the same model. If either economics or population instability explains away the urban-rural dichotomy, then the Cultural Backlash pattern is spurious. All three approaches are operationalized as interaction terms, so the question would be which interaction term retains independent significance. It would be possible for multicollinearity to eliminate the statistical significance of all three, of course. That would mean that my data are too limited to distinguish among the three theories. However, the statistical evidence might weigh clearly in favor of one, suggesting that the other two are merely capturing indirectly what the successful variable

likely explains.

Table 8-5, Model E, presents an omnibus model that combines three racial density interaction terms: one with the racial gap in per capita income (i.e., Hard Times), one with the percentage of migrants from outside Louisiana (i.e., Migration), and one with the level of urbanization (i.e., Cultural Backlash). The result is a resounding success for suburban exceptionalism. Backlash clearly matters in rural areas and not in metropolitan ones. Taking account of economic conditions or population instability adds nothing once I know how urban an area is–as indicated both by their lack of statistical significance and the *smaller* adjusted R^2 statistic than in Table 8-5, Model A.

Close, But Not Touching: A Regional Version of the Cultural Backlash Model

I've attempted to falsify the seven approaches to racial proximity introduced in Chapter 5. This chapter has falsified six of those seven, leaving only the Cultural Backlash hypothesis still standing. However, I still have not explored one observable implication of that approach, which is that while immediate proximity would not evoke a backlash, because whites and blacks would assimilate within the neighborhood and generate common political interests (assuming they did not already have them), white enclaves insulated from a *nearby* black population probably would show a strong reaction. They are far enough that cultural distinctions will exist, yet close enough that struggles over defining regional culture will appear frequently, enhancing the attractiveness of a David Duke.

This is a core argument, so let me be clear on the implications. While familiarity may overcome contempt, mere awareness only permits friction. Whites who reside in racially mixed neighborhoods are not likely to politicize their prejudices, because assimilation gives them shared interests with minorities (Kinder and Mendelberg 1995), but neither are those so far away from a minority population that racial issues become irrelevant (Rieder 1985, 71). Cloistered whites are far enough away to feel divergent cultural interests, to form a white subculture, but close enough to feel

threatened, to feel the presence of an alternate model, to require defending white privilege. They do not share the immediate living space with minorities, but are close enough that they must struggle over regional newspapers, universities, dialects, pastimes. The critical group of whites are those who can cultivate a siege mentality: who fear the blacks over the train tracks, over the bridge, over the county line, over in the central city. To put it another way, it may not be familiarity so much as potential *future* familiarity that breeds contempt, a need for exclusion.

This narrative is an intimate part of the Cultural Backlash argument, especially crucial because it restores a limited degree of territoriality–which explains the occasional white backlash finding researchers turn up when using high-level aggregations for the analysis, such as the state (Giles and Buckner 1996, 1,176). While cultural conflict need not be locally defined, sometimes it is, and once the "culture war" starts then we certainly would expect those fighting on multiple fronts to be most ardent in the defense of white exclusiveness. This thinking still differs from Green's Territorial Backlash hypothesis, discussed in the next section, because it does not rely on actual black migration so much as nearness, visibility.[24] It also works insights from the Contact Hypothesis research into the model, by acknowledging that whites with intimate racial contact likely lose their racial conservatism. But again the thinking still differs in one important way: it does not rely on a psychological mechanism of growing "tolerance" or shattering stereotypes; it presumes that cross-racial interests are more likely to develop within shared territory.

The trick is capturing how many blacks are "close but not touching." The data are necessarily limited in this respect, because Louisiana parishes are so large. Blacks and whites within a parish can be relatively insulated from each other, such that even the minority presence *within the parish* represents blacks who are "nearby." However, while we can speculate about the degree of

[24] This distinction has a long history. Studies of neighborhood change in Northern cities found that whites near the point of impact had fewer negative racial stereotypes and yet more hostility to blacks, whereas those more remote from the point of friction entertained more stereotypes but did not feel them strongly (Lipset and Raab 1978, 341; Pettigrew 1980).

interaction within a parish, we can be fairly certain that most whites experience little intimate contact with those across parish borders. If the proximity effect is stronger with nearby blacks than it is with those even closer, we can presume that the problem is not sharing a neighborhood or electoral district so much as offering a distant target for grievances, real or imagined. I created a new variable, the black density among registered voters in *adjacent* parishes.[25]

The first model in Table 8-6 strips the equation down to just the immediate proximity measure, percent of registered voters who are black. It shows that immediate proximity bears little simple connection to Duke's white support, and the limited effect that does appear works against the white backlash logic. Parishes with more blacks were slightly less likely to furnish Duke with white support. The next model adds a measure for nearby blacks, however, and suddenly a strong backlash pattern springs up. This cannot be a neighborhood effect, and cannot be a matter of local politics. It was not their black neighbors or their black co-constituents from whom Duke supporters wanted protection, but rival groups across the border.

The third model adds controls, and does not alter the basic finding. Having a nearby black population pushed Duke's support upward. Interestingly, once we consider the much stronger reaction whites have to blacks across the parish lines, and consider the sort of whites who live in a parish, then an immediate proximity effect creeps back into the equation. A two-standard-deviation change in the racial density measure now produces a 6.6 percentage point increase in Duke's white support on average. Increasing the *nearby* density by the same 26 percentage points, meanwhile, would increase Duke's white support by almost 12 percentage points. Overall, this model does an astounding job predicting Duke's white support, accounting for 76% of the variance and missing the

[25] Thanks to Jim Alt for this suggestion. I took a 64-by-64 matrix of 1's and 0's representing adjacency, and multipled it by two 64-by-1 vectors, one at a time: the parish number of registered blacks, and the total number of registered voters. This produced two 64-by-1 vectors, one containing each observation's number of registered blacks in adjacent parishes, the other containing the total number registered. Element-by-element division, of blacks by the whole pool, produced the black proportion of those nearby. Note that this measure therefore does not include blacks within the parish itself, so there's no necessary collinearity except to the extent that black populations tend to cluster in the same region.

Table 8-6: Developing the Cultural Backlash Approach

Dependent variable: the estimated percentage of white voters choosing David Duke

Explanatory Variable	Model A (Total)	Model B (Nearness)		Model C (Near Metro)		Model D (Green's)	Model E (Territorial)
		SIMPLE	FULL	SIMPLE	FULL		
Racial density: % black among registered voters	*-0.08* *(.09)*	*0.10* *(.09)*	*0.26* *(.07)*	*0.10* *(.08)*	*0.27* *(.08)*	*-0.35* *(.13)*	*-0.20* *(.11)*
Median white family income ($1,000s)			-0.42 (.27)		-0.47 (.30)		0.09 (.40)
% high-school grads, whites 25+ years old			-0.20 (.17)		-0.19 (.17)		-0.50 (.29)
% whites in labor force unemployed			0.15 (.63)		0.16 (.63)		-0.07 (.82)
% of population in an urban locale			-0.05 (.03)		-0.05 (.03)		-0.01 (.05)
% population born outside the South			-0.61 (.15)		-0.64 (.17)		-0.35 (.27)
% whites who came of age post-VRA			0.28 (.16)		0.30 (.17)		-0.09 (.21)
% French-speaking			-0.56 (.08)		-0.55 (.08)		-0.64 (.11)
Black density in surrounding parishes		*0.40* *(.11)*	*0.46* *(.07)*	*0.73* *(.13)*	*0.43* *(.09)*		
*Interaction: Metro dummy * nearby % black*				*-0.27* *(.07)*	*0.03* *(.07)*		
Change in black density: 1980 to 1990						*-3.48* *(.13)*	*-2.74* *(1.76)*
*Interaction: Black change * 1980 density*						*0.026* *(.022)*	*0.026* *(.025)*
Intercept	60.06 (2.31)	44.87 (4.63)	64.75 (14.3)	39.81 (4.41)	64.05 (14.52)	91.38 (10.51)	125.12 (21.36)
observations	64	64	63	64	63	63	63
Adjusted R^2	-0.00	0.17	0.76	0.32	0.75	0.25	0.58
Root MSE	8.6	7.9	4.2	7.2	4.3	7.5	5.5

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. Dependent variable aggregated from precinct-level EI estimates. All models are GLS regression equations using the parish's number of white registered voters as a weight The last two models use 1980 racial density among registered voters, rather than 1990 density, following on Green, Strolovitch and Wong (1998). The 1990 racial density comes in through a change variable.

parish rate by roughly 4.2 percentage points on average. Every prediction for the New Orleans metropolitan area comes within a percentage point, and the urban-suburban pattern found in residuals from my early models has disappeared (see Table 8-2). Even the mild parish density effect probably stems more from the highly aggregated data, which no doubt include within a parish small towns or neighborhoods that qualify as "white middle class" enclaves, than from a localized backlash phenomenon. This implication of the Cultural Backlash model therefore performs wonderfully. Indeed, unlike with the economic and psychological hypotheses, adding in the urbanization interaction does not eliminate these findings. They explain what sets suburbs apart: the siege mentality of whiteness amidst minorities.

Fossett and Kiecolt (1989) argue that backlash patterns do not appear in Northern data because whites react to their larger urban context. Presumably this logic could carry over to the rapidly urbanizing South, which also contains "metropolitan areas [that] contain multiple counties." Familiarity *does* breed contempt, they imply, just whites are familiar with a somewhat more expansive amount of territory when they live in big cities. They explain (1989, 825) that the metropolitan area

> more accurately reflects the 'life space' that urban residents inhabit. The mass media, an important source of information about minorities, have a metropolitan focus and the spatial dispersion of personal networks and activities (e.g., work, shopping, recreation, etc.) is greater in urban areas . . . The metropolitan area, rather than the county, is the arena within which interethnic competition for scarce resources such as jobs and residential location take place.

I do not take issue with the general argument that suburban whites still engage in interethnic competition with city blacks. Their conclusion is entirely consistent with my claim that racial politics have changed–that the old conflict over territory has mutated into a new strain, a conflict over cultural and economic resources that are more widely spread.

I disagree, however, that the finding relies on "spatial dispersion" of personal activities, for which they provide no evidence, or that this wider awareness of a region's racial dynamics is a

metropolitan phenomenon, for which they also provide no evidence. It is precisely those whites cloistered in racial enclaves who feel the greatest threat from black culture and government programs that promote black fortunes, those aware of the minority population but not rubbing elbows with it; it is not those with diverse exposure (Kinder and Mendelberg 1995). Certainly suburban whites form the largest concentration of isolated whites, because the metropolitan economy can support such a large population, and because cities allow greater residential differentiation. But small-town whites can feel just as much part of the "white middle class," can feel just as threatened by state and federal policies that help other races, can be just as "shocked and offended" by the behavior of nearby black populations. Their job markets, shopping habits and recreational activities are quite dispersed; their primary newspapers and television stations quite likely to come from outside the county or parish.

The best way to gauge whether their metropolitan exclusivity makes sense is to see whether nearby blacks matter more in metropolitan areas than they do anywhere else. I can get at this in two ways: either allowing a different slope for nearby racial density depending upon whether a parish is metropolitan, or allowing a more gradual slope shift as parishes become more urbanized. I tried both methods, to confirm that they produced similar results, but will report the simple metro interaction since it seems to resemble the Fossett and Kiecolt (1989) argument most closely. My findings contradict their urban focus, with or without the various demographic controls (see Table 8-6, Model C). Duke's vote increased roughly 6.6 percentage points, on average, for every two-standard-deviation (i.e., 7.7 percentage point) increase in nearby racial density outside of metropolitan areas. That figure only inches up to 7.1 percentage points around the cities, a difference that is not close to statistical significance ($p > .5$).

If suburban whites seem more sensitive to nearby black populations, it is only because their exposure varies much more severely than among more rural locales. The standard deviation in nearby density is 12.3 percentage points within metropolitan areas, but only 5.9 percentage points

elsewhere. These findings suggest that, while Giles (1977) may have been incorrect to conclude that racial proximity did not matter in the North, it may not be for the reason Fossett and Kiecolt (1989) claim. The problem was not a failure to understand metropolitan "life spaces," for which evidence is scant, so much as an emphasis on the localized nature of the threat mechanism. What sets the North apart is merely the greater level of segregation, the large number of whites in lily-white communities with blacks nearby who are *not*, in fact, part of their "personal networks and activities."

Green's Territorial Backlash Model

Some argue that a newly arrived minority-population is especially likely to provoke white hostility. Whites feel that their "way of life" is threatened (Rieder 1985, 133-34 and *passim*). Donald Philip Green and a pair of Yale graduate students (Green, Strolovitch and Wong 1998; Wong and Strolovitch 1996, 5) developed this observation into a theory of social conflict that closely resembles my Cultural Backlash model.[26] "Backlash theory contends [that] social and cultural change, whether real or imagined, [will] intensify both group identity and the need to maintain cultural dominance," Wong and Strolovitch (1996, 6) write. The published version describes their approach as a "rapprochement between symbolic and realistic perspectives"–basically, a "realistic" conflict over "symbolic" values. In this, we are in full agreement.

Their "backlash" model differs from mine only in its continued emphasis on territorial struggle. "Changes in a community's racial or ethnic composition will incite an exclusionary impulse by those who have been traditionally hegemonic in the area," Wong and Strolovitch (1996, 4-6) write. I do not dispute the accuracy of this assessment with the particular racial indicator that they feature, which is race-based (or ethnicity-based) hate crimes within New York City neighborhoods. However, this is a wonderful example of why I emphasize distinguishing a theory's observable

[26] Although Green is apparently the primary source for the idea, I have found a paper by his two graduate students particularly good at articulating Green's thinking.

implications with reference to the *actual racial indicator being used*. There is no reason to think that the same social process would produce the same findings in unrelated data. The territoriality of hate crimes is not merely a reflection of the socio-psychological forces driving all racial sensitivity; it is also a reflection of the peculiar incentives operating with hate crimes.

Some forms of racial conservatism exact heavier costs than others. Opposing busing, for example, is relatively easy–it merely requires the formulation and expression of an opinion. Activism against the policy requires much more intense commitment, so self interest may play a more significant role in predicting it (Green and Cowden 1992). The perpetration of hate crimes is similarly a low-probability, high-intensity event, and therefore more likely to tap motive. Furthermore, the distinction between neighborhoods that "belong to whites" and those that do not may carry over to everyone, not just the whites who happen to reside there. Black encroachments on a white preserve might offend all sorts of racist whites, even those outside the immediate area, and evoke violence at the front lines of racial contact. It is worth remembering that hate crimes are recorded according to where they took place, not according to the perpetrator's social environment. A slight by one Asian man against one white girl might pull brothers, uncles and cousins from a dispersed territory to avenge her honor at the point of friction. Where are such perceived slights most likely to occur? Precisely where the ethnic minority is a newcomer, unacculturated to the norms of the neighborhood. Furthermore, hate crimes require more than just hate. They also require the presence of potential victims, and interaction between those victims and likely assailants.[27] If the tendency toward such criminality were entirely unrelated to local racial demographics, we still would expect the greatest incidence of hate crime to occur where potential abusers were populous and where ethnic minorities could not avoid them.

It is less clear that culturally driven conflict would *always* follow "the geopolitics of local

[27] This is unlike lynchings, which are an organized form of violence. A hateful crime of passion can hinge on chance encounters (Reed 1972). Even here, though, escalation is eminently possible.

community" (Rieder 1985, 234), or that other measures of racial hostility would track the same pattern. David Duke actually had little to say about neighborhoods; his emphasis was on statewide or national policies such as welfare, affirmative action, and minority quotas on contracting. The symbols and stereotypes are much the same as those witnessed in New York's troubled ethnic enclaves (Rieder 1985, 99), but the cultural stakes are differently distributed. To the extent proximity alters one's interests, whites in mixed-race neighborhoods are usually the ones who would share common interests with blacks on both the policies and the cultural values Duke targeted. I would not expect "realistic" racial polarization to follow a territorial pattern with this indicator, especially given the high-level data required for the project.

Therefore I do not expect Green's Territorial Backlash approach to apply in these data, but not because it's generally incorrect, only because it is too specific. The problem is his emphasis on white territorial hegemony. Racial polarization does not stem from proximity, he suggests, nor does it stem from racial isolation, so much as the combination of past isolation and present proximity. Whites do not react to the presence, but the influx, of a minority group (also see Allport [1954] 1979, 221-229). To capture this idea, Green's Negative Binomial event-count model includes three variables: the 1980 white population percentage, the change in the minority percentage from 1980 to 1990, and an interaction between the two. The hate-crime pattern is consistent, whether looking at black, Latino or Asian victims: crime rises with the minority population where whites once dominated, but declines in historically diverse areas (Green, Strolovitch and Wong 1998, 387-391).

It is possible that proximity fails to predict Duke's vote in Louisiana only because I am not considering the desire to defend territorial dominance. Predominantly white urban parishes may support Duke less because of their whiteness, or their cultural identification with the "white middle class," than because they are experiencing the greatest increases in black population as African Americans flee the inner cities. Fortunately, my model allows a fairly close replication of their

Territorial Backlash model: the 1980 non-black percentage among registered voters, the change in black density among those registered from 1980 to 1990, and an interaction.[28] If the Cultural Backlash pattern derives from immediate proximity, such that polarization of any sort increases where blacks are large or increasing, then the same pattern presumably should apply here.[29]

Table 8-6, Model D, replicates the Green model for Duke's vote, once as it appears in his research, and once with the non-racial controls from my earlier models.[30] In neither case does the territorial pattern derived studying hate crimes apply to the Duke vote. Duke's white support was *lower*, on average, in parishes experiencing the greatest proportional increase in their black population. The interaction term, meanwhile, goes in the wrong direction, and is not statistically significant. Regardless of the 1980 white population, a black influx never redounds to Duke's advantage. Nor does he perform better in parishes that contained few blacks a decade before. Even these effects largely wash out when the other parish controls are added (see Table 8-6,Model E). The backlash Duke invoked simply played on a larger stage than hate crimes, and was not a defense of territory even if it was a defense of cultural advantage.

My statistical results contrast with those reported by the Yale team (Green, Strolovitch and Wong 1998; Wong and Strolovitch 1996). A black influx into predominantly white parishes did not necessary bolster support for race-baiting. I do not see this as undercutting the main thrust of Green's theoretical work, however. Indeed, for the statistical pattern he found with hate crimes to appear here would have undercut his interpretation, since Duke's campaign bore little connection

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[28] The main weakness of my attempt to capture Green's model is that I am not really measuring the size of the white population in 1980, but rather the size of the non-black population. However, in Louisiana this distinction is not a particularly important one, as the Latino, Asian and Native American populations are generally modest.

[29] Ideally, I would test this population change model at the precinct level. But precincts are not stable enough, over a decade, to replicate the model at a neighborhood level.

[30] Both equations come from GLS estimation, but OLS produced similarly negative findings for the Green model.

to the defense of neighborhood hegemony. Green's emphasis on cultural prerogatives, his emphasis on defending hegemony, his emphasis on the "realism" underlying symbolic racism–all fit quite well with what I am finding, as long as one relaxes the focus on territorial proximity.

Conclusion

Previous support of the traditional white backlash hypothesis relied on an implicit assumption, that white suburbanites and white urbanites react identically to a central city black population. In fact, this does not appear true. Suburban voters did not merely support Duke *as much as* central-city whites; they supported him more. The traditional backlash pattern does not apply to the average voter, largely because white metropolitan areas supported Duke much more than expected.

The data on Duke's white support allow for a handful of competing explanations for this urban-suburban divide. Cultural, economic and psychological forces all seem capable of producing such a pattern. However, when the three are thrown against each other in the same model, it is clear that predominantly white suburban areas stand out regardless of whites' residential mobility or relative economic resources, suggesting a cultural explanation.

Some scholars prefer to explain away the failure of a traditional backlash pattern by pointing to the more integrated nature of metropolitan areas. Familiarity does breed contempt, but urban whites are familiar with a broader terrain. They work and play in the city; they circulate in spatially dispersed social networks. I agree that nearby blacks are seen as a threat. I do not agree that this is because of their presence in the same "personal networks." Presumably blacks in the same parish would have at least as much chance to circulate in these networks as those across the parish border, but they do not evoke comparable resistance. Why would distant blacks be more threatening? Because it is precisely their exclusion from "personal networks" and cultural resources that whites are defending. At least, the findings presented in this chapter are fully compatible with such a story,

and incompatible with my best attempt to represent the alternatives.

Naturally it's possible these findings are unique to Louisiana, to county-level data, to voting data, or to limitations with aggregate census measures. Later chapters will address these critiques–not all at the same time, unfortunately, but in one way or another. By the time I am done, my rejection of the traditional white backlash phenomenon–whether based upon politics or based upon neighborhood dynamics–will not rely on any of these limitations. But for now, it is enough to observe that David Duke's political support was not at all a diluted extension of the same phenomenon V.O. Key popularized 40 years before, but it also was not the result of a disembodied psychological phenomenon based upon symbols rather than genuine conflict.