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Chapter 3

Does Becoming American Create a Better American? How Identity Attachments and Perceptions of Discrimination Affect Trust and Obligation

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DEBATES ABOUT immigration reform in the United States center on a variety of topics, including the economic impact of illegal immigration, the role of state governments in apprehending undocumented immigrants, and whether to allow naturalization for children brought to the country illegally by their parents. Another prominent concern in recent years has been that immigrants, documented and undocumented alike, may not be developing a sense of American identity. On the one hand, immigrants and their supporters at rallies for undocumented rights often have been praised for showing native-born Americans what active citizenship—a bedrock American value—is all about, and such civic engagement has been shown to strengthen immigrants' attachments to the United States.[1] On the other hand, immigrants have been chastised for not "becoming American," as when a group of musicians were criticized in press accounts and by President George W. Bush for releasing a Spanish interpretation of the American national anthem in 2006. One newspaper columnist wrote that the anthem signaled "an invitation to separatism and a fractured national identity now finding voice among Mexican illegal immigrants and their advocates."[2] An editorial noted that "the mere fact that [the anthem] is in Spanish is a protest against assimilation."[3] Similar outrage among basketball fans occurred in 2013 when a Mexican American boy dressed in a mariachi suit sang the national anthem during the finals of the National Basketball Association.[4] Critics have also pointed to the presence of Mexican flags at immigration rallies

to underscore fears that immigrants are not sufficiently attached to the United States.

Among the worries is that lack of American identification—with its alleged lack of commitment and loyalty—will hurt the nation as a whole. As Gary Gerstle explains in chapter 1 of this volume, the very openness of the American political community has long made the notion of identity choice a central concern when contemplating national stability and prosperity. Examining the validity of such concerns is especially pressing at this juncture as ongoing immigration and a growing second generation produce an ever more diverse population. Indeed, the number of children born to nonwhite parents in the United States outpaced the number born to white parents for the first time in mid-2012.[5] As other chapters in this volume also illustrate, outward cultural expressions among immigrants and their children raise fears that newcomers have psychological attachments to identities that are at odds with national cohesion and the values that sustain democratic stability. These fears are now common across western Europe as well as in the United States. Marieke Sloopman and Jan Willem Duyvendak refer in chapter 5 of this volume to this sentiment as *emotive citizenship*, the belief that for immigrants and the second generation to be seen as compatriots, they need to prove their loyalty through their cultural habits and national identification, that legal citizenship is not enough.[6]

This chapter looks beyond popular rhetoric to explore whether—and how much—we need to be concerned about the identity attachments of ethno-racial minorities in the United States among both immigrants and their descendants. It focuses on a series of questions that probe the impact of panethnic and national-origin identities on broader American attachments and obligations. Does prioritizing a panethnic identity— such as Latino or Asian—or a national-origin identity—such as Mexican or Korean—over an American identity promote alienation from the American political community? Do attachments to panethnic identities lead to reduced trust and a diminished sense of obligation to the United States? Does a person of Latino descent who primarily identifies as Latino, or as Mexican, feel more alienated from law enforcement or the federal government than a person of Latino descent who primarily identifies as American? Does that same person feel less of a sense of obligation to the United States and to the American people? Or do other factors, such as how people feel their group is treated in the United States, affect trust and obligation more?

Drawing on the results of a large-scale telephone survey of randomly selected participants conducted in 2004, I show that fears of widespread rejection of American identity are overblown and that adopting a non-American identity is often inconsequential. Insights from group consciousness theory and social identity theory can provide explanations for

the mechanisms driving the interplay among identities, perceptions of discrimination, and political attitudes. The impact of identity attachments on trust in American political institutions and on obligations to the national community depends on how people feel they or their group is treated. As it turns out, identity attachments themselves have little or no impact on trust and obligation. Instead, perceptions of group-level and individual-level discrimination have a greater negative effect. Absent perceptions of discrimination, a person's primary identity attachment is often of little consequence. When perceptions of discrimination are present, a non-American identification can be beneficial with regard to trust, and detrimental with regard to obligation. These findings thus raise important questions about when—and whether—a sense of psychological attachment to an American identity is desirable.

Trust, Obligation, and Identity

Trust in political institutions is generally defined as a belief that leaders will do or are doing right by the community and its interests and the extent to which people think the government's performance is living up to their expectations.[7] Trust affects compliance with political and legal processes, particularly when people dislike the outcomes of those processes.[8] It affects whether people support policies aimed at reducing inequality.[9] It also, some argue, plays a role in sustaining a willingness to take risks on behalf of the community and to accept compromise as a means of resolving conflict.[10]

Trust in law enforcement, as well as in the federal government, is an important factor in understanding connections with the American political system among members of ethnic and racial minority groups. In addition to general issues of racial profiling by the police, efforts have also been made in many states and cities to enlist local law enforcement agencies to locate and apprehend undocumented immigrants. In recent years, several states have gone even further, enacting stringent policies that require local police officers to verify the immigration status of people they suspect might be in the country illegally.[11] In 2012, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld such provisions.

Obligation refers to the duties of citizenship, what we owe to compatriots and political institutions in exchange for the privileges and rights conferred by membership in the political community. It is generally agreed that compliance with the law is where obligations start, though many Americans also feel they have a duty to devote time and resources to the common good. Some scholars argue that fulfilling such obligations is necessary in order for a self-governing society to be able to provide rights and privileges in the first place. William Galston, for instance, argues that a sense of obligation is essential in a society that provides people with

so many individual-level benefits, such as freedom, prosperity, and stability. It is imperative, he writes, "to do one's fair share to uphold the institutions that help secure these advantages."[12] Likewise, Christopher Wellman maintains, "the state cannot exist and perform its functions without the collective sacrifice of its citizens."[13] In practical terms, people with a greater sense of civic duty are more likely to participate in politics and thus embody the ideal of the active citizen.[14]

Concerns about whether immigrants and the second generation develop a sense of obligation have led observers to look to identity attachment as a culprit, and not just conservative or nativist commentators. Many political scientists, philosophers, and psychologists wonder about the role that a sense of national identity plays in the vitality of democracies. On the one hand, having a strong attachment to one's country can lead to hostility toward outsiders, feelings of superiority, diminished support for redistribution, and uncritical support of one's government. At the same time, possessing strong national attachments can also lead to greater willingness to make sacrifices for the public good, obey laws and pay taxes, and engage in more civic-minded behavior.[15] Moreover, psychologists have shown that cooperation and group harmony increase when people recognize that they share an attachment to a particular group.[16]

In this vein, Rogers Smith writes that "if citizens feel that their most profound commitments go to a racial, ethnic, religious, regional, national, or voluntary subgroup, then the broader society's leaders may find that their government lacks adequate popular support to perform some functions effectively" and that it is "politically necessary" to "constitute a people that feels itself to be a people."[17] Liberal democratic societies such as the United States must convince members of the "distinctive worth" of their membership, he argues, because only when people have such a feeling can the very liberal principles that make the society of value be nurtured.

Other theorists, known as liberal nationalists, contend that a shared national identity is important for several reasons. It prevents alienation from political institutions; promotes political stability; leads to trust in one's fellow citizens, making people willing to rely on compromise to settle disagreements; and generates a concern for the common good, which in turn leads to support for redistributive policies.[18] Communitarians, such as Michael Sandel, also write of the importance of loyalty to the political community in the maintenance of stable and vibrant democracies.[19] Even Charles Taylor, a critic of the notion that a common culture is necessary in liberal societies, admits that "democratic states need something like a common identity."[20] In short, many scholars maintain that for a diverse democracy like the United States to be governable, stable, and able to provide the opportunities of liberalism to all of its people, its members must view themselves as full members of the national community and think that being American is an important part of who they are.

But what, if anything, does empirical social science tell us about these matters? As it turns out, not much. To date, scholars have largely neglected analyses that examine the role of race, ethnicity, and identity in shaping trust and obligation. Studies of trust among Americans have tangentially mentioned that blacks are sometimes less trusting than whites or simply include racial dummy variables as controls, but fail to comment further.[21] As for opinions about the obligations of citizenship, they have received hardly any attention in empirical social science scholarship, let alone in studies of identity and diversity. When they have, the focus has generally been on whether people feel they have a duty to vote or to pay taxes, but not on other obligations, such as volunteerism or serving in the military.

When National Identity Might Matter

It is helpful to consider the mechanisms involved in determining whether a sense of national identity affects political outcomes such as trust and obligation. Two theoretical approaches—*group consciousness* and *social identity* theory—shed light on this process. The two theories, which provide the main frameworks in empirical studies of the political consequences of group identities, look beyond how group membership shapes political attitudes to concentrate on the conditions under which psychological processes associated with group membership become influential. In both theories, the perception of threat plays a key role in activating the power of identities.

Group consciousness theory posits that objective group membership must be paired with a psychological attachment to or identification with the group and a sense that the group membership is politicized before the identity itself will have political outcomes.[22] Politicization can involve the perception of threat in the form of discrimination against one's group and against oneself individually.[23] It can involve perceptions of deprivation relative to other groups in society along with the view that the political system—and not individual attributes—is to blame for such deprivation.[24] It can involve feelings of linked fate, or a sense that the group is worth fighting for.[25]

When politicized, an identification with one's ethnic group can generate political activity and minimize the otherwise alienating effects of perceptions of discrimination.[26] It does so by providing a psychological resource—or psychological capital—that facilitates engagement with the political system.[27] People with politicized identities feel that a change in the system—not in themselves—is necessary for improved status.[28] Importantly, they believe such change is possible, but only if they engage with the system. In contrast, people who perceive mistreatment yet do not feel close to the aggrieved group lack this mobilizing resource and withdraw.

Social identity theory also highlights the important role that perceptions of threat play in determining whether group identities affect subsequent attitudes and behavior. This theory posits that the need to maintain a positive group image is so powerful that group identification can promote ingroup bias or outgroup derogation.[29] Moreover, the perception of threat heightens the need to see one's group positively and exacerbates these tendencies.[30] Research has demonstrated that "the mere perception of belonging to a social category is sufficient for group behavior," as measured by "intergroup discrimination in social perception and behavior or intragroup altruism."[31] Studies document ingroup bias regarding helping behavior and that such bias is enhanced by perceptions of group threat.[32] As Nyla Branscombe and her colleagues explain, "when outgroup-based threats to the ingroup's value in the form of discrimination and devaluation are severe enough . . . we would expect that most ingroup members would behave in [a] defensive fashion; closing ranks following explicit group-based exclusion allows devalued group members to protect their well being."[33] Thus, whereas group consciousness theory predicts little power for group identification without a politicizing agent, social identity theory contends that psychological identification with a group is sometimes enough to lead people to close ranks around the ingroup. Both theories are in agreement, however, in noting that attachments to group identities are especially powerful when politicized by a perception of threat.

The question is whether the power of such politicized identities will lead to more or less engagement with the broader national political community. Here, the two theories generally provide complementary expectations. Much like the group consciousness literature, social identity scholarship has investigated the conditions under which people in disadvantaged groups become more likely to engage in actions aimed at improving their status. Such scholarship argues that collective action is more likely when people identify with the disadvantaged group, when they perceive that the group is disadvantaged, when group boundaries are seen as impermeable (as is typically the case with race and ethnicity), when alternatives to the status quo can be imagined, and when the group's lower status is perceived as illegitimate.[34] These conditions set the stage for psychological capital to emerge and enable people to become empowered, confident in their abilities, and motivated by a feeling of common cause shared with other group members. Thus, both theories lead us to expect a greater sense of trust in the political system among those with politicized identities than among those who perceive discrimination but do not identify strongly with the aggrieved group. After all, the very ability to imagine an alternative to the status quo implies that one believes that the political system is in fact responsive to pressure from collective action. The psychological capital that politicized identities provide sustains such beliefs. At a minimum, at least, we might expect

that politicized identities can inoculate people against the loss of trust in the political system that might otherwise result from the belief that one's group is disadvantaged.

When it comes to a sense of obligation to that system and the people who make up the national community, however, engagement is likely to decline among those with politicized identities, at least according to social identity theory. Social identity scholarship demonstrates that an attachment to a particular identity paired with the perception that the identity is threatened leads to withdrawal from prosocial interactions with the outgroup.[35] As Branscombe and her colleagues note, attachment plus the perception of threat can lead people to close ranks around their ingroup.[36] The implication is, therefore, that people will be less willing to make the sacrifices that obligations to a national community require when both an attachment to a subgroup and the perception of threat to that group are present.[37]

Social identity theory also suggests that identification with the group might be enough to influence one's relationship to politics, whereas group consciousness theory explicitly rejects this possibility. Thus, this aspect of social identity theory would lead us to expect that ethnic minorities will be less likely to have obligations to the national community if they do not think of themselves as part of the American ingroup, just as immigration critics contend. Both theories agree that a psychological attachment to the group is necessary for the identity in question to become politically consequential, but whether it is sufficient is a matter of debate.[38]

What, then, are the implications—and expectations—of group consciousness and social identity theory for the present inquiry? With regard to trust in institutions, American identifiers who perceive discrimination against their panethnic or national-origin group or against themselves personally should have lower levels of trust in political institutions than non-American identifiers who perceive discrimination, due to the psychological capital generated by politicized identities. With regard to obligations to the national community, non-American identifiers who perceive discrimination are expected to withdraw from prosocial behaviors that benefit the superordinate group. In both cases, perceptions of discrimination activate the ability of identity attachments to become politically consequential. On their own, such attachments should have no or comparatively less predictive power.

Little research to date has examined whether the influence of politicized identities goes beyond voting or protest and carries over to trust in government, trust in law enforcement, or one's sense of obligation to the national community.[39] Some extant research finds that both group-level and individual-level perceptions of discrimination can matter. At the same time, identity attachment, the concept animating both immigration critics and scholars of democratic theory, is often innocuous. To date, however, most studies in this area have looked only at group identification or

mistreatment. They have not tested whether the interactive dynamic proposed by group consciousness theory and social identity theory plays out with respect to trust and obligation. Moreover, most group consciousness research has focused primarily on African Americans. Applying its insights to other groups, such as Latinos and Asians, might be more complex given the different histories of these groups and the extensive diversity the panethnic labels embrace.[40] Most studies also lack the means to distinguish between types of non-American identifications, generally contrasting an American identification with only a panethnic or a national-origin identification. Whether panethnic and national-origin identifications play the same role in shaping political outcomes is largely unstudied, despite reasons to expect a panethnic identity to be more politically potent than enduring ties to one's country of origin.[41]

In the analyses that follow, I address these limitations through use of the 21st Century Americanism Survey (21-CAS), a national random-digit-dial (RDD) telephone survey of adults, supplemented with oversamples of blacks, Latinos, and Asians.[42] Conducted in 2004, the survey had 2,800 respondents: 1,633 white, non-Hispanic; 300 black; 441 Latino; 299 Asian.[43] It included questions designed to measure the attachments people have to American, panethnic, and national-origin identities, perceptions of discrimination these groups face, attitudes about trust in institutions, and attitudes about obligations to the American people.

Measuring Identities and Perceptions of Discrimination

One of the most noteworthy findings of the survey is the little credence to the concern that ethnic minorities in the United States fail to think of themselves as American.

Identity Attachment

The structure of the survey provided a way for respondents to indicate whether they ever thought of themselves in terms of their national origin, their panethnic group, and as American. It also asked them to indicate which of those identities best described how they thought of themselves most of the time. Answers to that question serve as my measure of a respondent's primary identity attachment.

Overall, 78 percent of the sample chose American as their primary identity, 14 percent chose their panethnic group, and 8 percent chose their national-origin group.[44] Of the 22 percent who did not choose American as their primary identity, 73 percent still sometimes described themselves as American. Table 3.1 shows bivariate breakdowns on identity attachment according to respondent characteristics relevant to this inquiry, and it offers few surprises. Whites, American citizens, people whose families

Table 3.1   Identity Attachment

	Panethnic	National Origin	American	N (Raw)
White	7.8	2.8	89.4	1,589
Black	41.6	6.1	52.3	281
Asian	16.7	36.0	47.3	276
Latino	18.2	28.2	53.6	422
U.S. citizen	13.1	4.6	82.4	2,435
Not U.S. citizen	26.2	56.1	17.8	249
First generation	20.2	38.0	41.8	530
Second generation	11.6	11.8	76.6	166
Third generation	5.9	2.6	91.5	175
Fourth generation or more	13.6	2.2	84.2	1,765
Speaks primarily English at home	12.8	3.7	83.6	2,281
Speaks another language at home	23.6	43.9	32.5	404

Source: Schildkraut and Grosse 2010.
Note: N = unweighted.
Question posed: "Which one best describes how you think of yourself most of the time?"

had been American for generations, and people who mainly spoke English at home were overwhelmingly likely to identify primarily as American. The level of American identification among the second generation is especially noteworthy given the comparatively lower levels of national identification among the second generation found in other countries.[45] In no case did a panethnic identification achieve plurality. Moreover, a majority of Latinos and a plurality of Asians and first-generation respondents adopted American as their primary identity. The only groups that were unlikely to see themselves primarily as American were those who spoke a language other than English at home and who were not citizens. In both cases, a national-origin identification was most common.

Perceptions of Discrimination

Central to this inquiry is an examination of whether perceptions of discrimination determine possible political consequences for having a panethnic, national-origin, or American identity. Thus, three types of discrimination perceptions were measured in the 21-CAS: against one's panethnic group, against one's national-origin group, and against oneself individually on the basis of race or ethnicity. The findings reveal wide variation among ethnic groups in the extent to which they perceived all three types of discrimination, nonwhites—especially blacks—perceiving more discrimination than whites. The results also indicate that among all

Table 3.2   Perceptions of Discrimination

	Panethnic	National Origin	Personal	N (Raw)
White	0.29	0.11	0.07	1,589
Black	0.74	0.61	0.46	281
Asian	0.47	0.42	0.24	276
Latino	0.57	0.49	0.25	422
U.S. citizen	0.39	0.26	0.15	2,435
Not U.S. citizen	0.55	0.47	0.28	249
First generation	0.52	0.43	0.24	530
Second generation	0.47	0.33	0.14	166
Third generation	0.32	0.19	0.15	175
Fourth generation or more	0.38	0.23	0.14	1,765
Speaks primarily English at home	0.38	0.24	0.15	2,281
Speaks another language at home	0.56	0.48	0.27	404

Source: Schildkraut and Grosse 2010.
Note: N = unweighted; mean.

groups, perceptions of group-level discrimination are more common than perceptions of individual discrimination.

The group-level measures in the 21-CAS asked about the degree to which respondents felt that discrimination against their group existed in schools, in the workplace, and in American society in general. Respondents' answers to the questions were combined to form one scale measuring the perception of panethnic discrimination ($\alpha = 0.84$), and one measuring national-origin discrimination ($\alpha = 0.91$). The individual-level measures asked whether respondents had personally experienced discrimination because of their racial or ethnic background in the workplace, in restaurants or stores, and in American society generally.[46] Answers were combined to form a scale of individual-level discrimination ($\alpha = 0.64$). All three scales were then recalibrated to run from 0 (no discrimination) to 1 (all scenarios in question are a major problem or have been personally experienced).[47]

Perceiving that one's group is mistreated is often more common than perceiving that one is personally a victim of discrimination, a phenomenon known as the personal-group discrepancy.[48] This discrepancy is evident in the 21-CAS: the mean level of panethnic discrimination is 0.37 (standard deviation [SD] = 0.33); the mean level of national-origin discrimination is 0.25 (SD = 0.33); and the mean level of personal discrimination is 0.15 (SD = 0.27). Table 3.2 shows bivariate breakdowns, and again, few surprises. The personal-group discrepancy appears among all groups, and in every case, a sense of panethnic discrimination is more common than national-origin discrimination. Across all three types of discrimination,

nonwhites perceived more discrimination than whites, and noncitizens perceived more than citizens. Discrimination seemed to level off after the first generation, and people who spoke a language other than English at home perceived more discrimination than those who spoke only English.

Overall perceptions of discrimination against one's panethnic or national-origin group are prevalent among nonwhites and immigrants. Establishment reactions to ethnically tinged claims of Americanness among immigrants and minorities, like those described earlier, along with restrictionist changes in immigration policy over the past several years, sustain these perceptions.[49]

In sum, panethnic identities are the least common, though that is the group people think is mistreated the most. Acculturation seems to increase the likelihood of adopting an American identity and decrease the likelihood of perceiving mistreatment. Together, these patterns suggest that fears that newer Americans—and their nonwhite descendants—fail to think of themselves primarily as American are overblown. Still, some cause for concern may be merited. Perceptions of panethnic discrimination are most common—even among the acculturated—yet few respondents identify primarily with their panethnic group. This combination reduces the likelihood that people who perceive discrimination are finding solace with the aggrieved group.

Predicting Trust and Obligation

Measures of identity attachment and perceptions of discrimination in place, we can test whether each of these factors, alone or in combination, are politically consequential. Examining trust in government and law enforcement, I find that identity attachment on its own is not where the main story lies. Trust in the federal government is affected more by politicized identities than by identity attachment absent perceptions of discrimination. Among Latino and Asian respondents, American identifiers who perceived discrimination against their panethnic group trusted the government less than non-American identifiers who perceived discrimination, just as the theoretical approaches outlined earlier lead us to expect. Likewise, among black respondents, American identifiers who perceived individual-level discrimination trusted the government less than non-American identifiers who perceived such discrimination. Trust in law enforcement, on the other hand, was lower for minority respondents who perceived individual-level discrimination regardless of whether they identified primarily as American.

Trust in government and law enforcement was gauged in the 21-CAS by asking respondents, "How much of the time do you think you can trust [the government in Washington/law enforcement] to do what is right . . . just about always, most of the time, some of the time, or never?"[50] Most respondents said they trust government only some of the time (57 percent) and that they trust law enforcement most of the time (53 percent). Separate statistical models were run to predict each form of trust for

whites, for blacks, and for Latinos and Asians. Latinos and Asians were analyzed together for several reasons. First, together these groups are well over a majority of contemporary immigrants. Second, Latino and Asian respondents yielded similar patterns underlying identity attachment.[51] Moreover, studies have shown that there are minimal differences among Asians of different national origins with respect to trust,[52] that Latinos of different backgrounds have similar political views,[53] and that Latinos and Asians "bear similar underlying structures of ethnicity."[54] Third, analyzing these groups together yields more precise estimates because of the increased sample size. Except where noted, running the models for Asians and Latinos separately gives similar results.

Each model has five sets of independent variables that are used in all subsequent analyses. The first consists of standard demographic and attitudinal measures: education, age, partisanship, and generalized trust (where 1 = most people can be trusted and 0 = you cannot be too careful). The second captures acculturation: generation (first, second, third, or more), and whether the respondent primarily speaks English in the home.[55] The third consists of identity attachment (American, panethnic, or national-origin), American being the omitted category. The fourth consists of perceptions of discrimination against one's panethnic group, against one's national-origin group, and against oneself personally. The fifth consists of interactions between each type of identity choice and each type of discrimination. These interaction terms reflect the concept of a politicized identity. They go beyond mere objective membership in a group by capturing both identification and beliefs about social standing, a combination that is essential for group consciousness to emerge. Only with these interaction terms can we compare people who are and are not attached to the ethnic group (or to being American) under different degrees of politicization. It moves the debate beyond whether attachment affects political engagement by shifting our attention to the conditions under which such effects might be more or less likely to emerge.

For the model with black respondents, only the identity and discrimination measures relating to panethnicity were included, and for blacks and whites, speaking only English was dropped for its failure to achieve significance in earlier tests. In all cases, the model for whites is considered the baseline because most of what we know about trust and obligation comes from studying whites. The role of identity and discrimination in shaping the opinions of whites is of less interest in the present analysis.

Trust in Government

The results for trust in government are in table 3.3. Due to the interaction terms, the coefficients on identity choices should be read as the effect of that identity choice on trust when perceptions of discrimination are absent. Likewise, the coefficients on the different types of discrimination should be read as the effect of each type of discrimination on trust

for American identifiers only. The coefficients on the interaction terms indicate whether the effect of identity attachment is different when the various perceptions of discrimination are present, and whether the effect of discrimination is different for non-American identifiers than it is for American identifiers.[56]

Table 3.3 shows that trust in government for whites works much like most existing research on trust would predict: Republicans and people

Table 3.3   Trust in Government

Independent Variable	White		Black		Asian and Latino	
	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE
Education	−0.28**	0.13	−0.14	0.25	−0.33*	0.19
Age	0.23	0.17	0.45	0.38	0.02	0.26
Republican	1.13**	0.10	−0.19	0.33	0.74**	0.16
Generalized (interpersonal) trust	0.23**	0.08	0.46**	0.18	0.04	0.12
Generation (first to fourth-plus)	0.04	0.14	0.21	0.34	−0.53**	0.16
Speaks primarily English at home	—	—	—	—	−0.21*	0.13
Latino	—	—	—	—	0.44**	0.13
National origin self-identification	−0.23	0.22	—	—	−0.08	0.21
Panethnic self-identification	0.25	0.18	0.02	0.44	−0.58*	0.34
National origin discrimination	0.31	0.21	—	—	0.19	0.24
Panethnic discrimination	−0.17	0.16	−0.43	0.48	−0.59**	0.24
Individual-level discrimination	−0.05	0.27	−0.69**	0.34	−0.12	0.25
National origin × national origin discrimination	−0.89	1.02	—	—	−0.11	0.37
National origin × individual discrimination	1.50	1.05	—	—	0.07	0.37
Panethnic × panethnic discrimination	−0.60	0.42	−0.88	0.63	1.19**	0.53
Panethnic × individual discrimination	−0.90	0.84	1.03**	0.50	−0.36	0.47
Cutpoint 1	−1.14	0.21	−1.41	0.45	−1.89	0.24
Cutpoint 2	0.93	0.20	0.66	0.44	0.01	0.23
Cutpoint 3	2.32	0.21	1.69	0.47	1.32	0.24
Chi-square	165.35		32.46		75.66	
N	1,006		228		463	

Source: Schildkraut and Grosse 2010.
Notes: Ordered probit; all nondummy variables coded 0 to 1; unweighted data.
**$p < .05$; *$p < .1$

with more generalized trust trust government more (the Republican Party controlled the executive and legislative branches when the 21-CAS was conducted), and people with more education trust less.[57] For whites, all measures of identity choice and perceptions of discrimination are insignificant, as are the interaction terms. For blacks, generalized trust promotes trust in government and individual-level discrimination diminishes trust in government. Identifying primarily as black has no impact absent perceptions of discrimination, but it mitigates the damaging effects of individual-level discrimination. In other words, discrimination hurts trust in government only for blacks who identify primarily as American (see interaction term for panethnic identity and perception of individual-level discrimination).

Latinos trust government slightly more than Asians, and acculturation reduces trust, as indicated by the negative coefficients on generational status and language use. But as with blacks, discrimination and identity also play a complicated role. Here, panethnic discrimination diminishes trust rather than personal discrimination. But as before, this effect only applies to people who identify primarily as American. Identifying as Latino or as Asian neutralizes the damaging effect of discrimination.

To get a better sense of the magnitude of the relationship between panethnic discrimination and identity attachment among Latinos, I determined the predicted probability of trusting government most of the time and never as identity attachment and perceptions of discrimination vary. Figure 3.1 shows the probability that a Latino respondent trusts the government most of the time as his identification changes from American to Latino and as his perception of discrimination against Latinos changes from "not a problem" to "a major problem."[58] Figure 3.2 shows the probability that a Latino respondent never trusts the government under the same conditions. These figures show that among American identifiers, perceptions of panethnic discrimination decrease the likelihood of trusting government most of the time by over ten percentage points and increase the likelihood of never trusting government, while panethnic identifiers exhibit psychological capital. Trust among American identifiers decreases in the face of panethnic discrimination, but trust among panethnic identifiers is enhanced.[59] Predicted outcomes for Asians tell the same story.[60]

Clearly, the role that identity attachment plays in shaping trust is more complicated than it is typically cast. For blacks, Latinos, and Asians, having an American identification is beneficial if perceptions of discrimination are absent. But such perceptions are not absent. Twenty-two percent of black respondents both score at or above the midpoint on the individual-level discrimination scale and identify primarily as American. Twenty-five percent of Latino and Asian respondents score at or above the midpoint on the panethnic discrimination scale and identify primarily as American.

Figure 3.1   Probabilities of Latinos Trusting Government "Most of the Time"
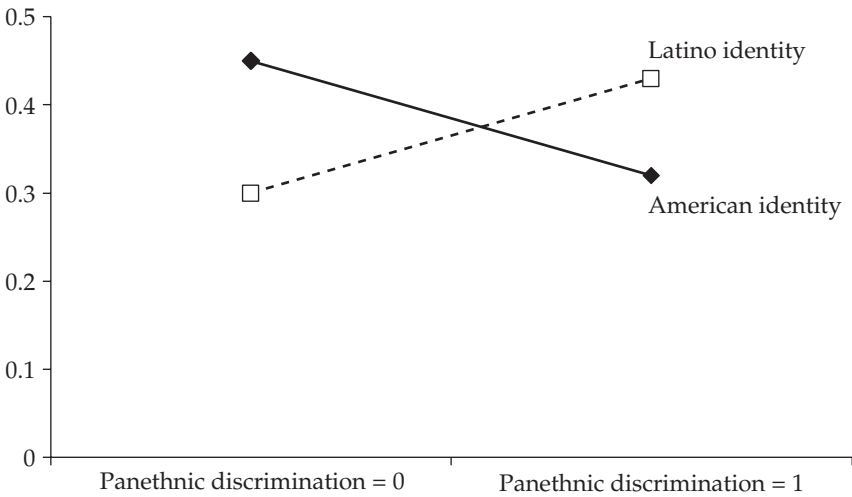
Source: Schildkraut and Grosse 2010.

Figure 3.2   Probabilities of Latinos Never Trusting Government
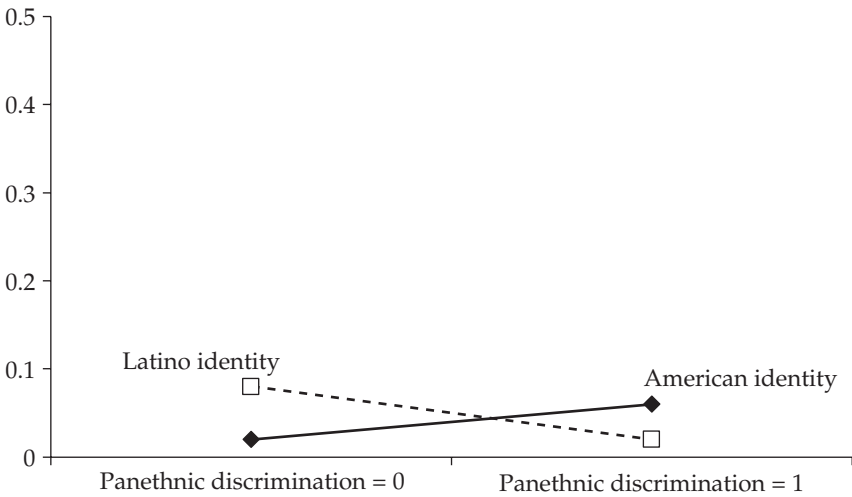
Source: Schildkraut and Grosse 2010.

A nontrivial portion of the population would have its level of trust in government raised if it were to identify primarily with the panethnic group instead of as American.[61]

Trust in Law Enforcement

To analyze trust in law enforcement, I used the same statistical test as for trust in government. The results of the full model are not shown here because the complicated relationship between identity attachment, discrimination, and trust does not apply when our target shifts from government to law enforcement. Instead, perceptions of individual-level discrimination diminish trust for blacks, Latinos, and Asians, and identity attachment does not alter this effect. The probability that a Latino respondent who identifies as American will trust law enforcement "just about always" drops from 0.21 to 0.08 when the perception of individual-level discrimination changes from 0 to 1. For Asians, it drops from 0.12 to 0.04. Changing primary identity attachment from American to Latino or Asian or to a national-origin group does not affect these results.[62] That perceptions of personal discrimination are so powerful in shaping attitudes toward law enforcement is perhaps not surprising, given that efforts to command social control through the police and federal agents loom so large in the daily experiences of immigrants and other minorities, as Mary C. Waters and Philip Kasinitz describe in chapter 4 of this volume.

   In sum, perceptions of both personal discrimination and panethnic discrimination are powerful. When it comes to trust in government, the expectations of group consciousness theory and social identity theory are borne out: identifying with the aggrieved group can inoculate people against alienation. But the impact of discrimination on trust in law enforcement is too powerful; identifying with the aggrieved group offers no protection for blacks, Latinos, or Asians.

Obligation

When the analysis shifts to predicting attitudes about obligations to the national community, the theoretical expectations detailed earlier are again on display. Identity attachment is not a central factor shaping whether people felt as if they had particular obligations to their fellow Americans. Only after perceptions of discrimination were present did identities sometimes become consequential, and did so in a way that made people less willing to contribute to the broader society. In particular, among Latinos and Asians, non-American identifiers who perceived group-level discrimination were less likely to feel that they had an obligation to donate to charity or to volunteer in their communities than American identifiers who perceived such discrimination.

Obligation is measured in the 21-CAS by offering respondents a list of possible obligations and asking them to indicate if they think each one is an obligation they owe to other Americans. Accepted responses were yes, no, and it depends.[63] The obligations under investigation are giving money to charities, volunteering in one's community, and serving in the military. Overall, Americans felt that they had all three obligations: charity = 57 percent, volunteer = 72 percent, and military service = 45 percent (a plurality).[64] As noted earlier, research on group consciousness has not examined these kinds of prosocial behaviors; it has focused on collective action in pursuit of group-specific gains. Social identity scholarship, on the other hand, suggests that panethnic or national-origin identifications, when paired with perceptions of discrimination, would make one's sense of obligation to the broader community less likely. Attachment plus the perception of threat should lead people to close ranks around the aggrieved group.[65]

The same models used to predict trust were employed here, but with three changes. First, generalized trust is removed. Second, gender is added because of scholarship suggesting that women are more sympathetic to the disadvantaged than men and possess an ethic of caring, and because men are more likely to serve in the military.[66] Third, a variable called *civic republican Americanism* is added. This measure captures the belief that "true Americans" should do volunteer work in their community, should be informed about local and national politics, and should be involved in local and national politics.[67] People who think American identity is uniquely defined by these types of active citizenship are probably more likely to feel that they personally have obligations to the United States and to the American people. The results appear in table 3.4. For ease of presentation, standard errors are not reported.[68]

The strongest and most consistent relationship across all models is the power that civic republican Americanism plays in shaping whether people feel that they personally have obligations to other Americans. With regard to the main causal variables of this study, identity attachment, absent perceptions of discrimination, only matters twice: whites who identify as white are less likely to say they should volunteer in their communities, and blacks who identify as black are less likely to say they should serve in the military. Perceptions of discrimination for American identifiers are relatively inconsequential. Blacks are more likely to say they should volunteer in their communities when they feel they personally have been mistreated due to their race, and they are less likely to say they should serve in the military when they feel that blacks have been mistreated.[69] Identifying primarily as black instead of as American does nothing to mitigate—or exacerbate—these relationships.

Perceptions of discrimination on their own do not affect whether Latinos or Asians feel they personally have obligations to donate, volunteer, or

Table 3.4   Obligation to Participate

Independent variable	Donate			Volunteer			Serve		
	White	Black	Asian/Latino	White	Black	Asian/Latino	White	Black	Asian/Latino
Education	0.31**	0.10	0.26	−0.02	−0.43	0.23	−0.71**	−0.50*	−0.54**
Age	0.54**	0.15	0.67**	−0.001	0.34	0.41	1.81**	2.62**	1.43**
Male	−0.18**	0.04	−0.11	−0.21**	−0.32*	0.004	0.26**	0.78**	0.15
Generation (first to four-plus)	−0.26*	−0.30	0.38**	0.01	−0.22	0.21	−0.33**	−0.11	−0.44**
Speaks primarily English at home	—	—	−0.34**	—	—	−0.13	—	—	0.02
Civic republican	1.75**	1.54**	0.79**	2.51**	2.29**	1.51**	1.11**	1.53**	1.51**
Americanism									
Latino	—	—	−0.17	—	—	−0.19	—	—	−0.07
National origin self-identification	−0.16	—	0.02	−0.24	—	0.27	−0.22	—	−0.03
Panethnic self-identification	−0.02	0.38	0.41	−0.55**	−0.60	−0.06	−0.26	−0.77*	0.06
National origin discrimination	0.04	—	−0.05	0.18	—	−0.16	−0.07	—	0.09

Panethnic discrimination	−0.14	0.17	0.02	0.03	−0.41	0.14	0.25*	−0.95**	−0.22
Individual-level discrimination	−0.07	0.22	0.05	−0.05	0.90**	0.26	−0.10	−0.14	0.07
National origin × national origin discrimination	0.57	—	0.07	−0.11	—	−0.80**	0.63	—	−0.35
National origin × individual discrimination	0.19	—	−0.32	0.79	—	−0.11	−0.21	—	0.01
Panethnic × panethnic discrimination	−0.20	−0.25	−0.86*	1.05**	1.24*	0.17	0.20	0.39	−0.13
Panethnic × individual discrimination	2.10**	−0.09	0.58	−0.41	−0.71	0.39	0.48	−0.26	0.11
Cutpoint 1	0.92	0.80	0.38	0.85	0.55	0.48	0.84	1.01	0.86
Cutpoint 2	1.20	0.99	0.69	1.12	0.66	0.66	1.18	1.31	1.14
Chi-square	116.40	15.01	35.23	157.69	29.83	46.75	218.39	91.28	95.70
N	1,168	271	604	1,167	272	605	1,157	268	598

Source: Schildkraut and Grosse 2010.

Notes: Ordered probit; all nondummy variables coded 0 to 1; unweighted data.

**p < .05; *p < .1

Figure 3.3   Probability of Stating Obligation to Donate
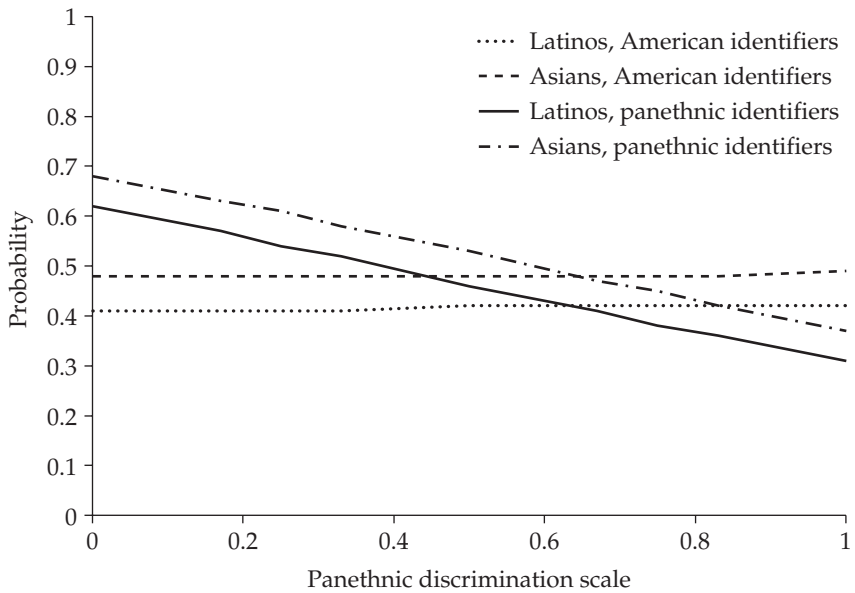
Source: Schildkraut and Grosse 2010.

serve, but such perceptions do become consequential when paired with a Latino or Asian identity. Also, contrary to the positive impact that politicized identities have on trust, the joint presence of discrimination and attachment to a non-American identity here reduces one's sense of connection to the American ingroup. For donating to charity, the relevant level of analysis is panethnicity. For volunteering in the community, it is the national-origin group.

Figure 3.3 shows the predicted probability of thinking that one has an obligation to donate to charity as one's identity choice (American versus panethnic) and perception of panethnic discrimination vary for Latinos and Asians. It shows that for American identifiers, one's likelihood of feeling an obligation to donate to charity does not vary with the level of perceived panethnic discrimination. It also shows that those who identify as Latino and Asian have a higher likelihood of saying they have an obligation to donate than American identifiers when perceptions of panethnic discrimination are absent. Importantly, once such perceptions are present, the sense of obligation among these panethnic identifiers drops considerably. A Latino respondent who identifies as Latino but does not perceive discrimination has a 62 percent chance of saying

she has an obligation to donate to charity. When the same respondent thinks Latinos are mistreated, that probability drops to 31 percent—a precipitous drop of 31 percentage points. The effect of politicized identities on the obligation to volunteer in one's community is similar (results not shown here).

In sum, a politicized non-American identity turns Latinos and Asians away from the American community. Twelve percent of Latino and Asian respondents identified primarily as Latino and Asian and scored at or above the midpoint on the panethnic discrimination scale, and 23 percent of Latino and Asian respondents identified primarily with their national-origin group and scored at or above the midpoint on the national-origin discrimination scale. In short, the phenomenon discussed here affects nontrivial proportions of American minorities.

Identity, Engagement, and Withdrawal in Contemporary American Politics

The results of the study are quite clear: American identities are alive and well in the United States. As one might expect, the immigrant generation held on to its national-origin attachments, but even among immigrants, about two-fifths said they identified primarily as American. Moreover, national-origin attachments shrink considerably with each generation and with English acquisition. When national-origin attachment fades, an American identity becomes common rather than a panethnic identity.

It is also clear from the study that identity attachments on their own (absent perceptions of discrimination) are rarely a problem when it comes to trust in government and law enforcement and obligation to the national community. Becoming American, in the sense of identifying as American, does not appear to make better Americans, and concerns that lack of an American identity reduces trust and obligation are largely unfounded. There are two caveats. A panethnic identity can lead Latinos and Asians (who do not perceive discrimination) to be less trusting of government and make blacks less likely to say they have an obligation to serve in the military. Otherwise, whether a person sees herself primarily as American or as a member of a panethnic or national-origin group appears to be inconsequential, although only if she does not perceive discrimination.

Perceptions of discrimination, however, cause a fair amount of alienation. Adopting a non-American identity can lessen the effects of discrimination with respect to trust in government, and this is more often the case with panethnic identities than with national-origin identities. But holding a panethnic or national-origin identity can also activate the alienating power of discrimination with respect to a sense of obligation to the American people. Such perceptions also reduce trust in law enforcement,

regardless of primary identity attachment. Politicized identities can provide a critical psychological resource that mitigates the damaging effects of discrimination, yet they can also lead people to close ranks around the mistreated group and be less willing to make sacrifices for the broader community.

The ideal advanced by immigration critics as well as by some democratic theorists and social psychologists—having all people in the United States identify primarily as American—is ideal only if people do not feel that they or their group is mistreated. Once perceptions of discrimination are added to the mix, the normative question of whether we should want people to see themselves primarily as American becomes considerably more complicated. As Lisa García Bedolla warns, feeling stigmatized while lacking a positive attachment to the aggrieved group leads to disengagement, and "for members of stigmatized groups, establishing a positive attachment to their social group may be a necessary first step toward their attachment to the political community as a whole."[70] My research suggests she is right with respect to trust, but not necessarily with respect to obligation. In both cases, however, the findings underscore the need to focus attention on perceptions of mistreatment more than on identity attachments, or rather, along with identity attachments. Without appreciating the conditional nature of how identities shape engagement with American society or how perceptions of threat activate the ability of identities to have political consequences, we run the risk of concentrating our attention on the wrong things. If we seek pathways to achieve a society in which people share attachments to a superordinate national identity and trust political institutions and feel they have obligations to the political community, we will never find them if we fail to look beyond simply whether people do or do not see themselves as American.

The 21-CAS was conducted in 2004. In the past few years, the national climate has arguably become even more hostile to immigrants and their descendants. The number of deportations has risen, and proposals for comprehensive immigration reform have stalled in Congress, as have proposals aimed at legalizing the status of children brought to the country illegally by their parents. Meanwhile, several states have passed laws aimed at driving immigrants out and that serve to create fears of racial profiling among native-born minorities. In 2012, the Supreme Court issued a ruling that allows key elements of such laws to stand. Although majorities of Americans favor political reforms that provide an opportunity for undocumented immigrants to acquire legal status, as many as 20 percent of the American public have favored deporting all illegal immigrants in recent years.[71] In the wake of these trends, perceptions of discrimination among Latinos have risen steadily. In 2002, 47 percent of Latinos said that discrimination against Latinos was a major problem; by 2010, that figure rose to 61 percent.[72]

The views of whites on these matters are in flux as well. Over the past two decades, non-Hispanic white Americans have become more likely to feel that being white is important to them, more likely to have their sense of white racial identity lead to more restrictive immigration preferences, and more likely to have their views on immigration affect their partisan preferences, with more hostility leading to more support for Republican candidates and identification with the Republican Party.[73] Research in psychology shows that whites who are primed to think about demographic projections become more conservative on a range of issues, perceive that their status as the prototypical American is threatened, and become more opposed to diversity.[74] One study also found that many American whites now consider antiwhite bias to be a bigger problem than antiblack bias.[75] Feeling that one's status is threatened in response to demographic change is of course not new in the United States, but it merits continued examination in light of its profound effects on both the majority and the minority.[76]

Three factors—demographic changes, the reactions of the native born to such changes, and the reactions of newcomers to the reactions of the native born—suggest that the phenomena presented in this chapter have likely become even more acute. After the 2012 presidential election, the dominant media narrative emphasized the extent to which ethnic background affected vote choice: nonwhites overwhelmingly supported the Democrat and whites favored the Republican. Issues related to ethnicity and identity have become aligned with partisan differences and are intricately tied to electoral politics. This inescapable political narrative, coupled with victories on the political right (in congressional elections and at thwarting immigration reform) and episodes in our popular culture (such as the negative reaction when a Mexican American boy sang the national anthem) reinforce the tensions that immigration stokes and that drive the findings uncovered in this chapter. Immigrants and the second generation are responsive to this environment, as are the native born. Together, these reactions can create a vicious circle of distrust, perceptions of threat, alienation, and disengagement. In short, our current trajectory has the potential to promote collective action and electoral participation among minorities, but also to exacerbate group-based distinctions and diminish attitudes and actions related to collective obligations.

Notes

1. On active citizenship, Meyerson 2006; on civic engagement, Silber Mohamed 2013.
2. Farmer 2006.
3. Investor's Business Daily 2006.
4. Rodriguez 2013.

5. Tavernise 2012.
6. See also chapters 6 and 7, this volume.
7. On interests, Smith 2003; on expectations, Hetherington 2005.
8. Tyler and Huo 2002; Tyler 2006.
9. Miller 1995; Hetherington 2005.
10. On the community, Smith 2003; on compromise, Miller 1995.
11. See chapter 4, this volume. See also National Conference of State Legislatures 2014.
12. Galston 2003, 179.
13. Wellman 2001, 233; see also Epstein 1984; Miller 1995; Sandel 1996.
14. Campbell et al. 1960; Abramson, Silver, and Anderson 1987.
15. Druckman 1994; Schatz, Staub, and Lavine 1999; Furia 2002; de Figueiredo and Elkins 2003; Shayo 2009; Theiss-Morse 2009.
16. Gaertner and Dovidio 2000.
17. Smith 1997, 480, 474.
18. For a review of liberal nationalist arguments, see Mason 1999.
19. Sandel 1996.
20. Taylor 1998, 143.
21. Owen and Dennis 2001; Richardson, Houston, and Hadjiharalambous 2001; Keele 2005.
22. Miller et al. 1981; Conover 1988; Conover and Sapiro 1993; McClain et al. 2009.
23. Schildkraut 2005b; McClain et al. 2009.
24. Miller et al. 1981.
25. On linked fate, Dawson 1994; on worth fighting for, García Bedolla 2005.
26. Miller et al. 1981; Schildkraut 2005b.
27. García Bedolla 2005.
28. Miller et al. 1981.
29. Tajfel 1982; Tajfel and Turner 1986; Theiss-Morse 2009.
30. This is not to say that social identity theory maintains that outgroup derogation *automatically* follows from group attachment and threat; some derogation is more accurately characterized as a product of ingroup promotion rather than outgroup hostility (Ellemers, Spears, and Doosje 1999; Oakes 2001; Turner and Reynolds 2001).
31. Turner 1982, 23.
32. Dovidio and Morris 1975; Hornstein 1976; Hayden, Jackson, and Guydish 1984; Flippen et al. 1996.
33. Branscombe et al. 1999, 47.
34. Tajfel and Turner 1986; Ellemers and Barreto 2001; Wright 2001; Spears 2011.
35. See also Gaertner and Dovidio 2000.
36. Branscombe et al. 1999.
37. In contrast to social identity research, research on group consciousness has typically examined collective action outcomes and not prosocial behavior, leaving us with little in the way of expectations regarding how

a politicized identity might affect one's sense of obligation to the national community.

38. Turner 1999.
39. For related research, see Tyler and Huo 2002; Michelson 2003; Putnam 2003; Weaver 2003; Lien, Conway, and Wong 2004; Weitzer and Tuch 2004; Schildkraut 2005b; Pearson and Citrin 2006; Theiss-Morse 2009.
40. Junn and Masuoka 2008; McClain et al. 2009.
41. Sommers 1991; Espiritu 1992; Lowe 1996.
42. Schildkraut and Grosse 2010. The survey was conducted by the Social and Economic Sciences and Research Center (SESRC) at Washington State University and was funded by the Russell Sage Foundation. Any U.S. resident over eighteen years old and living in a household with a telephone was eligible for selection in the sample. Counties with higher percentages of black, Latino, and Asian residents were targeted more heavily with RDD for the oversamples. The cooperation rate, the ratio of interviews to interviews plus refusals, was 31.2 percent. Although a higher rate would be preferable to a lower rate, studies challenge whether the cost of extensive refusal conversions are worth the effort (Curtin, Presser, and Singer 2000; Keeter et al. 2000). A Spanish version of the survey was available and used by 137 respondents. The average interview length was twenty-six minutes. Comparisons between the 21-CAS and the 2000 Census show nearly identical breakdowns regarding age, nativity, and race. The survey population is more female, more educated, and has more households earning over $100,000 than the U.S. population, but the median household income compares favorably. Such differences are typical (see, for example, Lien, Conway, and Wong 2004).
43. The remaining respondents identified as mixed, Native American, or answered the race question in a way that could not be incorporated into this breakdown (for example, "human").
44. Unless otherwise noted, all figures refer to weighted results, using population weights provided by the SESRC.
45. For a discussion of the differing forces that potentially shape identity integration on either side of the Atlantic, see chapters 5 and 2, this volume.
46. Exact question wording can be found in Schildkraut 2011.
47. Exploratory factor analysis confirmed these three distinct dimensions among the discrimination items.
48. Crosby 1984; Kessler, Mummendey, and Leisse 2000; Fuegen and Biernat 2000; Schildkraut 2005a.
49. See chapter 4, this volume.
50. "Just about always" was coded as 1, "never" as 0.
51. Schildkraut 2011.
52. Lien, Conway, and Wong 2004.
53. Claassen 2004.
54. Lien 1994.

55. In all analyses, all nondummy variables are recalibrated to run from 0 to 1.
56. Brambor, Clark, and Golder 2006.
57. For existing scholarship on trust in government, see Brehm and Rahn 1997; Keele 2005; Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2001; Citrin and Luks 2001; and Hetherington 2005.
58. Predicted outcomes are calculated using CLARIFY, holding all other variables constant at their means for Latinos, with *speaks English at home* held constant at 1 (King, Tomz, and Wittenberg 2000). I predicted "most of the time" instead of "just about always" because so few respondents of any kind said that they trust the government just about always under any condition.
59. It is important to note that a panethnic identification for Latinos and Asians does reduce trust in government when perceptions of discrimination are absent (see table 3.3), indicating that concerns of immigration critics cannot be dismissed completely.
60. See Schildkraut 2011.
61. In separate analyses (not shown), I used the 2001 Pilot National Asian American Political Survey to predict trust in local government. In that test, the interaction between an Asian identification and discrimination was positive and significant, confirming that panethnic identification can neutralize the negative impact of discrimination on trust for Asian Americans.
62. For full results, see Schildkraut 2011.
63. "Yes" was coded as 1, "no" as 0, and "it depends" as 0.5.
64. "It depends" was a volunteered response: donating to charity (9.6 percent), volunteering (6.4 percent), and serving in the military (11.6 percent).
65. For other research on attitudes about obligations, see Eckstein 2001; Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002.
66. Conover 1988. The membership of the United States armed forces is just under 15 percent female (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs 2011).
67. This scale runs from 0 to 1, with $\alpha = 0.6$ and mean $= 0.78$.
68. Standard errors are available from the author on request.
69. Though unexpected, it is possible that panethnic mistreatment promotes the belief among blacks that one owes it to other Americans to volunteer in the community due to the prevalence of residential segregation in the United States. When black respondents hear "the community," they may think of a largely black community.
70. García Bedolla 2005, 190.
71. See Gallup 2014.
72. Lopez, Morin, and Taylor 2010.
73. Hutchings et al. 2012; Jardina 2013; Hajnal and Rivera 2014.
74. Craig and Richeson 2014; Danbold and Huo 2014.
75. Norton and Sommers 2011.
76. See chapter 1, this volume.

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