



N.C. Division of Archives and History

What the Polls Show About Attitudes Toward Public Policy and Race Relations: Race Matters

by Lynn Bonner

Race and ethnicity have a clear impact on how North Carolinians view race relations and the role of government. Most polls on the topic have focused primarily on how blacks and whites view public issues, because other groups were too small to draw a representative sample. That's changing as the Hispanic/Latino population of both North Carolina and the nation continues to expand. However, polls over the past decade primarily have examined the perspectives of whites and African Americans. Here, there are broad areas of disagreement.

African Americans and whites hold differing views toward police and the criminal justice system. For example, in a poll of racial attitudes in North Carolina by the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation of Winston-Salem, 64 percent of black respondents said law enforcement officers in their communities were generally tougher on blacks, while 65 percent of white respondents said officers treat blacks and whites the same. National polls show similar results. In a 2000 CBS News poll, 71 percent of African Americans said the criminal justice system was biased against blacks, compared to only 39 percent of whites and 44 percent of Hispanics/Latinos who felt the same way.

Job discrimination and affirmative action is another area where blacks, whites, and Hispanics/Latinos hold differing views. In the CBS poll, 90 percent of blacks and 87 percent of Hispanics/Latinos, but only 60 percent of whites said laws were necessary to protect minorities from discrimination in hiring and promotion.

A January 2003 ABC News/Washington Post poll asked, "Do you support or oppose government and private programs that give women, blacks, and other minorities preference over white men getting into college, getting a job, or getting a promotion?" A total of 65 percent of black respondents said they favor such programs, while only 24 percent of whites said they support them.

In yet another area of difference, African Americans are far more supportive of busing to achieve school integration than whites, and they are generally less satisfied with the public schools than whites.

Finally, blacks take a dimmer view of race relations and of prospects for the future than do either whites or Hispanics/Latinos. For example, 77 percent of Hispanics/Latinos, 74 percent of whites, but only 55 percent of blacks agree that since the 1960s there has been "real progress" in getting rid of racial discrimination.

The Hispanic/Latino perspective is only beginning to emerge in public opinion polling, though recent polls have indicated concerns about immigration from the public generally. The state's other growing racial and ethnic populations remain too small to register on the public opinion radar screen. However, what is clear is that North Carolina has work to do if the state is to understand the varying policy perspectives of an increasingly diverse population.

African-American and white North Carolinians hold demonstrably different views on whether and how race shapes society and, if so, how government should respond. People of different races don't see eye to eye even on the question of whether race relations are getting better or worse. The differences are evident in state and national polls results over the last decade. Blacks and whites have differing views on how blacks are treated when they look for jobs or seek promotions, how they are treated by the police and courts, and whether affirmative action is fair or needed.

And, blacks are not the only racial or ethnic group holding different views from white Americans on public policy issues. Hispanics/Latinos bring another perspective on the issues, though polls until recently had not separated them out as a distinct group due to their small numbers in North Carolina. Other racial and ethnic groups still represent too small a percentage of state's population to be separated out in analysis of polling data. However, the differences between African Americans and whites are evident and have been for some time.

Differing Views Toward Police and the Criminal Justice System

Views of police and the criminal justice system show some of the starkest differences. In poll after poll, majorities of black respondents say that law enforcement officers are tougher on blacks and that obtaining equal justice is a problem. Responding to those same questions, most whites say law enforcement treats blacks and whites the same, and that the criminal justice system is fair to all. The disparity extends to the death penalty, which has significantly more support among whites. In a 1993 poll of racial attitudes in North Carolina by the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation of Winston-Salem, 64 percent of black respondents said law enforcement officers in their communities were generally tougher on blacks, while 65 percent of white respondents said officers treat blacks and whites the same.¹

National polls show similar results. Seven years after the Reynolds Foundation poll, 71 percent of African Americans answering a 2000 CBS News poll said the criminal justice system was biased against blacks, compared to only 39 percent of whites and 44 percent of Hispanics/Latinos who felt

the same way.² A 1999 Princeton Survey Research poll for *Newsweek* asked respondents, "Why do you think so many young black men are in prison today?"³ Among black respondents, 40 percent chose "unfair targeting of blacks by police" compared to 13 percent of whites. On the other hand, 39 percent of whites chose the answer, "bad character of the convicts themselves," while 22 percent of blacks chose that answer.

Questions about race are interwoven in public policy debates on law enforcement. Over the past four years, members of the Legislative Black Caucus have been vocal in their support for measures before the North Carolina General Assembly that would examine the fairness of the state's criminal justice system. In 2001–2002, there were 25 African Americans among the 170 lawmakers, and there were 24 in 2003. In the 2003 session, the General Assembly debated a two-year moratorium on administering the death penalty while the state studied its fairness.⁴ In 1999, the legislature enacted a "driving while black" law requiring state law enforcement officials to collect demographic data on drivers they stop.⁵

African-American legislators championed both issues. These issues had the support of white legislators as well, but among the public in general, support for the death penalty is much stronger among whites than among African Americans. In a 1999 Carolina Poll, for example, 64.9 percent of adult North Carolinians said they favor the death penalty for persons convicted of murder, 18.8 percent oppose it, and 16.2 percent said they didn't know or did not answer. Support among white respondents was slightly higher at 72.6 percent, but only 37.2 percent of black respondents said they favor the death penalty for persons convicted of murder, with 42.3 percent opposed.⁶

Martha Early, an assistant minister at a Durham church who pushed for the moratorium, says she couldn't help noticing that all the people who spoke at a public hearing against it were white. Some people who oppose the death penalty, as Early does, do so in part because they believe poor people and blacks are sentenced to death in greater proportions than whites found guilty of murder. "The criminal justice system, it's never been fair to us, us blacks," says Early.

Poll results also indicate blacks are far more likely to believe that black motorists are pulled over more often by police than are whites—the so-called

In this News & Observer photograph from September 7, 1960, Bill Campbell is escorted by his mother to his new public school in Raleigh (see page 104).

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"By 1970, the leaders of different movements were telling their followers what the recipe for authenticity was. Black people who didn't fit the bill were called "oreos" which meant black on the outside, white on the inside; Hispanics used the term "coconuts," for brown on the outside, Anglo on the inside; and we eventually heard about "the woman who thinks like a man." All of these people were seen as victims and, potentially, enemies of their movements because their allegiance was to those who oppressed them, who set the standards, who imposed definitions on them, who let them know when they were good and when they were bad. Such people were considered descendants of mission Indians and Uncle Toms—individuals so brainwashed by the oppressors that they had no love for their culture, for themselves, for their people."

...

"But by the start of the 1970s, I was on my way out of the separatist movements. By then, Black Power had destroyed the civil rights movement. Its exponents had called for throwing whites out of organizations that had provided integrated teams of workers against discrimination. They had rejected King's march-on-Washington vision in favor of a politics based on skin tone, an international black unity, a hatred of European and American culture, and a remarkably naïve conception of Africa as some kind of paradise lost. . . . We have yet to come out of that tailspin."

...

"The kids fear doing well in school because they might be accused of trying to be white, as if high-quality work were outside the province of Negro American engagement."

"This is remarkable because, in the past, Negroes protested against minstrelsy and the stereotypes of innate intellectual inadequacy by struggling up through the barriers of illiteracy and doing the very best jobs that they could. They knew that excellence is one of the highest forms of protest against charges of inferiority. It was also formerly understood that learning itself provided one with interior experiences that could not be taken away, regardless of how unfair the external world might be."

...

"Americans . . . are trying to find out what it means to be authentic. Few of them would use the word "authentic," but the question is still there. That is because we are always being asked to add something new to the mix that might redefine us. This question of renewing or diluting the mix is the fundamental challenge at the heart of our democracy."

—STANLEY CROUCH

"IDENTITY" IN MARIANNE WILLIAMSON, EDITOR,
IMAGINE WHAT AMERICA COULD BE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

“driving while black” issue. In a poll of North and South Carolinians by KPC Research for *The Charlotte Observer*, 69 percent of black respondents said that blacks are pulled over by police more often than whites, while 63 percent of whites said blacks were not stopped by police more than whites.⁷

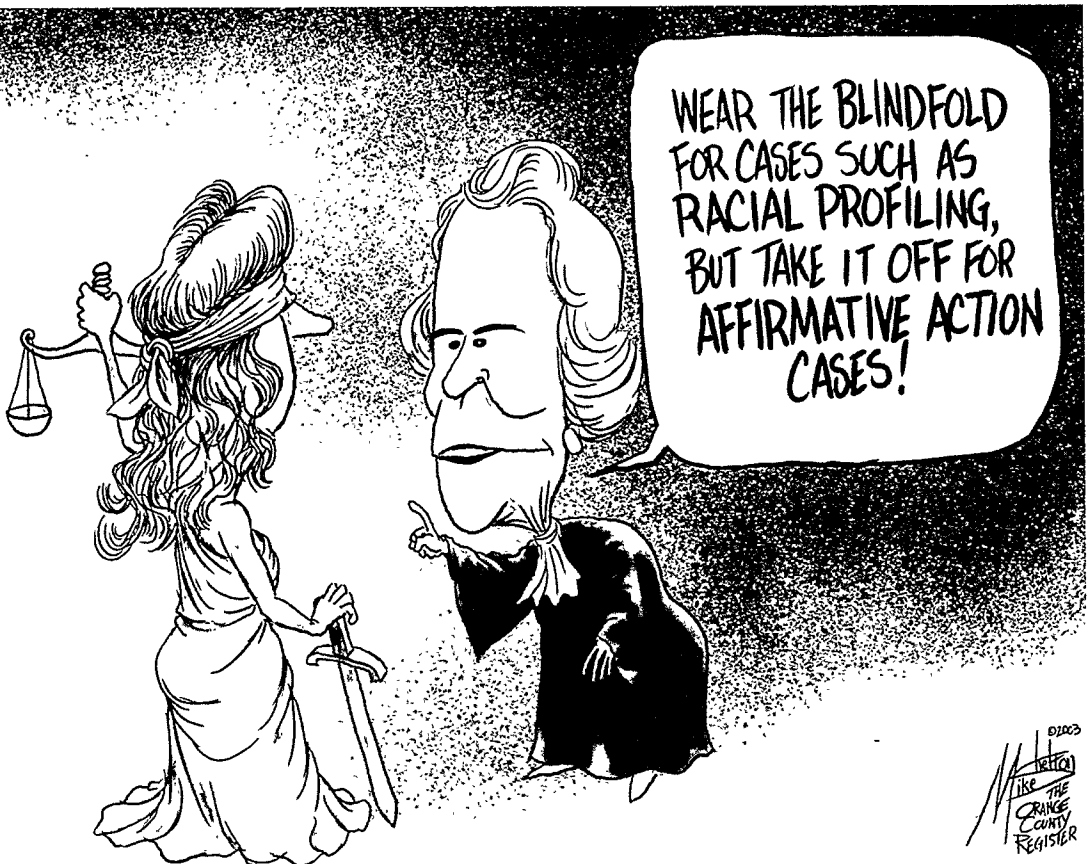
Differing Views on Job Discrimination and Affirmative Action

Job discrimination and affirmative action represent another area where polls show greater percentages of blacks than whites feel legal protections are necessary. In the 2000 CBS poll, 90 percent of blacks, 87 percent of Hispanics/Latinos, but only 60 percent of whites, said laws were necessary to protect minorities from discrimination in hiring and promotion.⁸ And, majorities of black respondents have shown consistent support for affirmative action, while whites have shown far less support. A January 2003 ABC News/*Washington Post* poll asked, “Do you support or oppose government and private programs that give women, blacks, and other minorities preference over white men getting into college, getting a job, or getting a promotion?” A

total of 65 percent of black respondents said they favor such minority preference, while only 24 percent of whites said they support them.⁹

Probing further, the poll asked, “Do you think that blacks who live in your community do or do not have as good a chance as whites to get a job for which they’re qualified?” Among white respondents, 80 percent answered yes, compared to only 39 percent of blacks.¹⁰ Additionally, a majority of black respondents said they or a friend or relative had been denied a job because of their race.¹¹ In the same poll, 79 percent of black respondents said they support government and private programs that give women, blacks, and other minorities assistance—but not preference—getting into college, getting a job, or getting a promotion.¹²

A January 2003 CBS News/*New York Times* poll found a majority of Americans (54 percent) favor continuing affirmative action programs in hiring, promoting, and college admissions, though support was far greater among blacks (94 percent) than among whites (47 percent).¹³ A June 2003 Gallup poll of adults nationwide asked the question, “Do you generally favor or oppose affirmative action programs for racial minorities?”¹⁴ Among black re-



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spondents, 70 percent said they were in favor of affirmative action while 21 percent were opposed. Only 44 percent of non-Hispanic whites said they favor affirmative action, with 49 percent opposed. Among Hispanics/Latinos, 63 percent were in favor, and 28 percent were opposed. The poll was taken a few weeks before the U.S. Supreme Court struck down an undergraduate admissions program at the University of Michigan that relied on a points system and automatically awarded extra points to minority applicants.¹⁵ The Supreme Court upheld, in a 5-4 companion decision, a narrowly tailored program designed to diversify enrollment at the University of Michigan Law School.¹⁶

The Gallup poll's findings regarding support for affirmative action showed some consistency with those taken over the past several years, though responses to questions gauging support for affirmative action depend greatly on the way the questions are worded. In the 1993 Reynolds Foundation poll in North Carolina, for example, 51 percent of black respondents said they *opposed* giving blacks preference over equally qualified whites in hiring and college admissions because of past discrimination, while 36 percent said they favored such preferences.¹⁷ Whites were still much more likely than blacks to be against giving blacks preferences over equally qualified whites, with 82 percent of whites opposing them and only 10 percent in favor.

Differing Views on Busing and School Quality

African Americans and whites also hold divergent views on issues such as busing to achieve racial integration of the public schools and on the quality of the schools generally. Polls show African Americans to be almost evenly divided about busing and whites strongly opposed. The Reynolds Foundation poll found that 47 percent of blacks opposed busing to achieve racial integration and 45 percent of blacks favored it, while 75 percent of white respondents opposed busing for racial integration and only 17 percent favored it.¹⁸ White parents' lawsuit overturning the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools' system of integrating the public schools through magnet schools that use race as part of admissions criteria has resulted in the re-segregation of some schools in that district.¹⁹ For example, at Marie G. Davis Middle School in a predominantly black Charlotte neighborhood, the student body shifted from a near 50-50 split between whites and blacks to 95 percent black in one

*This house divided, we live inside it.
Hate's dwelling place is behind our
door in fitful nights. Hear it walk the
floor and hear it rave as it moans and
drags along its ball and chain, as it
moves through this house it can't es-
cape. Now, inside this place we hide
away. We hear it near and hope it
turns away.*

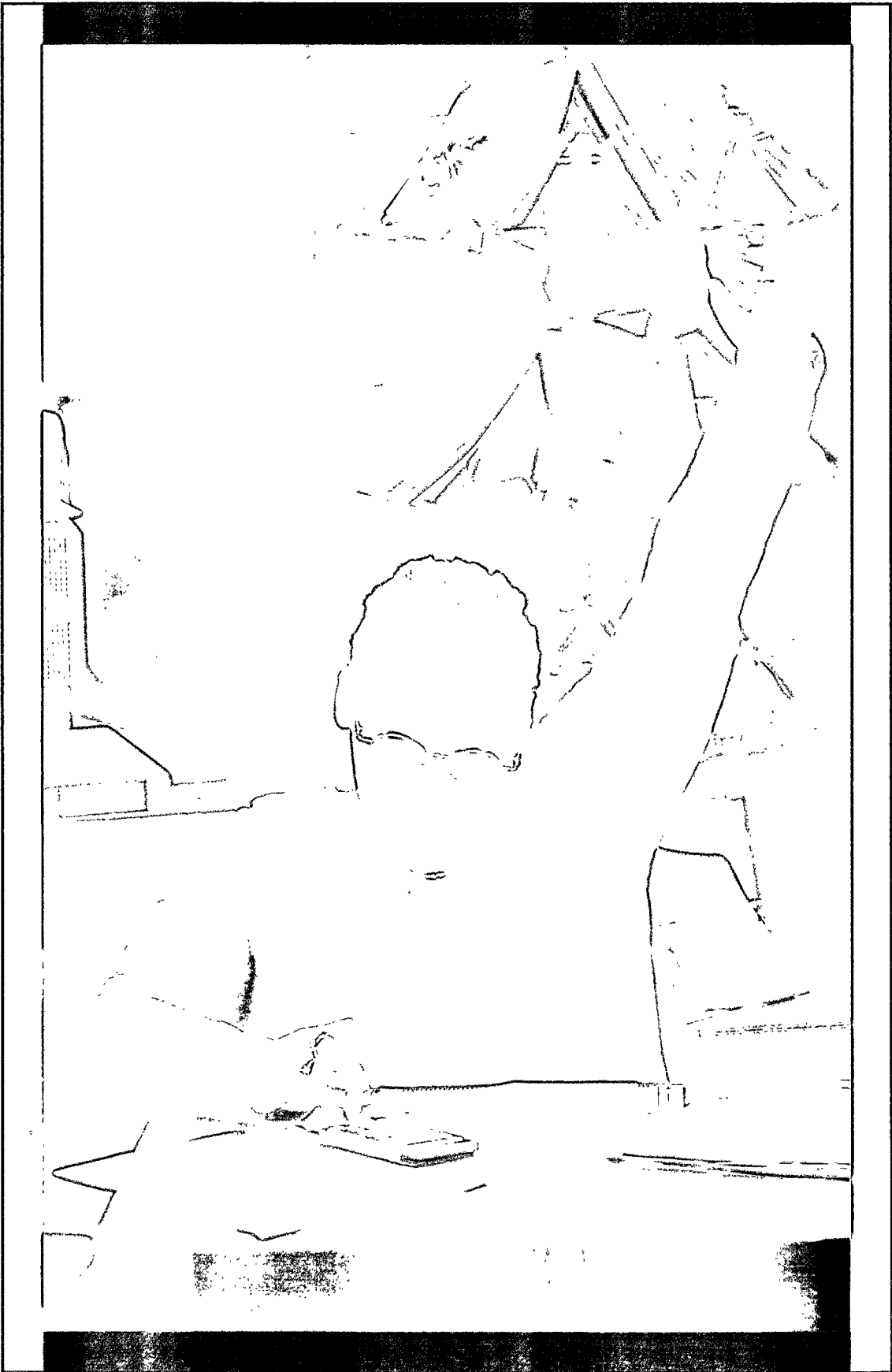
—SINGER NATALIE MERCHANT

"TOLERANCE"

year following the court's ruling.²⁰ Nearly a third of the schools in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg district wound up more than 80 percent minority, though the racial breakdown of the school district is 43 percent white, 43 percent black, and 14 percent other.

In Wake County, a group called Assignment by Choice was incorporated in May 2003 to challenge involuntary reassignment of students to maintain diversity in the public schools. Wake uses family income rather than race in its diversity policy in an attempt to avoid legal challenges. Despite pressure from some parents opposed to reassignment, Wake County has thus far managed to preserve its integrated school system.

While more supportive of busing, African Americans generally are less satisfied with their local schools than are whites. The Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, a Washington, D.C., think tank that studies issues of particular concern to minorities, has tracked school satisfaction for six years. The group has consistently found that whites are much more likely to give their local schools a rating of good or excellent than are African Americans.²¹ In 2002, for example, 53.7 percent of white respondents ranked their local schools good or excellent compared to only 35.2 percent of black respondents. The difference in the ratings between the two population groups has been referred to as a "satisfaction gap." That gap has shrunk slightly since 2000, when 52 percent of whites, but only 30.4 percent of blacks, rated their school good or excellent.



Karen Tam

Differing Views on the State of Race Relations

Besides being less supportive of preferences and of busing to achieve school integration, whites in North Carolina and around the country have been much more optimistic than blacks about the state of race relations, the chances for future improvements in race relations, and the well-being of black people. In a 1999 ABC News/Lifetime television poll, 57 percent of blacks said blacks face a lot of discrimination, while 22 percent of whites held that belief.²²

Chuck Stone, a journalism professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the author of books on the black political experience, says there's a connection between the greater feeling of optimism among whites and their opposition to affirmative action. "One of the results of this optimism is whites' opposition to affirmative action, which they think is unnecessary," he says. "It's kind of a persistent, ubiquitous pattern of behavior between the races." Generally, says Stone, whites see less need for a focus on race and its impact on society, and they are more likely to believe that the government has done all it can to improve race relations.

These differing views on affirmative action and other public policy issues are based in the varied experiences of blacks and whites, says Stone. Whites don't experience rejection and alienation based on their race, Stone says, while African Americans experience it almost every day. "There

are vast inequities between treatment of blacks and whites. It's something that's alien to their [whites'] experience. They see it, of course. But it doesn't happen to them."

Some, however, take a dimmer view of white attitudes toward racial issues. Racism is pervasive throughout society, says Nettie Coad, director of the Partnership Project in Winston-Salem, an organization that sponsors anti-racism workshops. Race influences how people respond to and work with one another and is reflected in the laws of the state and nation. "All of these laws and policies are just out-breaks of what racism really is," she says.

How important is addressing these issues of race? Again, the race of the respondent seems to shape attitudes. In the 2000 CBS News poll, 64 percent of African Americans said that improving race relations was one of the most important things the United States needs to do for the future, compared to 29 percent of whites.²³ And, 65 percent of whites, but only 30 percent of blacks, said improving race relations is important, but so are other issues.

Francis J. Hale III, a white member of Raleigh's Human Relations/Human Resources Citizen Advisory Council, says the country would do better to focus less on race. People should concentrate on taking control of their own lives, he says. Laws have spawned a multimillion-dollar consulting industry and lawsuits alleging discrimination have been a drain on governments and business, he says.

■
"Why are we having a national argument about race? By all objective measures . . . race relations between blacks and whites have never been better."

...
"the achievements of the American people over the past half century in reducing racial prejudice and discrimination and in improving the socioeconomic and political condition of Afro-Americans are nothing short of astonishing."

Poll reported that low income blacks said that money, not racism, was their biggest problem.
— GALLUP POLL, JUNE 1997

BOTH QUOTES AND GALLUP POLL FROM ORLANDO PATTERSON,
THE ORDEAL OF INTEGRATION: PROGRESS AND RESENTMENT IN AMERICA'S RACIAL CRISIS
AS QUOTED FROM COLUMN IN *THE NEWS AND OBSERVER* OF RALEIGH, N.C., NOVEMBER 23, 1998

NON SEQUITUR

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All of the government imposition has been a poor replacement for good manners and treating people decently, Hale says. "It really does come down to the individual. When [President Ronald] Reagan was in office, we had a fair amount of prosperity. I don't recall racism being that much of a topic."

Cary resident Ann Seng worked with the YWCA in Raleigh to begin "study circles," or discussion groups for people of different backgrounds to talk about race. Seng, who is white, says whites are leaving the issue of race relations to black leaders, who have concentrated on creating self-help programs within the black community. That's left a void in public policy discussions on how government's priorities reflect the need for equal treatment, she says. "It's very easy for us to say, 'Well, I don't discriminate. This is not my issue. Things are really improving,'" says Seng. But when whites are inconvenienced by a public policy that has racial equality as a goal, they will resist, she says.

Differing Views on Progress

African Americans believe a range of personal and societal issues contribute to problems in black families. In a 1999 Princeton Survey Research poll for *Newsweek* magazine, majorities of blacks said teenage girls having children (78 percent), a lack of jobs paying decent wages (68 percent), not following moral and religious values (66 percent), drugs and alcohol (66 percent), reliance on welfare (63 percent), and crime in neighborhoods (60 percent) are big problems for black families, along with racism in society (56 percent).²⁴

Whites are more likely than blacks to think the situation for blacks is improving over time, though a majority of both demographic groups point to progress in eliminating racial discrimination since

the 1960s. Blacks tend more often to say they've seen little change. In the 2000 CBS News poll, 74 percent of whites, but only 55 percent of blacks, said that since the 1960s there has been "real progress" in getting rid of racial discrimination, while 43 percent of blacks, but only 23 percent of whites, said there had not been much real progress.²⁵

Meanwhile, a national survey of Hispanics/Latinos found they too consider prejudice and discrimination to be a persistent problem, though one that is improving. In the 1999 Princeton Survey Research Associates poll for *Newsweek*, Hispanic adults were asked whether the situation for younger Hispanic or Latino Americans is better, worse, or about the same as their parents' situation was when they were the same age. Overall, 44 percent of respondents said things are better for the younger generation while 41 percent said they consider the situation worse.²⁶ Asked whether younger Hispanic or Latino Americans face more, less, or about the same amount of prejudice and discrimination as their parents did when they were the same age, 23 percent of respondents said more, 49 percent answered less, and 21 percent said the level of prejudice and discrimination is about the same.²⁷

Eunice Hawkins, another early organizer of study circles for the YWCA, grew up in segregated Raleigh but went north for school and work. When she moved back to Raleigh in 1994 after 40 years away, Hawkins says she saw vast changes in the city. But she says friends from childhood who remained in Raleigh from childhood and some of the black participants in the discussion on race had not seen the same transformation. "I would not be here today if I had not seen a change," says Hawkins. "I had some friends who were in the teaching field, and they don't see that much of a change. This is the view of quite a few who never left Raleigh."

Some of the biggest problems remain in the area of jobs and the economy, says Hawkins. Blacks, especially black men, have a harder time breaking into some areas, such as government contracting, because “good old boy” networks continue to thrive, she says.

In a 1995 Princeton Survey Research poll for *Newsweek* magazine, 34 percent of blacks said they had “a lot of common interests” with whites in their social class, while 18 percent of whites said the same of blacks.²⁸ A total of 41 percent of blacks and 48 percent of whites said they had “some common interests” with people of the other race in their same social class.

For Herb Dawkins, a real estate broker in Chapel Hill, thinking only in terms of race oversimplifies complicated social interactions. “We need to be able to talk about all the forms of discrimination,” says Dawkins, who is black. “If you restrict it to racism, it doesn’t give you the full picture of the problem, because so much of it has to do with money and what schools you attended and your exposure level.”

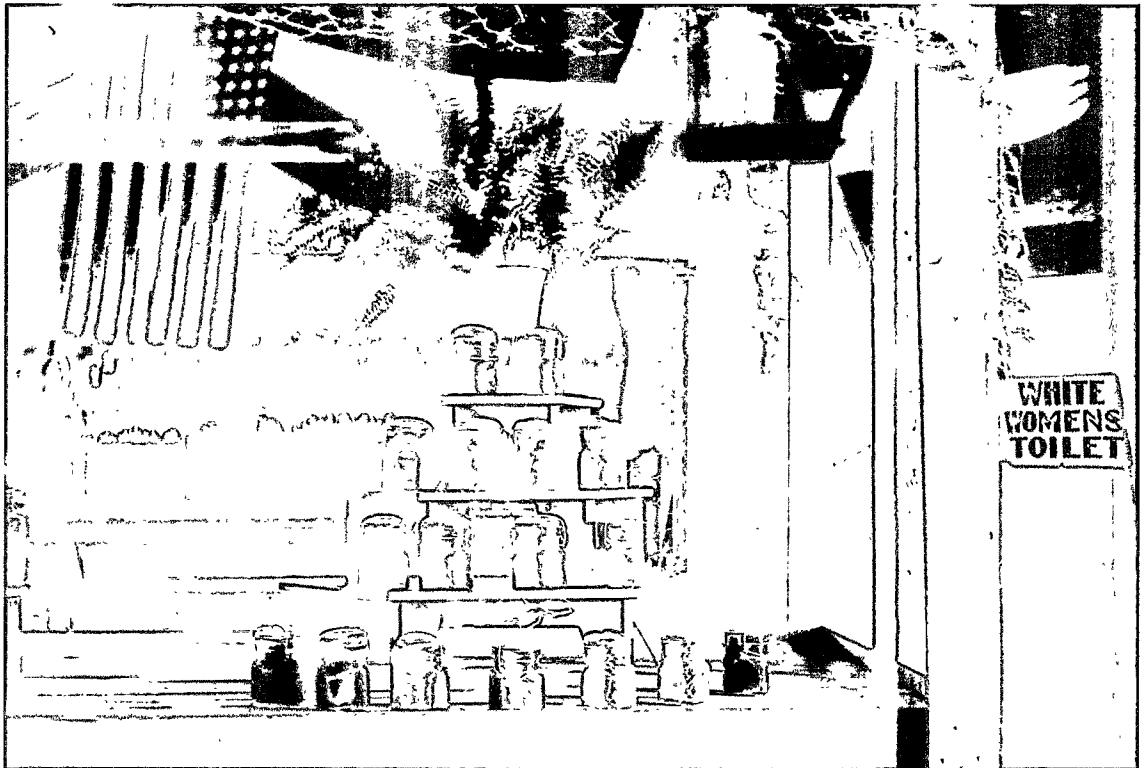
Dawkins sees society aligned more in terms of social class than race. Money determines where you can afford to live, he says, which in turn determines the quality of the schools your children will attend.

“Some of these issues that are still lingering and will continue to linger have a whole lot to do with class,” Dawkins says.

Diane English, executive director of the Community Building Initiative in Charlotte, says class is an important factor, but there is a correlation between class and race. “In our community, you look at high incarceration, free and reduced lunch — you look at all of these kinds of things, and it has to be something other than the lack of initiative or bad luck that has made all of these factors break out by race.”

Asking these pointed questions about differences in such areas as health, education, and incarceration rates is the best way to address questions related to race, says Van Kloempken, a Cary businessman and N.C. State University student. “Why more blacks die, why they get convicted, why they lag in education. These are objective things,” he says. “Nobody can argue about that.”

In the 1999 Princeton poll for *Newsweek*, 71 percent of whites said black Americans would one day close the income gap and earn as much money as white Americans, while only 42 percent of black Americans said they believed that would happen.²⁹ Similarly, in the 1993 Reynolds Foundation poll of North Carolinians, only 27 percent of blacks said



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blacks have as good a chance as whites of getting jobs for which they are qualified, while 68 percent of whites said blacks had as good a chance as whites of getting those jobs.³⁰ Seventy percent of blacks said their chances were not as good.

However, a 1995 poll by FGI Research of Chapel Hill for *The News & Observer* of Raleigh, N.C., found high percentages of both white and black respondents believe racial discrimination still occurs in employment in North Carolina, with 94 percent of black respondents and 73 percent of whites holding this belief.³¹ Asked how often such discrimination occurs, 67 percent of white respondents said "occasionally," while 19 percent responded "all the time." That compares to 50 percent of blacks who said discrimination in employment occurs "all the time" and 46 percent who responded "occasionally."³²

Such beliefs about an unfair labor market may help explain why North Carolina's black legislators have been the primary backers of "livable wage" studies and bills in past legislative sessions. Of the legislators who sponsored or co-sponsored bills in the 2003 General Assembly to raise the minimum wage to \$8.50 an hour in 2005, 12 of 16 were black.³³

No Longer Just Black and White

Though racial and ethnic divisions have for years been cast in terms of black and white, especially in the South, reality is more complex. Hispanics/Latinos have surpassed blacks as the nation's largest minority group. Though blacks still outnumber Hispanics/Latinos in North Carolina, the Hispanic

population jumped nearly 400 percent in the 1990s to 4.7 percent of the state's population. African Americans represent 22 percent of the state's population, while Native Americans comprise just over 1 percent. (For more on North Carolina's changing demographics, see pp. 2–11.) Polls are beginning to reflect these changes as respondents are broken out by race, but also by whether they are Hispanic or non-Hispanic.

In the Hispanic/Latino community, there is concern that North Carolina has been slow to expand its view to account for greater racial and ethnic diversity. The state has changed tremendously, says Aura Camacho Maas, director of the Latin American Resource Center in Raleigh. Not only has the population of Hispanics/Latinos expanded, but that of Asians and Indians as well. "At the policy level, we don't have the representation of all people," says Camacho Maas. "To a certain degree, it's almost like the system doesn't want, doesn't know how, to adapt to the change yet." Camacho Maas, who serves on a state committee looking for remedies to the achievement gap among school students, says it's difficult to push the conversation beyond black and white. (For more on the achievement gap in the North Carolina public schools, see "Educational Achievement: Bridging the Gap?," pp. 76–103.)

"A lot of people feel that only black people from the United States or from North Carolina, they are the only ones that address issues of race," says Camacho Maas. Yet it's clear from the state's rapidly changing demographics that the state will be pushed beyond black and white as it attempts to accommodate the concerns of an increasingly diverse society.

■

*Sunday afternoon and it is one-thirty and all the
churchgoing latinos fuse each other with love and the women
dress so clean and pure and the children walk so straight and pure
and the fathers look so proud and pure and everything so right and
pure and even as I wake up to my nephew's voice coming through
the window, there is pleasure in awakening. . . .*

—MIGUEL ALGARÍN



Karen Tam

Indeed, polling data indicate what could be construed as a backlash against North Carolina's rising tide of immigrants. A survey commissioned by *The News & Observer* of Raleigh, N.C., in November 2003 found 74 percent of respondents believe the number of immigrants admitted to the United States is too high.³⁴ Further, 73 percent of respondents said illegal Mexican workers should not be allowed to remain in the United States even if they are otherwise law-abiding citizens. Analysts say U.S. citizens have become more sensitive to immigration issues since the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York. Additionally, some questioned the use of the word "illegal" in the question wording as opposed to "undocumented." Nonetheless, the poll points to additional challenges as the state attempts to meld its many cultures and ethnicities.

And, as the data show, increasing diversity oftentimes brings a divergence of perspectives. North Carolina faces a growing challenge as the state attempts to reconcile these different views into sound solutions to pressing public issues. A good first step is simply attempting to understand the diversity of views that already exist. ■

FOOTNOTES

¹ Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation survey of racial attitudes of North Carolinians. A telephone survey was conducted in September and October 1993. The total sample consisted of 403 whites and 409 blacks aged 18 and older. The margin of error for the total sample was 3.4 percent. The margin of error for the white and black samples separately was 4.9 percent.

Question: Do you think the law enforcement officers in your community are generally tougher on whites than blacks, tougher on blacks than whites, or do the officers treat them both the same?

	White	Black	Total
Tougher on whites	4%	0%	3%
Tougher on blacks	19%	64%	29%
Treat the same	65%	30%	57%
Not sure	12%	6%	11%

² CBS News poll, Feb. 6-10, 2000. Survey of 1,499 adults nationwide.

Question: In general, do you think the criminal justice system in the United States is biased in favor of blacks, or is it biased against blacks, or does it generally give blacks fair treatment?

	All	Whites	Blacks	Hispanics
Biased in favor	2%	2%	1%	2%
Biased against	43%	39%	71%	44%
Treat fairly	43%	46%	17%	45%
Don't know	12%	13%	11%	9%

³ Princeton Survey Research Assoc. for *Newsweek* April 16–19, 1999. 751 adults nationwide with an oversampling of 200 blacks.

Question: Why do you think so many young black men are in prison today? Do you think the main reason is [see below]?

	All	Whites	Blacks
More arrests and tougher sentences in general	12%	12%	10%
Unfair targeting of blacks by police	16%	13%	40%
Failure of government social programs and policies	12%	12%	10%
Bad character of the convicts themselves	37%	39%	22%
Other (voluntary)	11%	11%	8%
Don't know	12%	13%	10%

⁴ House Bill 1199 and Senate Bill 972 of the 2003 session. S.B. 972 passed the Senate and is alive for consideration by the House in the 2004 short session of the General Assembly.

⁵ Chapter 26 (S.B. 76) of the 1999 Session Laws, now codified as G.S. 114-10.

⁶ Carolina Poll, Oct. 23–30, 1999. Survey of 717 adult North Carolinians. Margin of error plus or minus 4.5 percent for the total sample and larger for comparisons between groups.

Question: Do you favor or oppose the death penalty for persons convicted of murder?

	All	Whites	Blacks
Favor	65%	73%	37%
Oppose	19%	13%	42%
Don't know	16%	14%	21%

⁷ *Charlotte Observer*/WBTV News Carolinas Poll, July 23–Aug. 1, 1999. Survey of 913 North and South Carolinians. Margin of error 3.2 percent for entire sample.

Question: Do police officers stop black motorists more often than whites?

	Whites	Blacks
Yes	26%	69%
No	63%	19%
Don't know or refused to answer	11%	11%

⁸ CBS News poll, note 2 above.

Question: These days, do you think it is necessary to have laws that protect minorities from discrimination in hiring and promotion, or don't you think it's necessary?

	All	Whites	Blacks	Hispanics
Necessary	66%	60%	90%	87%
Not necessary	30%	36%	6%	12%
Don't know	4%	4%	4%	1%

⁹ ABC News/*Washington Post* poll, Jan. 16–20, 2003.

Question: Do you support or oppose government and private programs that give women, blacks, and other minorities preference over white men getting into college, getting a job, or getting a promotion?

	All	Whites	Blacks
Support	30%	24%	65%
Oppose	66%	73%	29%

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

Question: Do you think blacks who live in your community do or do not have as good a chance as whites to get a job for which they are qualified?

	All	Whites	Blacks
Do	73%	80%	39%
Do not	24%	16%	60%

¹¹ *Ibid.*

Question: Have you personally ever felt that you were denied a job you were qualified for just because of your race, or not? (if not) As far as you're aware, has that ever happened to a close friend or someone in your immediate family?

	Blacks (asked only of black respondents)
Yes, self	34%
Yes, friend or family member	17%
No	49%

¹² *Ibid.*

Question: Do you support or oppose government and private programs that give women, blacks, and other minorities assistance—but not preference—getting into college, getting a job, or getting a promotion?

	All	Whites	Blacks
Support	69%	67%	79%
Oppose	26%	33%	19%

¹³ CBS News/*New York Times* poll, Jan. 19–22, 2003. Survey of 997 adults nationwide.

Question: Should affirmative action programs in hiring, promoting, and college admissions be continued or abolished?

	All	Whites	Blacks
Continued	54%	47%	94%
Abolished	37%	42%	3%

¹⁴ The Gallup Poll. A survey of 1,385 adults nationwide, including, with oversamples, 821 non-Hispanic whites, 241 blacks, and 266 Hispanics. The margin of error for the entire sample was 3 percent. The margin of error for non-Hispanic whites was 4 percent, for blacks it was 7 percent, and for Hispanics, 7 percent. Interviewing was June 12–15, 2003, for non-Hispanic whites and June 12–18, 2003, for blacks and Hispanics.

Question: Do you generally favor or oppose affirmative action programs for racial minorities?

	Favor	Oppose	No opinion
All	49%	43%	8%
Non-Hispanic whites	44%	49%	7%
Blacks	70%	21%	9%
Hispanics	63%	28%	9%

¹⁵ *Gratz v. Bollinger* (02-516) Reversed in part and remanded, or *Gratz v. Bollinger*, 539 U.S. 244 (2003).

¹⁶ *Grutter v. Bollinger*, 288 F.3d 732, affirmed, or *Grutter v. Bollinger*, 539 U.S. 244 (2003).

¹⁷ Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation survey, note 1 above.

Question: Do you favor or oppose giving blacks preference over equally qualified whites in such matters as getting into college or getting jobs because of past discrimination against blacks?

	White	Black	Total
Favor	10%	36%	15%
Oppose	82%	51%	74%
Not sure	8%	13%	10%

¹⁸ Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation survey, note 1 above, p. 8.

Question: There is much discussion about the best way to deal with racial problems. Some people think achieving racial integration of schools is so important that it justifies busing children to schools out of their own neighborhoods. Others think letting children go to their neighborhood schools is so important that they oppose busing. Do you favor or oppose busing to achieve racial integration?

	White	Black	Total
Favor busing	17%	45%	23%
Oppose busing	75%	47%	70%
Not sure	7%	8%	7%

¹⁹ *Capacchione v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools*, F. Supp. 2d. 228 (W.D.N.C. 1999).

²⁰ The Associated Press, "Some fear Southern schools are resegregating," CNN Student News, www.cnn.com/2002/EDUCATION/12/28/southern.segregation.ap

²¹ Catherine Gewertz, "Racial Gap Found to Persist in Public's Opinion of Schools," *Education Week*, Bethesda, Md., May 21, 2003, p. 9. The poll of 2,463 adults was conducted between September 17, 2002, and October 21, 2002.

²² ABC News/Lifetime Television Poll. Conducted Oct. 13-19, 1999 of 1,107 adults nationwide, including an oversample of 192 blacks. The margin of error for the total sample is 3 percent. Field work by ICR.

Question: Do you think blacks are discriminated against in this society a lot, somewhat, a little, or not at all?

	All	Whites	Blacks
A lot	26%	22%	57%
Somewhat	43%	46%	25%
A little	19%	21%	7%
Not at all	11%	11%	10%
No opinion	1%	1%	1%

²³ CBS News poll, note 2 above.

Question: How important do you think improving race relations is to the future of the United States? Do you think it's one of the most important things we need to do for the future, or is it important, but so are other issues, or it's not that important to the future of the United States?

	All	Whites	Blacks	Hispanics
Most important	36%	29%	64%	61%
Important, but so are others	58%	65%	30%	36%
Not that important	4%	4%	4%	3%
Don't know	2%	2%	2%	0%

²⁴ Princeton Survey Research Assoc. for *Newsweek*, note 3 above.

Question: In general, how much of a problem do you think each of the following is for black families today? How about [see below]? Is this a big problem for black families today, somewhat of a problem, or not a problem?

	All	Whites	Blacks
Too many teenage girls having children.			
Big problem	62%	61%	78%
Somewhat of a problem	29%	31%	16%
Not a problem	4%	2%	4%
Don't know	5%	6%	2%
Crime in their neighborhoods			
Big problem	61%	60%	60%
Somewhat of a problem	26%	27%	24%
Not a problem	6%	5%	11%
Don't know	7%	8%	5%
People depending too much on welfare			
Big problem	55%	53%	63%
Somewhat of a problem	31%	33%	24%
Not a problem	9%	8%	8%
Don't know	5%	6%	5%
People not following moral and religious values			
Big problem	52%	50%	66%
Somewhat of a problem	28%	29%	22%
Not a problem	13%	14%	10%
Don't know	7%	7%	5%
Drugs and alcohol			
Big problem	51%	50%	66%
Somewhat of a problem	37%	39%	24%
Not a problem	5%	4%	4%
Don't know	7%	7%	6%
Not enough jobs paying decent wages			
Big problem	50%	48%	68%
Somewhat of a problem	33%	34%	22%
Not a problem	12%	12%	9%
Don't know	5%	6%	1%
Too many parents never getting married			
Big problem	49%	49%	51%
Somewhat of a problem	29%	28%	29%
Not a problem	15%	15%	14%
Don't know	7%	7%	6%
Public schools not providing a good education			
Big problem	44%	42%	54%
Somewhat of a problem	27%	27%	27%
Not a problem	23%	24%	15%
Don't know	6%	7%	4%
Racism in society in general			
Big problem	36%	31%	56%
Somewhat of a problem	46%	50%	30%
Not a problem	12%	13%	6%
Don't know	6%	6%	8%
Racism in the workplace			
Big problem	28%	25%	46%
Somewhat of a problem	41%	43%	34%
Not a problem	21%	22%	12%
Don't know	10%	10%	8%
The government not spending enough on social programs			
Big problem	28%	24%	52%
Somewhat of a problem	32%	32%	31%
Not a problem	30%	33%	10%
Don't know	10%	11%	7%
Not enough successful blacks for young people to look up to			
Big problem	26%	24%	41%
Somewhat of a problem	34%	35%	31%
Not a problem	34%	35%	26%
Don't know	6%	6%	2%

²⁵ CBS News poll, note 2 above.

Question: Some people say that since the 1960s there has been a lot of progress in getting rid of racial discrimination. Others say that there hasn't been that much progress for blacks over that time. Which do you agree with more? Would you say there's been a lot of progress in getting rid of racial discrimination or hasn't there been much real progress?

	All	Whites	Blacks	Hispanics
Real progress	71%	74%	55%	77%
Not much real progress	26%	23%	43%	20%
Don't know	3%	3%	2%	3%

²⁶ Princeton Survey Research Associates for *Newsweek*. Survey of 505 Hispanics nationwide, conducted June 25-30, 1999. Margin of error plus or minus 4.4 percent.

Question: All in all, do you think the situation for the younger generation of Hispanic or Latino Americans is better, worse, or about the same as their parents' situation was when they were the same age?

	All	18-34	35 & Older
Better	44%	49%	39%
Worse	41%	37%	45%
About the Same	12%	10%	13%
Don't Know	3%	4%	3%

²⁷ *Ibid.*, Princeton Survey Research Associates for *Newsweek*, 1999.

Question: Do you think the younger generation of Hispanic or Latino Americans faces more, less, or about the same amount of prejudice and discrimination as their parents did when they were the same age?

	All	18-34	35 & Older
More	23%	23%	23%
Less	49%	55%	44%
About the Same	21%	18%	23%
Don't know	7%	4%	3%

²⁸ Princeton Survey Research Associates for *Newsweek*. Survey of 471 whites and 252 blacks nationwide, conducted Feb. 1-3, 1995.

Question: Do you feel you have a lot of common interests with whites/blacks in your social class, some common interests, or very few common interests?

	Blacks	Whites
A lot	34%	18%
Some	41%	48%
Very few	21%	28%
Don't know	4%	6%

²⁹ *Ibid.*, Princeton Survey Research Associates for *Newsweek*, 1999.

Question: Do you think that black Americans will ever be able to close the income gap and earn as much money as white Americans, or not?

	All	Whites	Blacks
Will be able	67%	71%	42%
Will not be	23%	19%	49%
Don't know	10%	10%	9%

³⁰ Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation survey, note 1 above.

Question: Do you think blacks have as good a chance as white people in your community to get any kind of job for which they are qualified, or don't they have as good a chance?

	White	Black	Total
Have as good a chance	68%	27%	59%
Not have as good a chance	19%	70%	30%
Have better chance (voluntary)	10%	0%	8%
No blacks in community (voluntary)	0%	0%	0%
Not sure	3%	3%	3%

³¹ *The News & Observer*-FGI Poll. Nov. 8-12, 1995. Survey of 601 North Carolina residents. Margin of error plus or minus 4 percent.

Question: Do you think racial discrimination still occurs in employment in North Carolina?

	Whites	Blacks
Yes	73%	94%
No	18%	5%
Not Sure	9%	2%

³² *Ibid.*, *The News & Observer*-FGI Poll, 1995.

Question: How frequently do you think this type of discrimination occurs?

	Whites	Blacks
All the time	19%	50%
Occasionally	67%	46%
Rarely	11%	3%
Not sure	3%	1%

³³ House Bill 37 and Senate Bill 589 of the 2003 Session.

³⁴ Michael Easterbrook, "Welcome mat not out for immigrants, poll shows," *The News & Observer*, Raleigh, N.C., Nov. 24, 2003, p. 1A. The Research 2000 North Carolina Poll was conducted for *The News & Observer* November 10-13, 2003. A total of 600 likely voters were interviewed statewide for a margin of error of 4 percent. Quotas were assigned to reflect voter registration by county.

Question: Should Mexican workers who come into the country illegally but otherwise abide by the laws of the United States be allowed to remain here as legal residents?

Yes	22%
No	73%
Not Sure	5%

Question: Which comes closest to your view on how many legal immigrants should be admitted to the United States each year? The number of immigrants is too high, or the number of immigrants is too low, or the number of immigrants is about right?

Too high	74%
Too low	1%
About right	17%



*Let us turn our thoughts today to
Martin Luther King
And recognize that there are ties between us
All, men and women, living on the earth
Ties of hope and love, sister and brotherhood
That we are bound together
In our desire to see the world become
A place in which our
children can grow free and strong
We are bound together
By the task that stands before us
And the road that lies ahead
We are bound and we are bound.*

—SINGER JAMES TAYLOR, "SHED A LITTLE LIGHT"