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# The Effect of Racial Resentment on White American's Gun Control Policy Opinions

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## **“The Effect of Racial Resentment on White American’s Gun Control Policy Opinions”**

Emma García, Meghan Wray

Faculty Advisor: Erin M. Pryor, Ph.D.

Although the United States has consistently high rates of gun violence, gun control policy remains a divisive topic (Leach-Kemon, Sirull, and Scott 2021; Kavi 2023). Data shows that gun ownership is highly divided along racialized lines, and gun rights advocacy organizations such as the NRA increasingly push rhetoric meant to heighten white’s racial anxieties as support for gun control increases (Burbick 2006; Melzer 2009; Filindra and Kaplan 2015; Filindra, Kaplan, and Buyuker 2020; Nielsen et al. 2023; Schaeffer 2023). This fear has led to guns taking on a symbolic importance to white racial identity (O’Brien et al. 2013; Yamane 2017; Scaptura and Boyle 2021; Warner and Ratcliff 2021). Our research explores the motivation behind how white racial resentment contributes to white individuals opposing gun restrictions. In Dr. Pryor’s Social Research Methods class, we surveyed other classes, analyzed a recent survey of gun owners in the US, examined promotional publications distributed by the NRA, and conducted interviews with individuals opposed to gun control measures to test the relative importance of racial resentment in predicting white Americans’ opposition to gun control. This presentation will detail the class process and explain our methodologies, analyses, findings, and potential future research.