

Abstract

We will examine whether White individuals' experiences with White guilt and White privilege influence perceptions of Black students as deserving of a scholarship. Research has explored these constructs in relation to attitudes toward affirmative action, but little research has measured attitudes toward people benefiting from affirmative action. In Study 1, participants will complete White Guilt and White Privilege Attitudes scales and report their perceptions of a Black scholarship beneficiary as deserving of the scholarship. In Study 2, participants will write letters to the Black student beneficiary and the letters will be coded to assess positivity toward the Black individual. We expect participants scoring higher on the White Guilt and White Privilege Attitudes scales—meaning participants feel that they have benefited from White privilege and feel guilty for unfair advantages—will perceive the scholarship recipient as more deserving of the scholarship and express more positivity in their congratulatory letter. This research has important practical implications, potentially showing how these attitudes may affect the degree to which White individuals welcome students of color onto college campuses.