

Jake Womick
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Employment

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Postdoctoral Research Associate

August, 2021 - Present

Education

University of Missouri, Columbia

PhD, Social & Personality Psychology

Spring 2021

Dissertation: "Leveraging Rhetorical Style to Reduce the Existential Threat of Pluralism"

Advisor: Laura A. King

University of Missouri, Columbia

M.A.

Spring 2018

Research Interests

I am interested in two broad topics: The experience of meaning in life, and political beliefs and behaviors (note, these are not independent of religious, social, and conspiracy beliefs, which I also study). Most of my research centrally concerns these two areas and often how they intersect (e.g., the existential function of ideology). I'm leveraging this work to understand hurdles to pluralism in the U.S., how to overcome them, and how to capitalize on these insights to create a more inclusive America (and academia). Outside of this central focus, my research interests are broad, spanning mainstream social and personality psychology, including topics such as authenticity, marginalized identity, personality traits.

Publications

**Indicates undergraduate co-author*

Ernstoff, R., Blakely, W., **Womick, J.**, Bail, C., Finkel, E., Han, H., Sarrouf, J., Schroeder, J., Sheeran, P., Van Bavel, J. J., Willer, R., & Gray, K. (2022). Interventions to Decrease Political Polarization. *Nature Human Behavior*.

Ward, S. J., **Womick, J.**, Titova, L., & King, L. A. (2022). Meaning in life and coping with everyday stressors. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*.

- Womick, J., Ecklekamp, J.***, Luzzo, S.*, Ward, S. J., Salamun, A.*, Baker, S. G., & King, L. A. (2021). The affective and existential effects of Hitler: Exposure to authoritarian values leads to lower positive affect, higher negative affect, and higher meaning in life. *Plos ONE*, *16*, 1-30. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0256759>
- Womick, J., Woody, B., & King, L. A.** (2021). Religious fundamentalism, right-wing authoritarianism, and meaning in life. *Journal of Personality*.
- Womick, J., & King, L. A.** (2021). Testing cognitive, interpersonal, and ideological symmetry vs. asymmetry in the 2020 Presidential primaries. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*.
- Womick, J., Atherton, B.***, & King, L. A. (2020). Lives of significance (and purpose and coherence): Subclinical narcissism, meaning in life, and subjective well-being. *Heliyon*. doi: 10.1016/j.heliyon.2020.e03982
- Womick, J., & King, L. A.** (2020). Personality and well-being. In B. J. Carducci (Editor-in-Chief) & C. Nave (Vol. Ed.), *The Wiley-Blackwell encyclopedia of personality and individual differences: Vol. IV. Clinical, applied, and cross-cultural research*. (pp. 371-376). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Womick, J., Ward, S. J., Heintzelman, S. J., Woody, B., & King, L. A.** (2019). The existential function of right-wing authoritarianism. *Journal of Personality*, *87*, 1056-1073. doi: 10.1111/jopy.12457
- Womick, J., Foltz, R. M.***, & King, L. A. (2019). "Releasing the beast within?" Authenticity, well-being, and the dark tetrad. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *137*, 115-125. doi: 10.1016/j.paid.2018.08.022
- Womick, J., Azevado, F., Rothmund, T., King, L. A., & Jost, J. T.** (2019). Group-based dominance, authoritarian aggression and support for Donald Trump in 2016. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, *10*, 643-652. doi: 10.1177/1948550618778290

Manuscripts Under Review

*Indicates undergraduate co-author

Womick, J., & King, L. A. (invited revision). The existential threat of religious pluralism.

Womick, J., & King, L. A. (invited revision). Understanding prejudice in response to the COVID-19 pandemic: Threat, right-wing authoritarianism, and meaning in life.

Rose, H., **Womick, J., & King, L. A.** (invited revision). Purpose maintained: Adverse Childhood Experiences and Meaning in Life.

Manuscript in Preparation

**Indicates undergraduate co-author*

Womick, J., & Gray, K. (in prep). Cultural, ideological and religious pluralism.

*6 studies complete; continuing to collecting data

Womick, J., Puryear, C., Sherwen, M.*, & Gray, K. (in prep). Leveraging in-group hate to bridge political divides

*4 studies complete; continuing to collecting data

Womick J., Costello, T., Cross, E.*, Kennedy, J., Grossman, I., Pennycook, G., Rand, D., & Gray, K. (in prep). Intellectual Arrogance.

*2 studies complete; continuing to collect data

Womick, J., Galgali, M., Gray, K. (in prep). Systems Struggle Theory.

*initial draft written and undergoing revisions

Womick, J., & King, L. A. (in prep). Leveraging rhetorical style to reduce the existential threat of pluralistic ideology.

**This is my dissertation. Manuscript undergoing final revisions.*

Womick, J., Galvan, M., & King, L. A. (in prep). The nature and function of liberalism: Shinning new light on a neglected construct.

*Initial draft written and undergoing revisions

Womick, J., & King, L. A. (in prep). Perceptions of Implicit and Explicit Prejudice.

**Completing final revisions.*

Wilkinson, L., **Womick, J.,** King, L. A., & Booker, J. (in prep). Authenticity, positive and negative group identification, and well-being among African American adults.

**All data have been collected. A draft of the manuscript has been written. Revisions underway.*

Academic & Conference Presentations

**Indicates undergraduate co-author*

Womick J., Cross, E.*, & Gray, K. (2022 July). Intellectual Arrogance. Talk presented at the annual conference for the International Association for Conflict Management. Ottawa, CA.

- Womick J.,** Puryear, C., Sherwin, M.,* & Gray, K.. (2022 June). Leveraging Evaluations of Political Elites to Bridge Divides. Talk presented at the Annual conference for the Center for the Science of Moral Understanding. Durham, NC.
- Womick J.,** King, L. A. & Booker, J. (2022 June). Internalized Oppression, Authenticity, and Well-being. Talk presented at the Existential Psychology preconference for the Annual Society for Personality and Social Psychology. San Francisco, CA.
- Womick J.,** King, L. A. & Booker, J. (2022 February). Internalized Oppression, Authenticity, and Well-being. Talk presented at the Existential Psychology preconference for the Annual Society for Personality and Social Psychology. San Francisco, CA.
- Womick J.,** King, L. A. & Booker, J. (2022 February). Black Live Matter Promotes Purpose among White Liberals and Black Americans. Poster presented at the Political Psychology preconference for the Annual Society for Personality and Social Psychology. San Francisco, CA.
- Womick J.,** Gray, K. (2022 February). Epistemic Arrogance. Poster presented at the Annual Society for Personality and Social Psychology. San Francisco, CA.
- Womick J.** (2021 November). The Existential Dynamics of Politics and Pluralism. Invited talk at the University of Washington.
- Womick, J.** (2021 November). The Existential Dynamics of Politics and Pluralism. Presentation given at Organizational Research Group at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
- Womick, J.,** & King L. A. (2021 February). Testing Cognitive, Interpersonal, and Ideological Symmetry vs. Asymmetry in the 2020 Primaries. Poster presented at the Annual Society for Personality and Social Psychology. Virtual.
- Womick, J.,** & King L. A. (2021 February). Testing Unique Predictors of Support for Moderate vs. Extreme Liberals in the 2020 Primaries. Poster presented at the Political Psychology preconference for the Annual Society for Personality and Social Psychology. Virtual.
- Womick, J.,** & King L. A. (2021 February). Experiencing Meaning in Political Action: Black Lives Matter, Ideology, and Meaning in Life. Talk presented at the Happiness and Well-being preconference for the Annual Society for Personality and Social Psychology. Virtual.
- King, L. A., **Womick, J.,** Vignoles, C. (2021 February). *The Experience of Meaning in Life During a Pandemic: The Importance of the Facets of Meaning*. All authors co-presented at Annual Society for Personality and Social Psychology Convention. Virtual.
- Womick, J.** (2020 September). *Attitudes, Beliefs, and Meaning in life*. Presentation given at Social and Personality area meeting at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

- Womick, J.** (2020 April). *The Nature and Function of Liberalism*. Presentation given at Social and Personality area meeting at the University of Missouri-Columbia.
- Womick, J.,** Satheeskuman, V.*, & King, L. A. (2020 March). *What is it worth to be American? The effects of pluralism on perception and value of American culture*. Poster presented at the Annual Society for Personality and Social Psychology Convention. New Orleans, LA.
- Womick, J.,** Satheeskuman, V.*, & King, L. A. (2019 March). *God, Trucks, and Meaning: The Existential Threat of Pluralism*. Poster presented at the Annual Society for Personality and Social Psychology Convention. Portland, OR.
- Womick, J.,** & King, L. A. (2019 August). *God, Trucks, and Meaning: The Existential Appeal of One Right Answer*. Presentation given at Social and Personality area meeting at the University of Missouri-Columbia.
- Womick, J.,** & King, L. A. (2018 March). *Meaning in the Misfortune of Others: Just World Beliefs, Schadenfreude, and the Experience of Meaning in Life*. Poster presented at the Annual Society for Personality and Social Psychology Convention. Atlanta, GA.
- Womick, J.,** & King, L. A. (2018 January). *Exposure to authoritarian Ideology and The Experience of Meaning*. Presentation given at Social and Personality area meeting at the University of Missouri-Columbia.
- Womick, J.,** & King, L. A. (2017 August). *Authenticity, The Dark Tetrad, and Well-being*. Presentation given the at Social and Personality area meeting at the University of Missouri-Columbia.
- King, L.A., **Womick, J.,** & Ward, S.J. (January 2017). *Right Wing Authoritarianism Bolsters Meaning in Life*. Presented in a Symposium entitled "Puzzles of Well-Being: Parenthood, Politics, and the Good Life," David Newman & Norbert Schwarz, Chairs. Society for Personality and Social Psychology Convention. San Antonio, TX.
- King, L. A, & **Womick, J.** (2017 January). *Despite What You've Heard, the Sense that Life is Meaningful is Not Easily Threatened*. Presented at the Happiness and Well-being preconference for the Annual Society for Personality and Social Psychology. San Antonio, TX.
- Womick, J.,** & King, L. A. (2017 January). *The Meaning in Miracles: Unexpected Positive Events and the Experience of Meaning*. Poster presented at the Annual Society for Personality and Social Psychology Convention. San Antonio, TX.
- Womick, J.,** & King, L. A. (2017 March). *The Dark Side of Meaning*. Presentation given at Social and Personality area meeting at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Womick, J., & King, L. A. (2016 January). *Do Worldviews Contribute to Meaning in Life? Rightwing Authoritarianism and the Experience of Meaning*. Poster presented at the Annual Society for Personality and Social Psychology Convention. San Diego, CA.

Womick, J., & King, L. A. (2016 April). *On the Right Side of Meaning: Rightwing Authoritarianism and Meaning in Life*. Presentation given at the Social and Personality area meeting at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Robert, C., **Womick, J., & Bettencourt, A.** (2015 May). *Mindfulness Meditation Can improve Generalization of Positive Attitudes*. Poster presented at Midwestern Psychological Association. Chicago, IL.

Grants and Awards

Submitted

National Science Foundation, “The existential function and ideological concomitants of collective action” (reviewed but not funded) November 2020

National Institute of Mental Health, PA-16-677, F31 NRSA title “Leveraging well-being science to reduce prejudice,” (submitted but not funded) 2018

Templeton Foundation, “Endorsement of political violence: Understanding predispositions, psychological functions and ideological concomitants,” (submitted but not funded) August 2020

Funded

Department of Psychological Science Summer Grant Writing Fellowship (\$2500) 2018

Graduate Professional Council Travel Award (\$300-500) 2017-2019

SPSP Travel Award (\$450) 2019

Travel Grant, Department of Psychological Sciences, University of Missouri to attend the annual meeting for Society for Personality and Social Psychology (\$400) 2015-2020

Teaching

Instructor of Record

Fall 2019 – Spring 2020

Introduction to Personality Psychology (average evaluation 4.74 out of 5)

Teaching Assistant

August 2015-May 2019

Human Relationships Capstone (average evaluation 4.47 out of 5)

General Linear Models (graduate level; no TA evaluations)

Introduction to Personality Psychology (no TA evaluation)

Mind, Brain and Behavior (no TA evaluation)

Introduction to Psychology (no TA evaluation)

Guest Lectures

Data Workshop- data analysis workshop presented in Melanie Sheldon’s Human Relationships Capstone, University of Missouri, Fall 2018

Writing Workshop- manuscript writing workshop presented in Melanie Sheldon’s Human Relationships Capstone, University of Missouri, Fall 2018

The Science of Sexuality- guest lectures presented in Lynne Cooper’s Human Relationships Capstone, at University of Missouri. Fall 2017

Teaching Interests

Personality Psychology, Introduction to Psychology, Social Psychology, Research Methods, Statistics, Positive Psychology, Political Psychology

Media Coverage & Community Outreach

New York Times

“Trump true believers have their reasons”

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/06/opinion/trump-voters-2020-election.html>

The Boston Globe

“Vladimir Putin’s fans are happier than you are”

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/03/31/opinion/vladimir-putins-fans-are-happier-than-you-are/#bgmp-comments>

PsyPost

“Exposure to authoritarian values leads to worsened mood but heightened meaning in life”

<https://www.psypost.org/2021/10/exposure-to-authoritarian-messages-leads-to-worsened-mood-but-heightened-meaning-in-life-61953>

International Society for the Science of Existential Psychology

“Existential politics: Right-wing authoritarianism and meaning in life”

<https://www.issep.org/article/rwa-meaning>

Character and Context

“The benefits of right-wing authoritarianism”

<http://www.spsp.org/news-center/blog/womick-authoritarianism - gsc.tab=0>

PsyPost

“Right-wing authoritarianism linked to an enhanced sense that one’s life matters”

<https://www.psypost.org/2019/02/right-wing-authoritarianism-linked-to-an-enhanced-the-sense-that-ones-life-matters-study-finds-53175>

Corresponding social media coverage and engagement:

https://www.reddit.com/r/science/comments/athuzd/people_who_endorse_rightwing_authoritarianism/

Big Think

“Right-wingers find more meaning in life, researchers say”

<https://bigthink.com/politics-current-affairs/right-wingers-find-more-meaning-in-life-say-researchers>

Peeled Eyes

“Authoritarian aggression and group-based dominance distinguished Trump supporters from other Republicans in 2016”

<https://www.peeledeyes.us/authoritarian-aggression-and-group-based-dominance-distinguished-trump-supporters-from-other-republicans-in-2016/amp/>

Raw Story

“Here’s why we shouldn’t be surprised that a Trump supporter attacked a reporter on Monday”

<https://www.rawstory.com/2019/02/heres-shouldnt-surprised-trump-supporter-attacked-reporter-monday/>

PsyPost

“Authoritarian Aggression and group-based dominance distinguished Trump supporters from other Republicans in 2016”

<https://www.psypost.org/2018/07/authoritarian-aggression-and-group-based-dominance-distinguished-trump-supporters-from-other-republicans-in-2016-51821>

Corresponding social media coverage:

https://www.reddit.com/r/science/comments/90vbhv/authoritarian_aggression_and_groupbased_dominance/

AlterNet

“Blowing up the myth that White voters support Trump because of economy anxiety: ‘They share his prejudices’”

<https://www.alternet.org/2018/09/sociologists-blow-myth-uneducated-white-voters-support-trump-because-economic-anxiety-they-share-his/>

AD HOC Reviews

National Science Foundation
Journal of Personality and Social Psychology
Perspectives in Psychological Science
Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin
Journal of Research in Personality
Group Processes and Intergroup Relations
Personality and Individual Differences
Motivation Science
Motivation and Emotion
Applied Research in Quality of Life
Current Psychology
Heliyon
Journal of Happiness Studies

Professional Memberships

Society of Personality and Social Psychology
Association for Psychological Science
The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues

Service

Field Builder at the New Pluralist Society	2020-Present
Co-chair of the Partnerships subcommittee of the Pathways to Graduate School JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) taskforce at UNC	2021-Present

References

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Dr. Kurt Gray
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