Becoming a Group:

How Changing National Demographics Will Shape White Identity and Intergroup Relations

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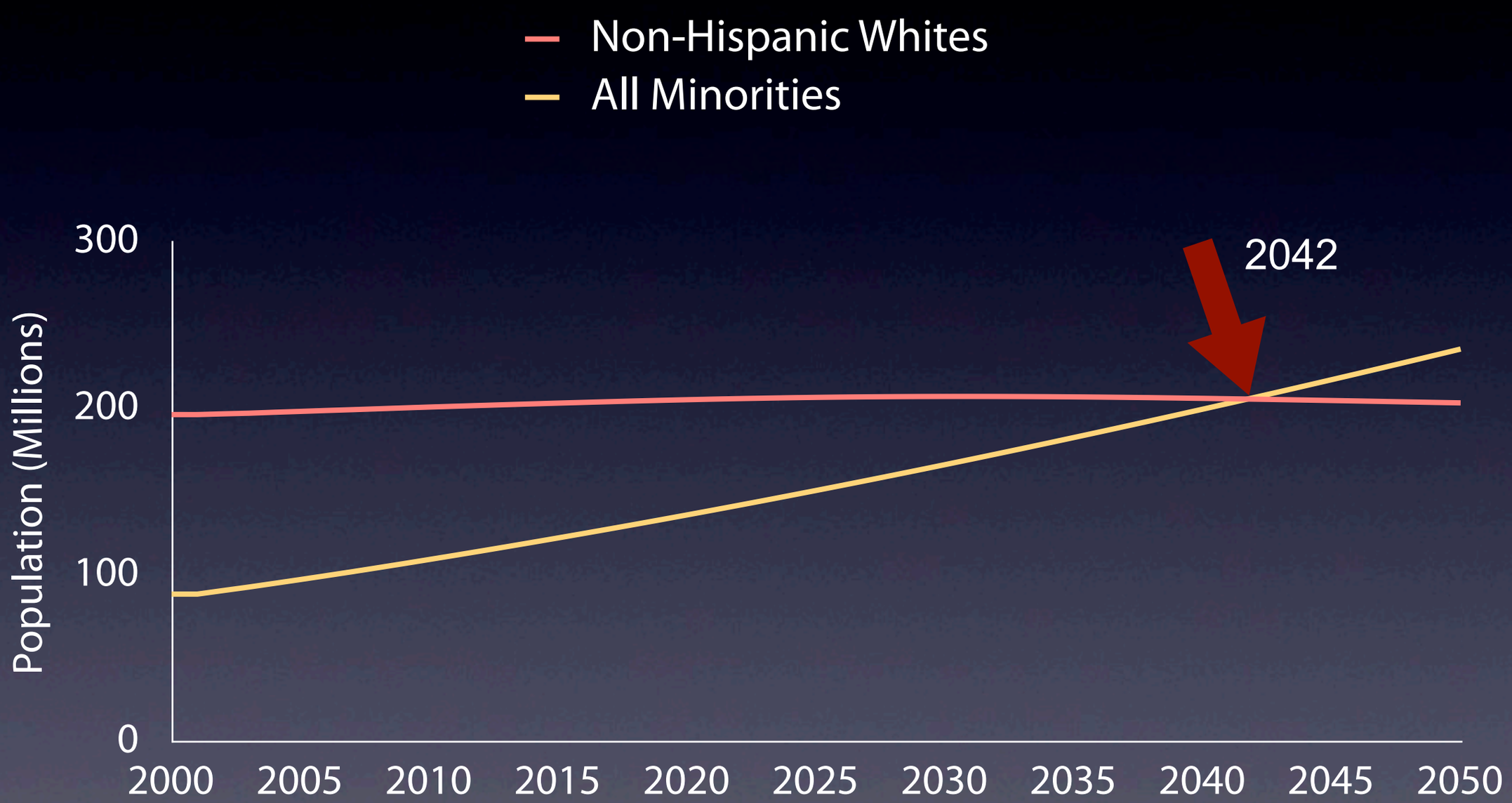
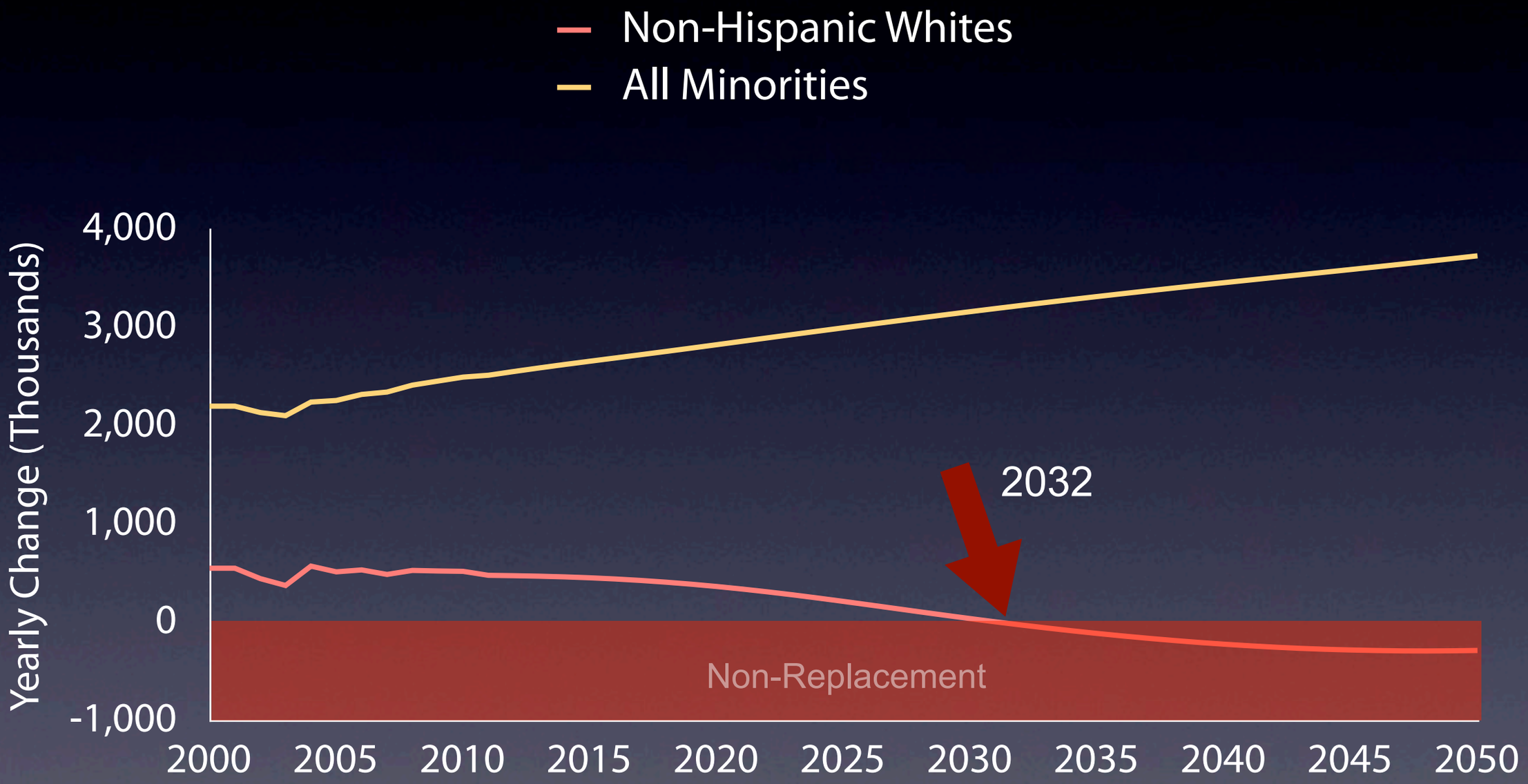
Demographic Change in America



U.S. Census Bureau Projections (2012)

Demographic Change in America



U.S. Census Bureau Projections (2012)

Increased Tolerance?

- Intergroup contact theory[1]
  - Prejudice rooted in ignorance
  - Interracial interaction increases understanding, esp. under "optimal" conditions (e.g., status parity)
- Meta-analytic[2] and experimental[3] support

[1]Allport (1954); [2]Pettrigrew & Tropp (2006); [3]Page-Gould, Mendoza-Dention, Alegre, & Siy (2010)

Increased Tension?

- Group threat theory[1,2]
  - Prejudice rooted in (perceived) competition
  - Interracial diversity increases threat to the group's economic and social prerogatives
- Whites in regions with large minority populations display more prejudice – esp. where minority population has spiked[3], economy is poor[4], and whites predisposed[4,5]

[1]Blumer (1958); [2]Bobo & Hutchings (1996); [3]Hopkins (2010); [4]Quillian (1995); [5]Giles & Evans (1989)

An Identity-Centered Analysis

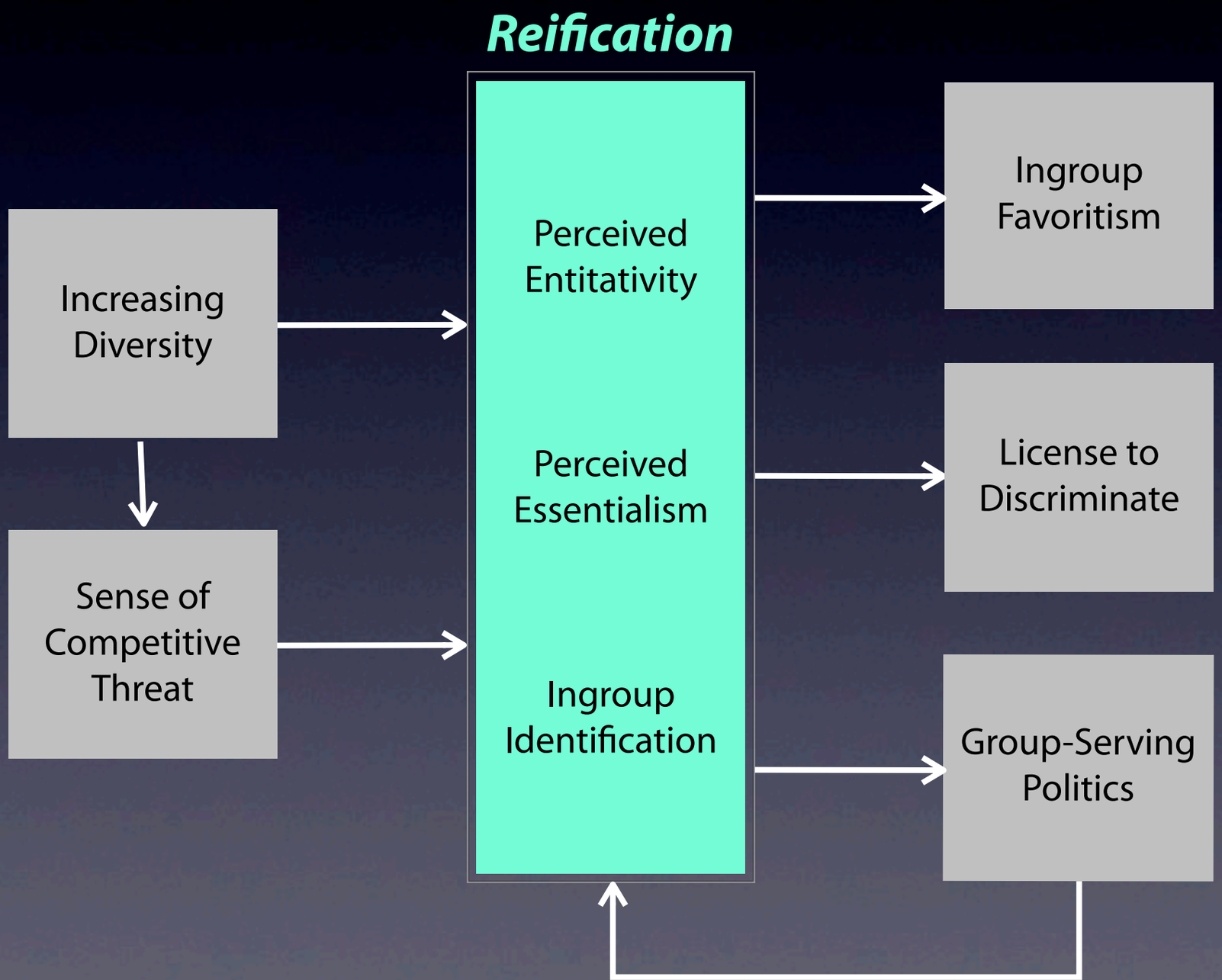
- Whites' response to demographic change will be complex rather than monolithic
- Point of departure:
- We should model how diversity affects whites' conceptions of their ***own*** racial identity – and how these changes shape intergroup behavior

White Racial Identity?

- Whites rarely introspect about it
  - "I'm not a minority"[1]
  - "My great-grandfather was Polish"[2]
  - "I'm an American"[3]
  - Low levels of racial identification[4]
- Perceptual[5] and normative[6] barriers

[1]Frankenberg (1993); [2]Perry (2002); [3]Devos & Banaji (2005); [4]Huo (2006); [5]McDermott & Samson (2005); [6]Apfelbaum, Sommers, & Norton (2008)

Ingroup Reification Model



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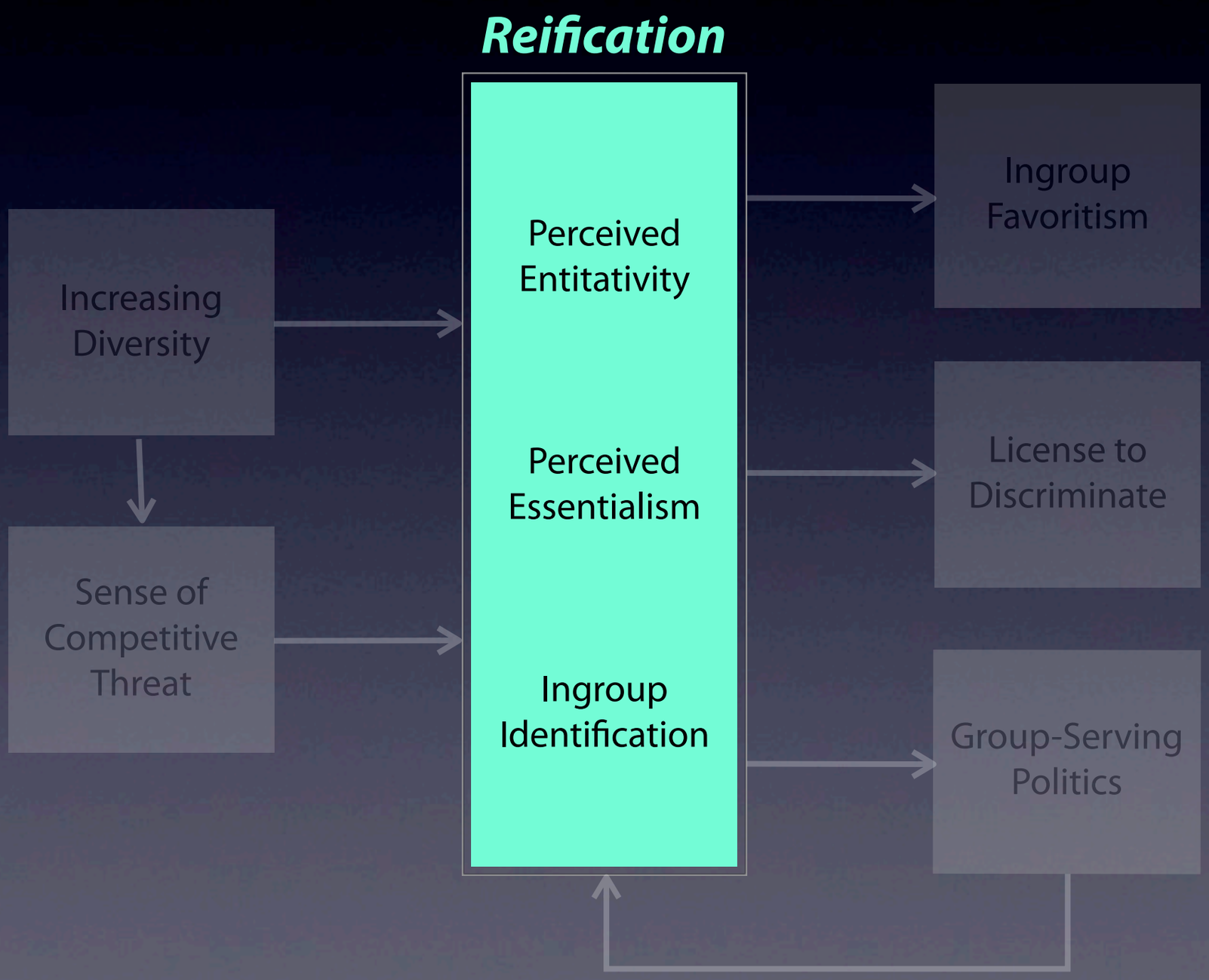

Dimensions of Reification

- Entitativity[1]
  - Perceived common fate, homogeneity
- Essentialism[2]
  - Sense that group is immutable, natural
- Identification[3, 4]
  - Mental connection between self and group

[1]Campbell (1958); [2]Haslam et al. (2000); [3]Leach et al. (2008); [4]Knowles & Peng (2005)

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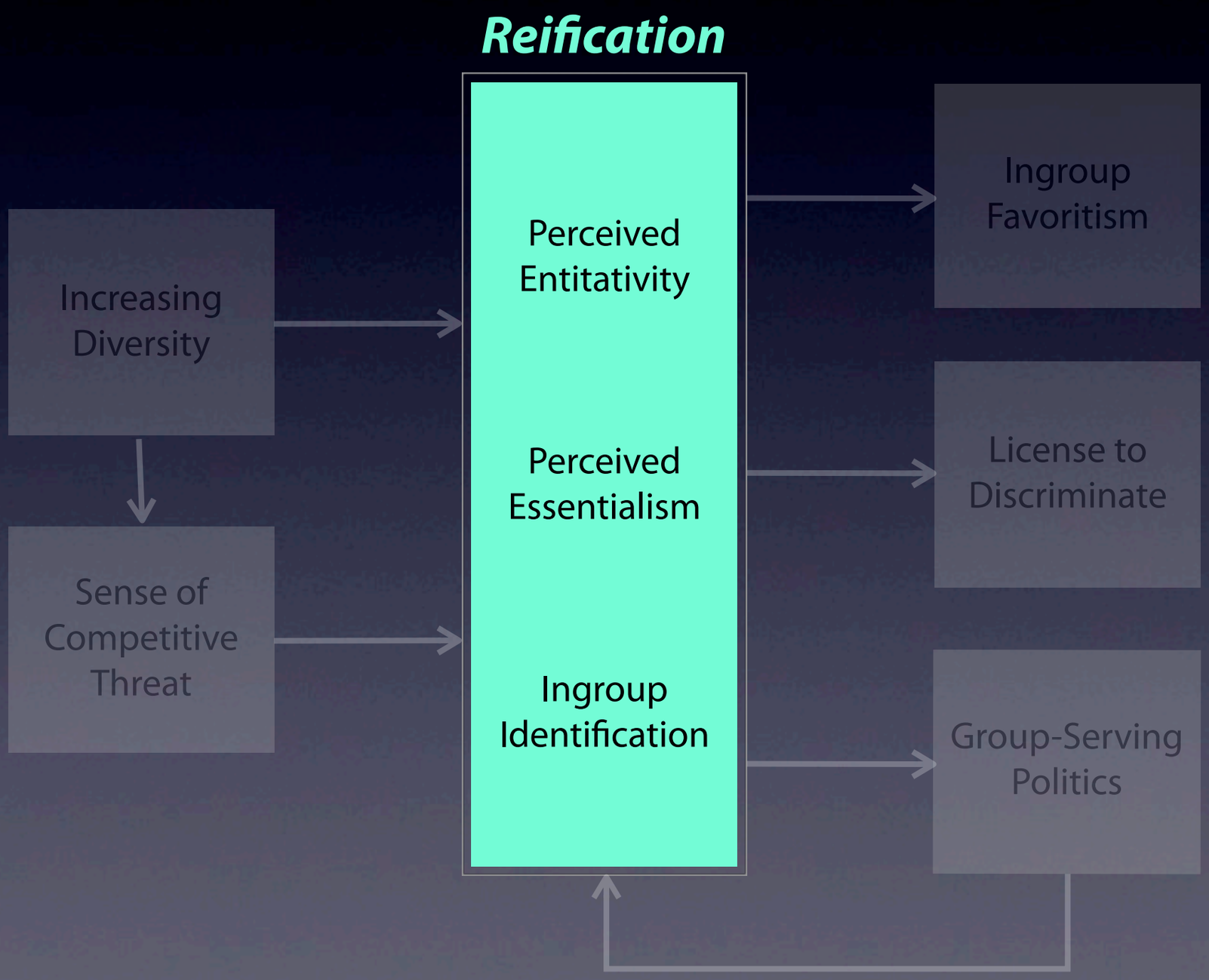

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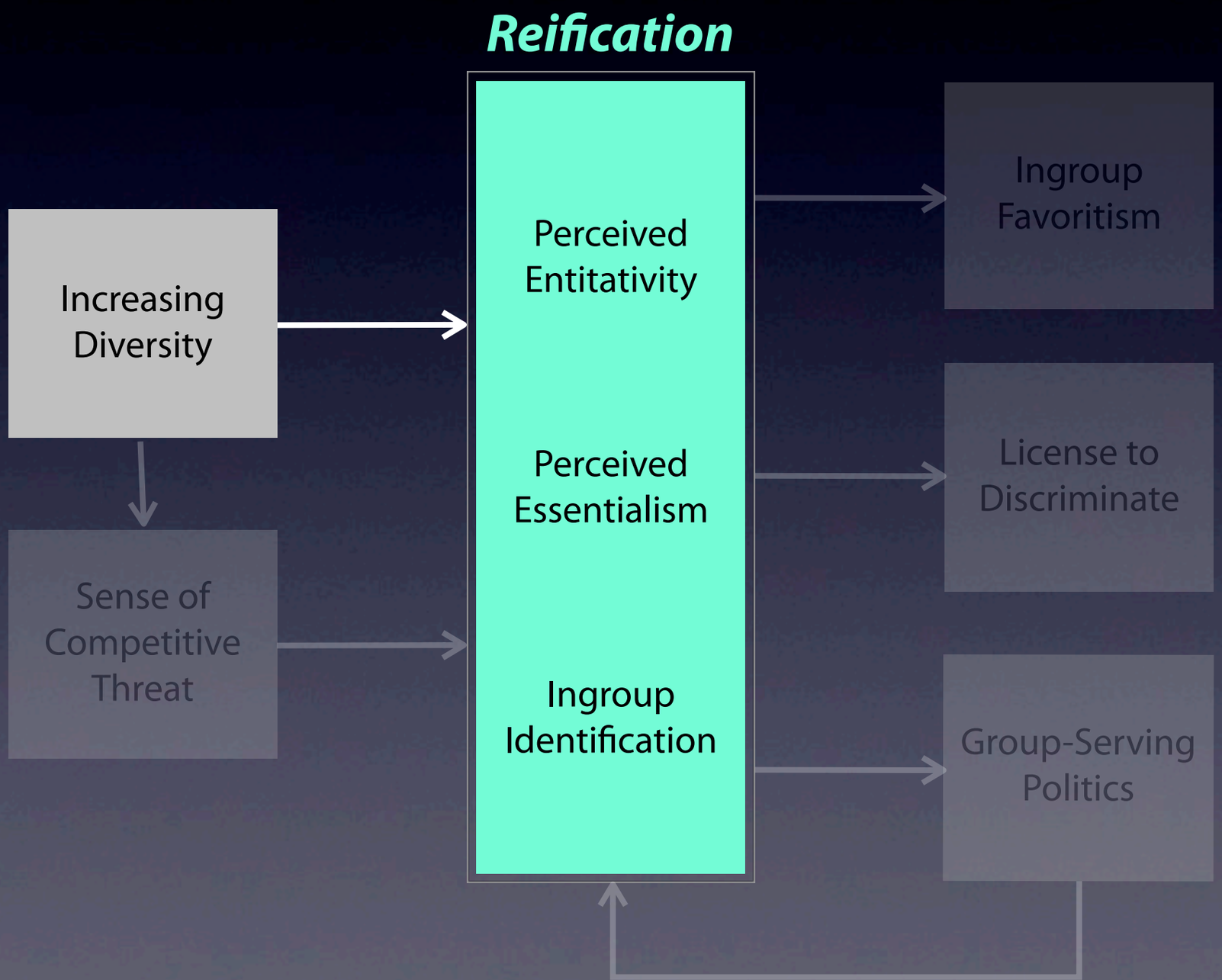


Perceptual Reification

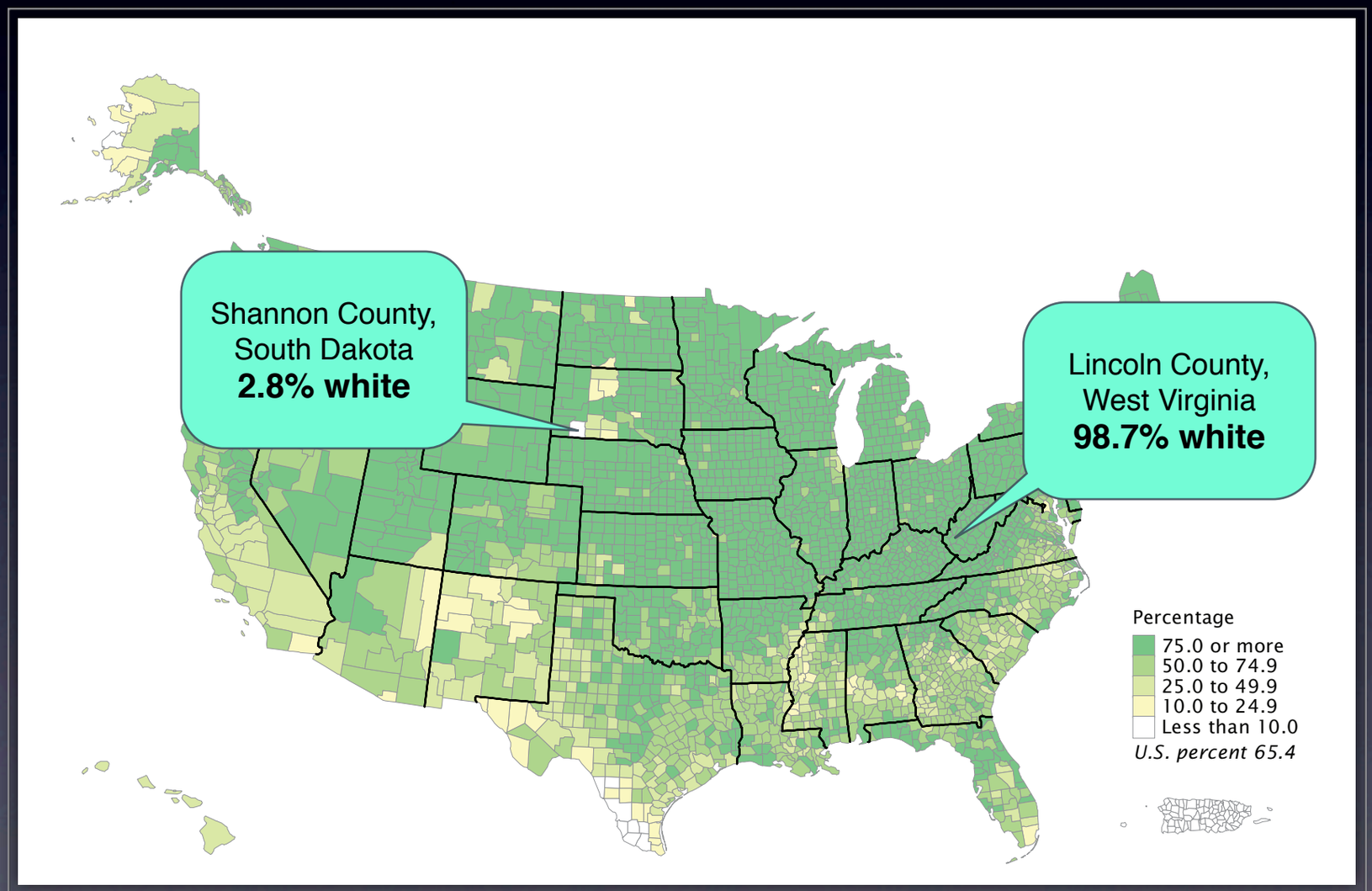
- Exposure to outgroups makes ingroup membership perceptually distinctive[1]
- Repeated exposure makes ingroup category chronically accessible[2]
- High accessibility is a precondition for "psychological group formation" (i.e., reification)[3,4]

[1]McGuire et al. (1978); [2]Higgins (1996); [3]Turner et al. (1987); [4]Voci (2006)

Hints of Reification: Exposure and Identification

- Knowles and Peng (2005)
  - 262 non-Hispanic whites
  - White identity measures:
    - White Identity Centrality IAT (N=100)
    - Identity centrality questionnaire (N=162)
  - Census-derived index of outgroup exposure

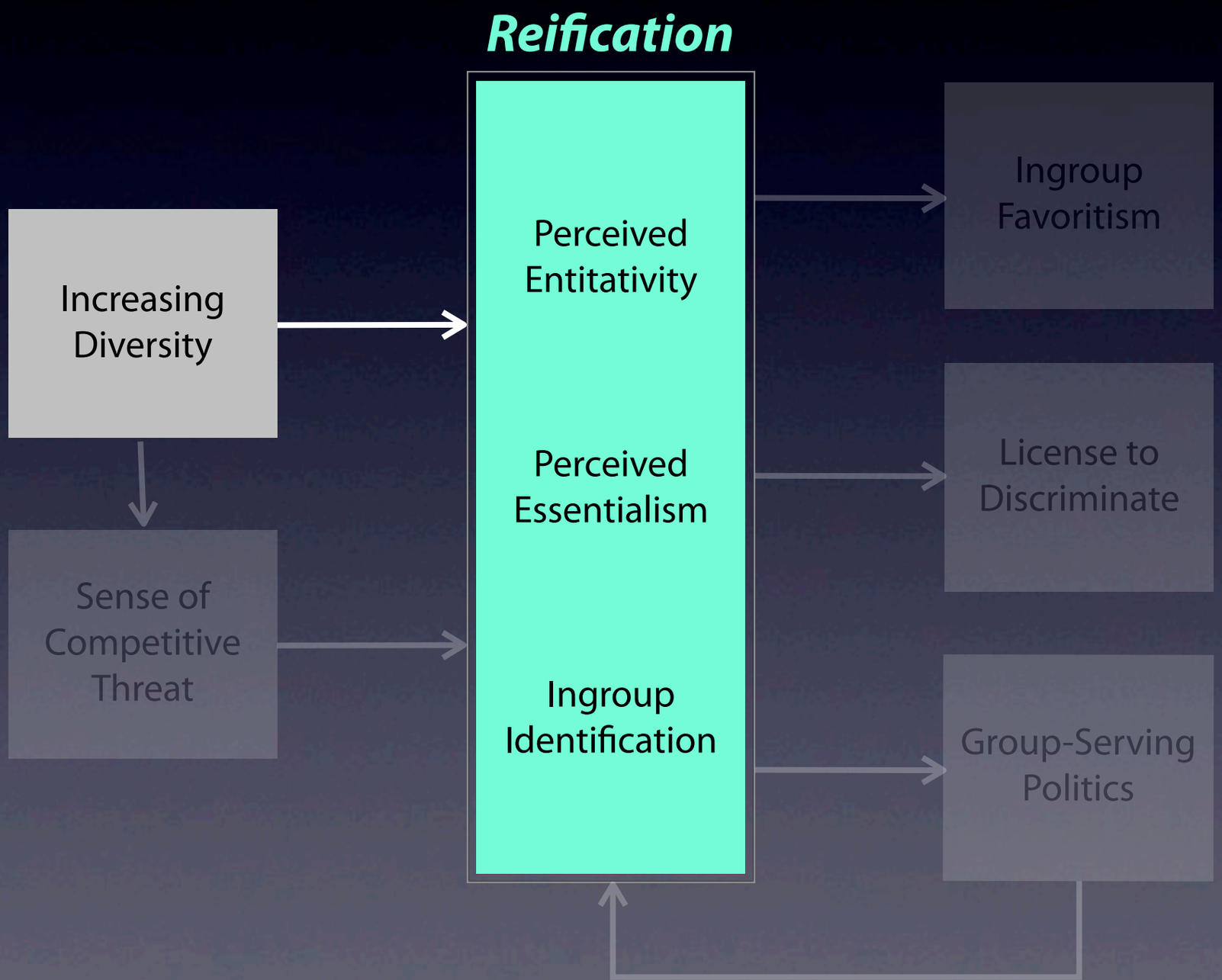
White Population by County



Hints of Reification: Exposure and Identification

- Outgroup exposure predicts White identification
  - Explicit Identity: $r = .20^{**}$
  - Implicit Identity: $r = .16^{**}$

Ingroup Reification Model



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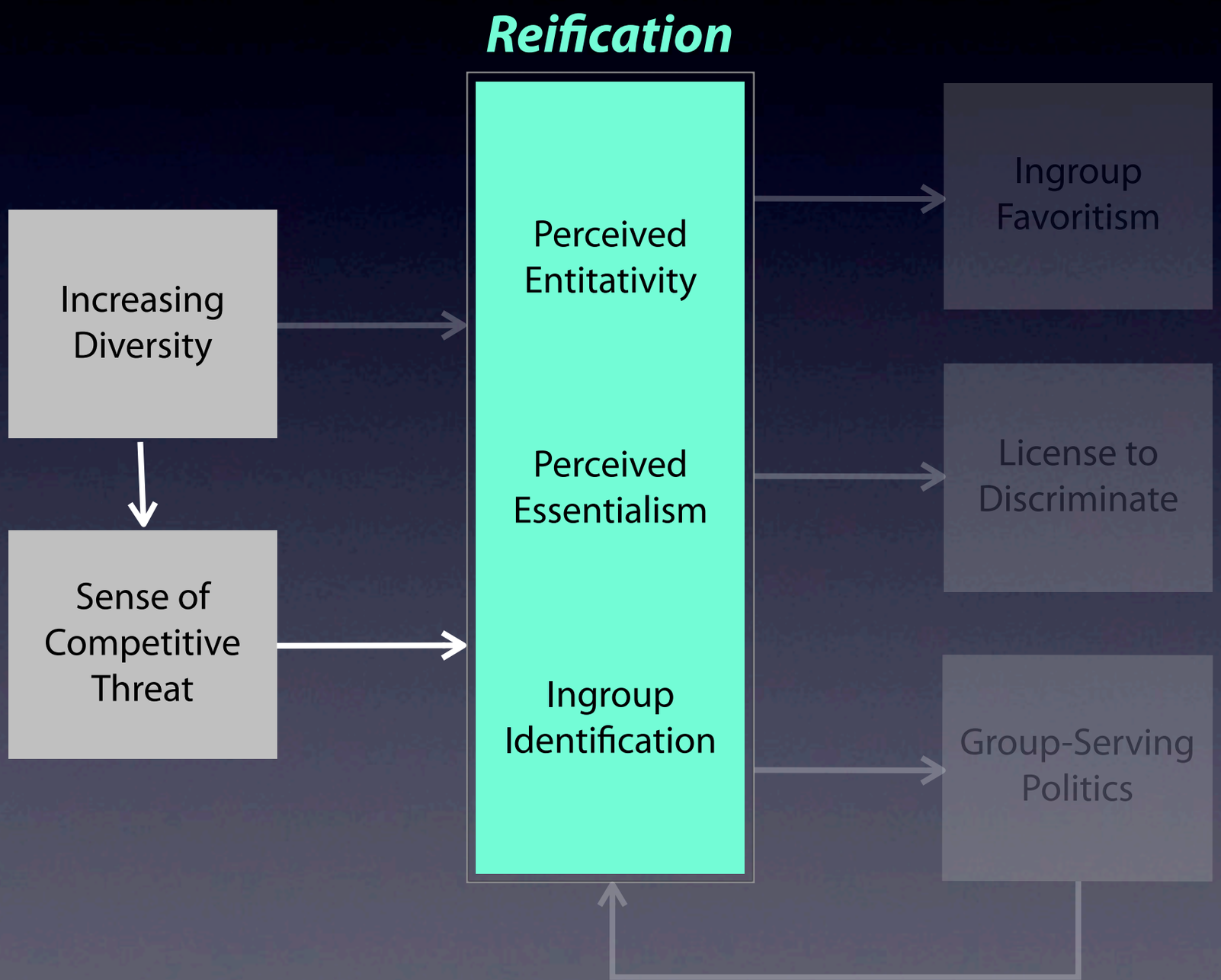

Threat-Mediated Reification

- Perceived "competitive threat" (usually inferred from prejudice) increases with relative size of outgroup population[1-3]
  - Perceived challenge to ingroup's economic and social prerogatives
- For whites, feelings of competitive threat should increase ingroup entitativity[4] and identification[5]

[1]Fossett & Kiecolt (1989); [2]Quillian (1995); [3]Quillian (1996); [4]LeVine & Campbell (1986)
[5]Tajfel & Turner (1986)

Hints of Reification: Threat

- Giles and Evans (1985)
  - Data from 1972 American Election Study
  - White identification = ingroup warmth
  - County % black predicted perceived threat
  - Perceived threat predicted identification

Hints of Reification: Threat

- Outten, Schmitt, Miller, and Garcia (2012)
  - Manipulated white Canadians' awareness of (their) majority-minority crossover
  - Awareness led to more:
    - Anger and fear toward racial outgroups
    - Sympathy for and identification with ingroup (e.g., "I feel strong ties to ... my ethnic group")

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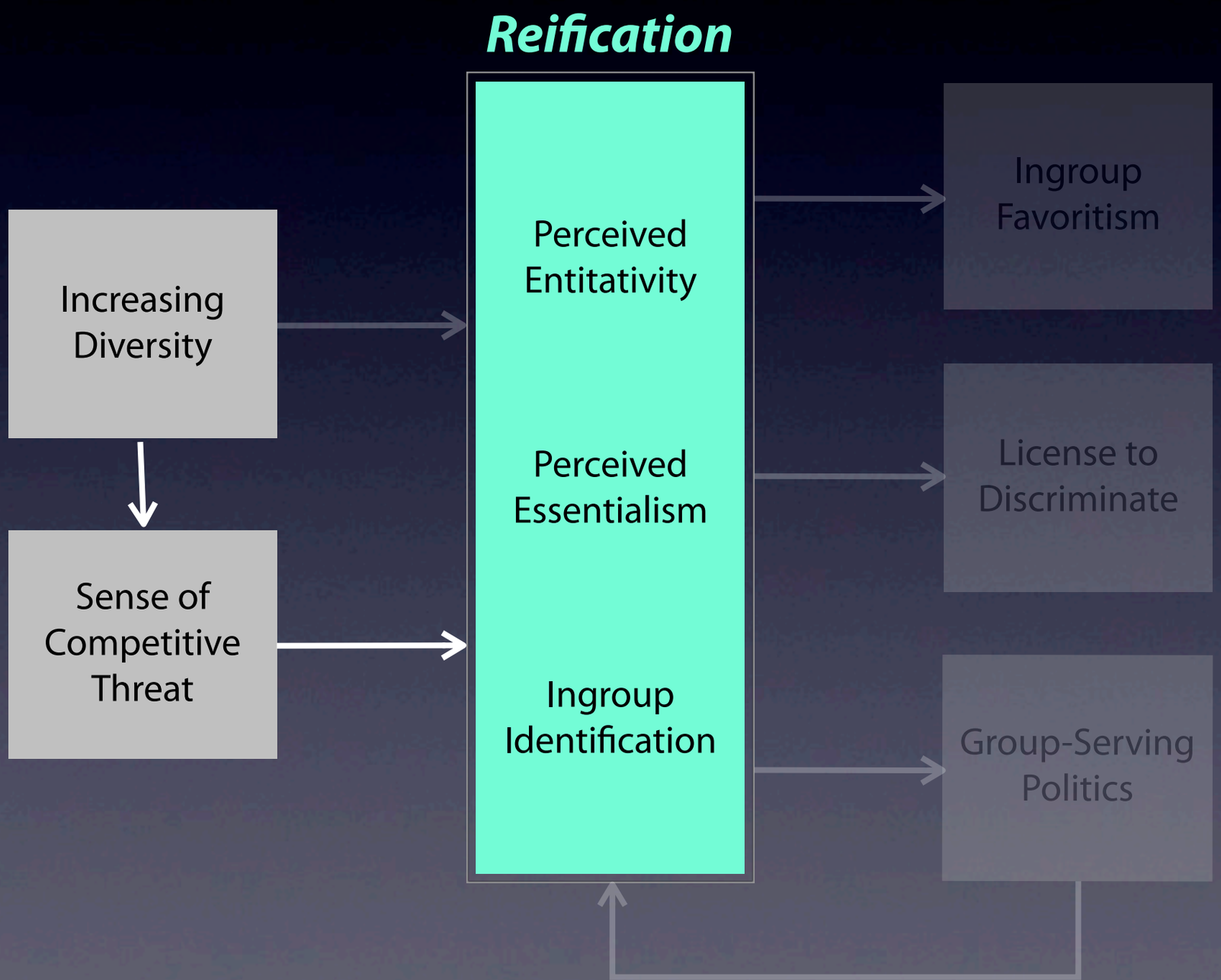

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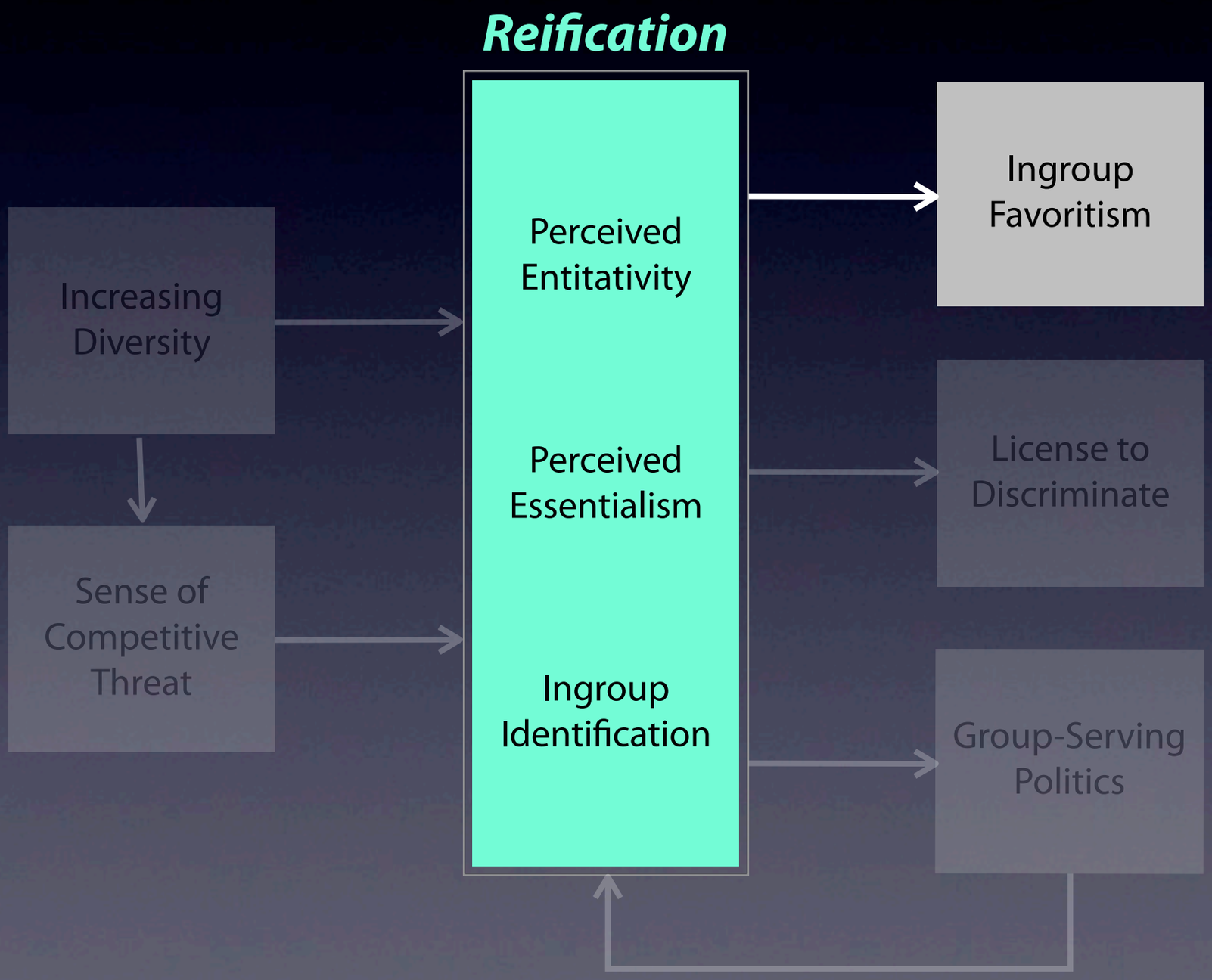
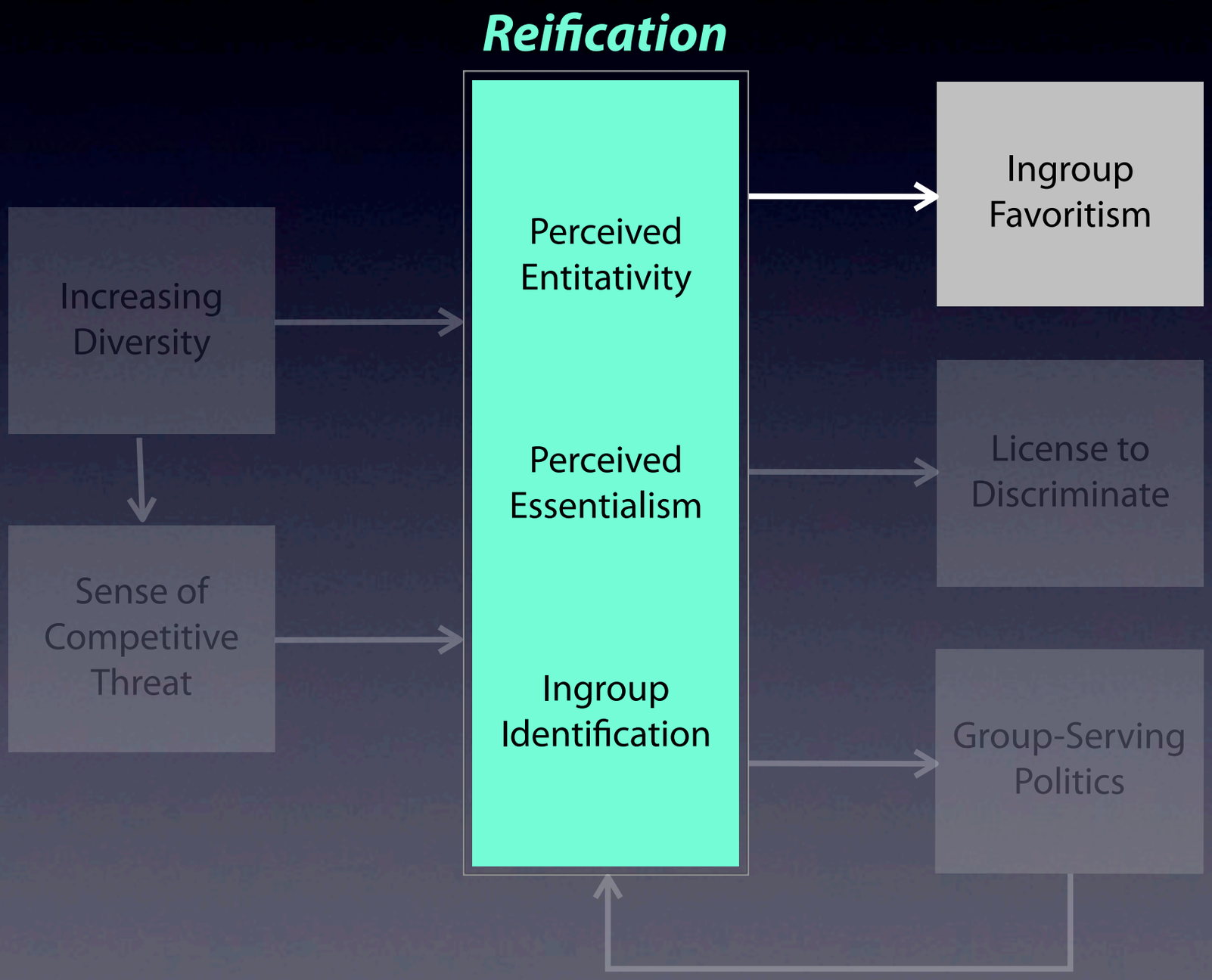


Ingroup Favoritism

- ***Ingroup entitativity*** predicts ingroup-favoring attitudes and behavior[1]
- Racial ***essentialism*** predicts tolerance for inequality and disinterest in intergroup contact[2]
- ***Identification*** creates desire for positive ingroup distinctiveness[3, 4]

[1]Gaertner & Schopler (1998); [2]Williams & Eberhardt (2008); [3]Tajfel & Turner (1978)

Ingroup Reification Model



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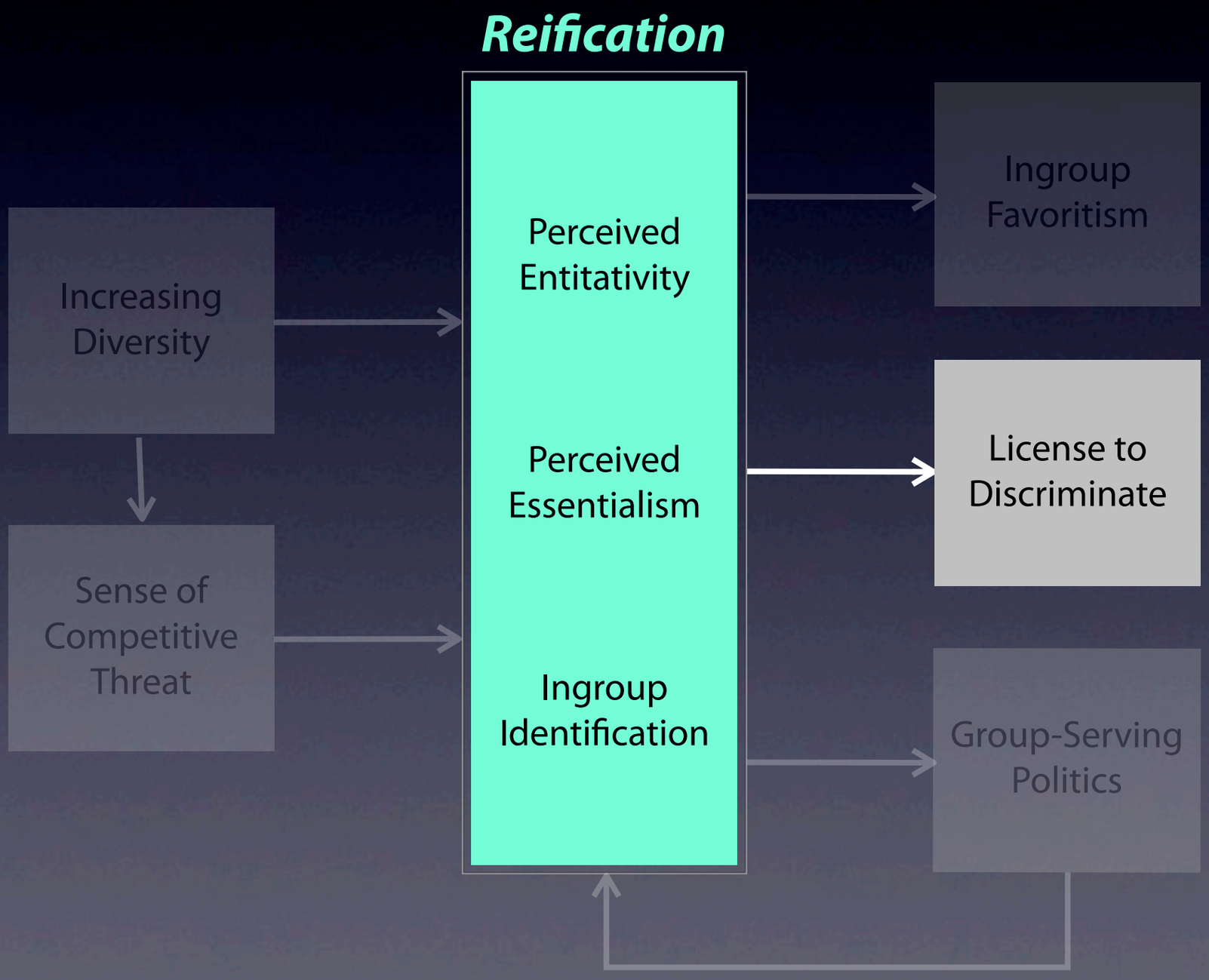


License to Discriminate

- Rationalist lay theory of intergroup bias[1]
  - Prejudice and discrimination as ***natural*** and ***rational*** in pursuit of one's group-interest[2]
  - Add naturalistic fallacy[3] ... and bias that reflects group-interest seen as ***legitimate***
  - That is, one has the ***moral standing***[4] to be biased because of plausible group-interested concerns

[1]Effron & Knowles (in progress); [2]LeVine & Campbell (1986); [3]Eidelman, Crandall, & Pattershall (2009); [4]Miller & Effron (2010)

License to Discriminate

- You have ***moral standing***[1] to be biased if
  1. You have group-interests ... thus that one's "group" is a real – reified! – group
  2. Another group is threatening your group's resources
- "Skin in the game"

[1]Miller & Effron (2010)

License to Discriminate

- Effron and Knowles (in progress)
  - 248 participants
  - Shown 2 racial-ethnic groups (A and B) from set of Blacks, Latino/as, Asians, and whites
  - Ratings
    - Moral acceptability of A discriminating against B
    - Moral acceptability of B discriminating against A

License to Discriminate

- How ***socially acceptable*** is it for a member of Group A to...

1. tell a joke that plays on negative stereotypes of B?
2. prefer not to hire B because of his race?
3. prefer her child not marry B because of his race?
4. prefer not to associate with B because of his race?
5. make a prejudical remark about B?
6. refuse to shop at a store that is owned by B?
7. believe that A are superior to B?

License to Discriminate

- Ratings (cont.)
  - **Entitativity**[3] (cooperation, similarity, fate)
  - **Social status** (ladder probe)
  - **Past victimization** (history of prejudice against the group)
  - **Size** (percentage of population)
  - **Own attitude** (feeling thermometer)

[3]Denson, Lickel, Curtis, Stenstrom, & Ames (2006)

Perceived Acceptability of Bias

Mixed-model regression (two discrimination scores for each participant)

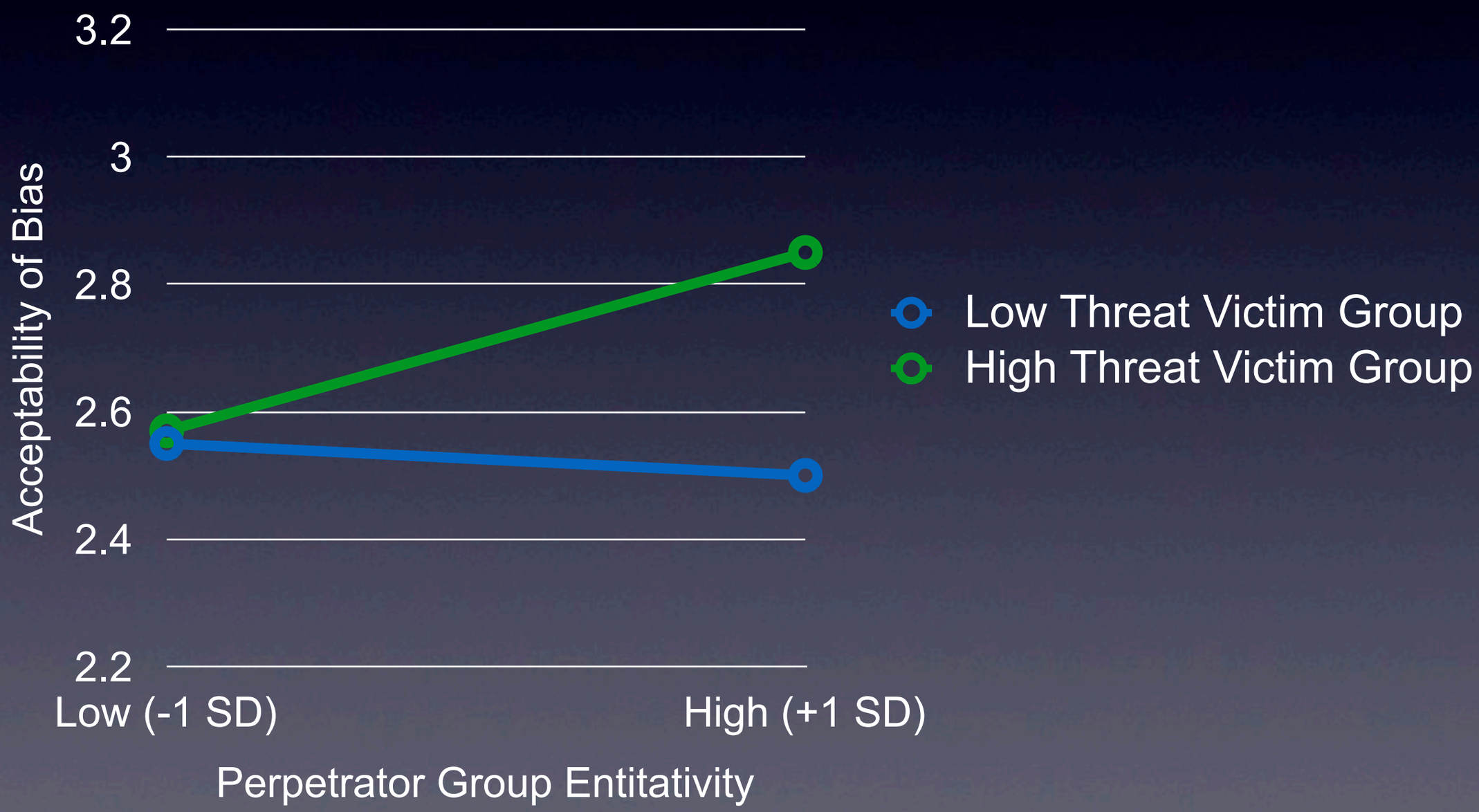
Predictor	Perp Group (*z*)	Targ Group (*z*)
Entitativity	**2.47***	-1.16
Past victimization	0.98	**3.31****
Social status	-0.88	-0.3
Size	-0.21	1.54
Own attitude	0.42	0.75

License to Discriminate

- Effron and Knowles (in progress)
  - 252 participants
  - Same design as before
- Addition of Intergroup Threat scale[1]
  - Measures zero-sum intergroup competition
  - E.g., “More good jobs for [Group A] means fewer good jobs for [Group B]”

[1]Bobo & Hutchings (1996)

License to Discriminate



License to Discriminate

- Degree of correspondence between implicit and explicit measures of an attitude varies with social desirability[1]
- Evidence for motivated biases in self-report
- Self-perceived moral license should reduce such bias and increase implicit-explicit correspondence

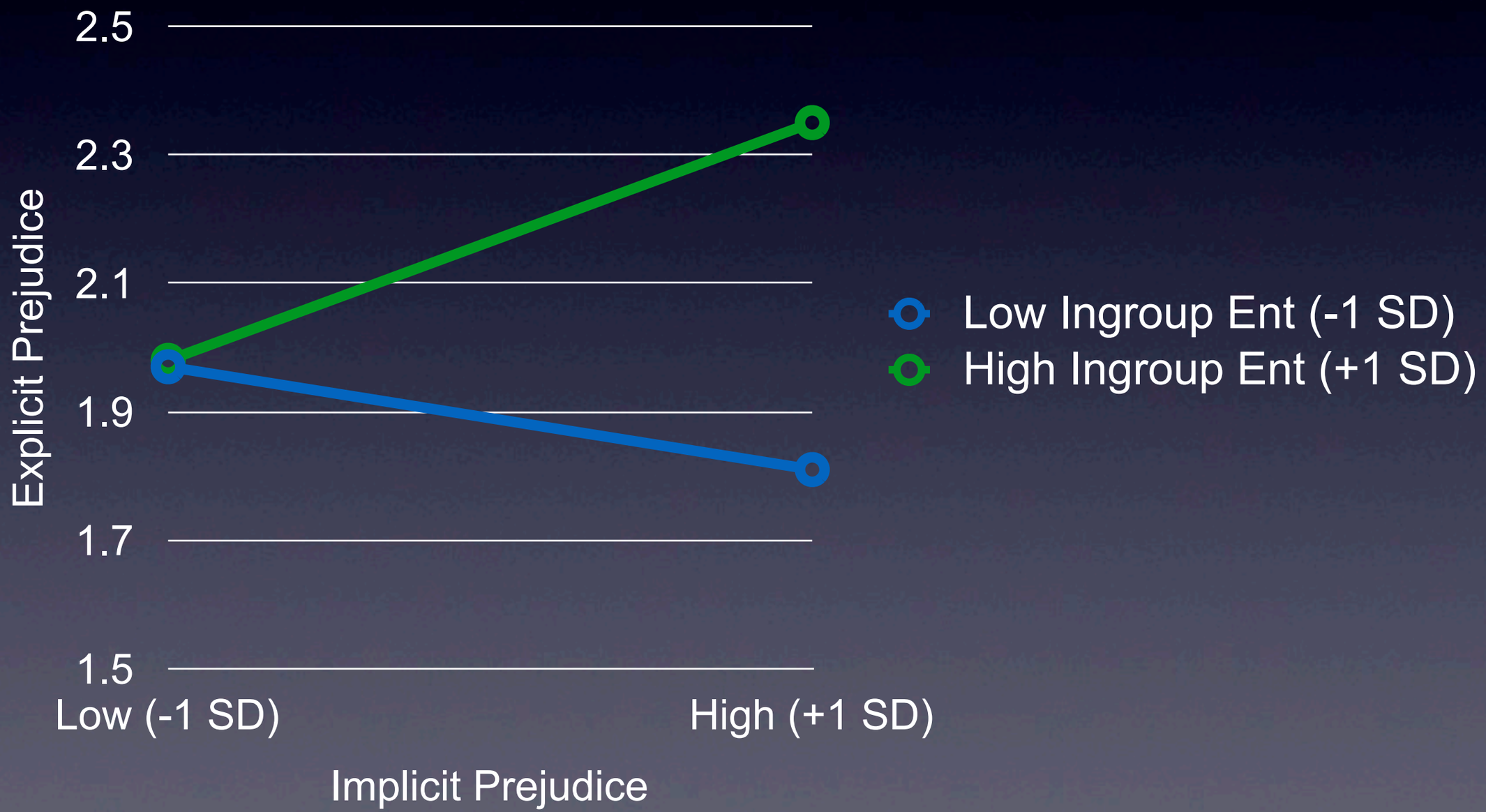
[1]Hofmann et al. (2005)

License to Discriminate

- Knowles and Effron (data)
  - 83 white participants
  - IVs = Perceived entitativity of whites & blacks
  - DVs:
    - Implicit anti-black prejudice (IAT)[1]
    - Explicit anti-black questionnaire[2]
  - License = implicit-explicit correspondence

[1]Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz (1998); [4]Katz & Hass (1988)

Implicit-Explicit Correspondence



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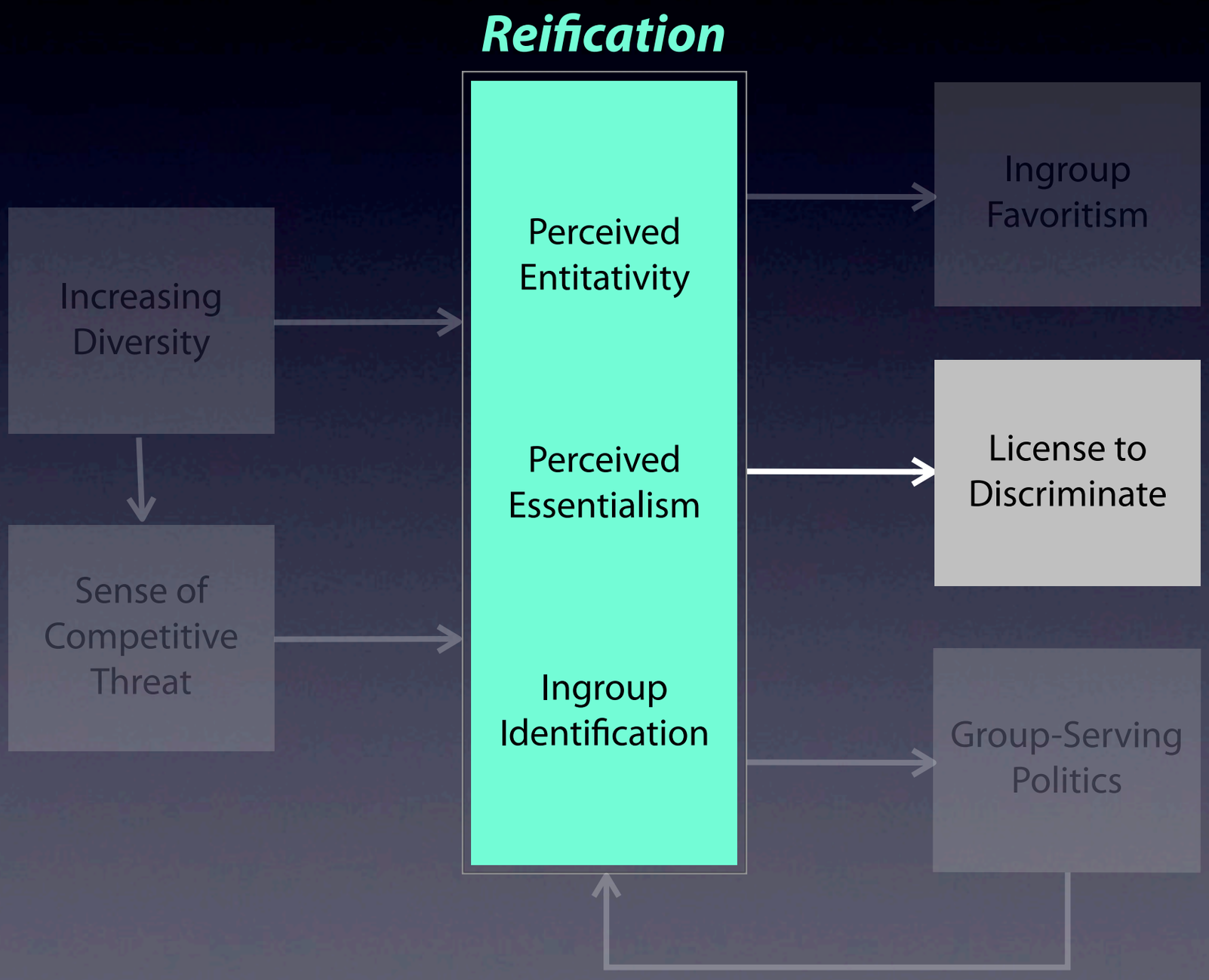

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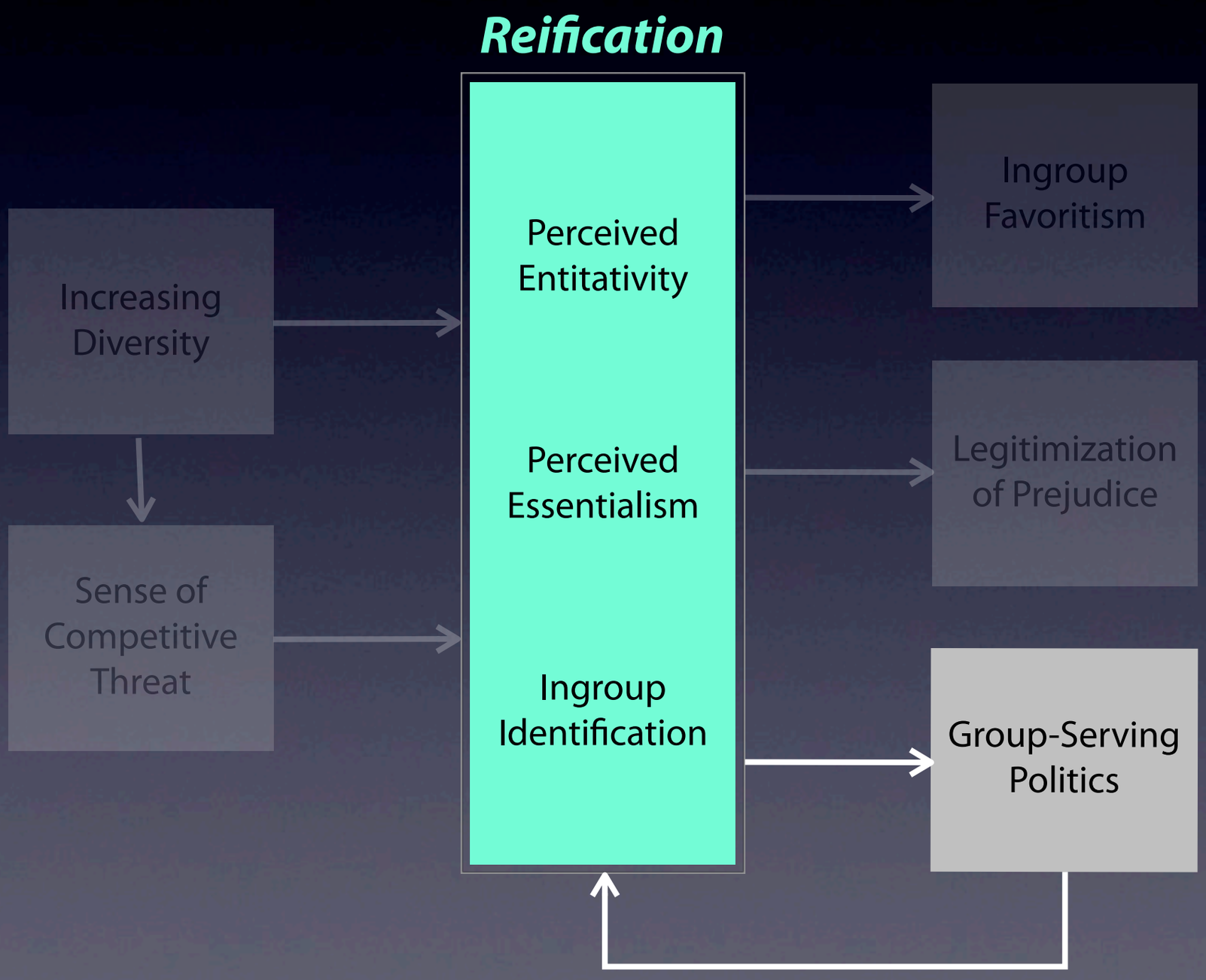


Group-Serving Politics

- If white reification is weakening colorblind norms, then "white identity politics"[1] may become more pronounced and explicit

[1]Knowles & Marshburn (2010)

Group-Serving Politics

White Reification and Politics

- Racialized politics[1]
  - Political choices made with ingroup-serving intent
    - E.g., whites oppose affirmative action because they think it's bad for the ingroup[2]

[1]Sears et al. (2000); [2]Lowery et al. (2006)

White Reification and Politics

- Political racialization
  - Political affiliations may increase awareness of, and investment in, ingroup interests
    - Elites (O'Reilly) from chosen affiliation inject ingroup racial rhetoric into discourse[1, 2]
    - E.g., membership in fraternities/sororities increased whites' sense of racial victimization[3]

[1]Malka & Lelkes (2010); [2]Sniderman & Bullock (2004); [3]Sidanius, van Laar, Levin, & Sinclair (2004)

ONLY
CONG
SLAVE
OWNER
TAX PAYER
NIGGAR

A VILLAGE
IN KENYA
IS MISSING ITS
IDIOT!
DEPORT OBAMA
T SHOVE OBAMACARE
MY THROAT

Race and the Tea Party

324 non-Hispanic whites, assessed 3 times:

Time 1
July, 2010

- Racial Common Fate
- Tea Party Support

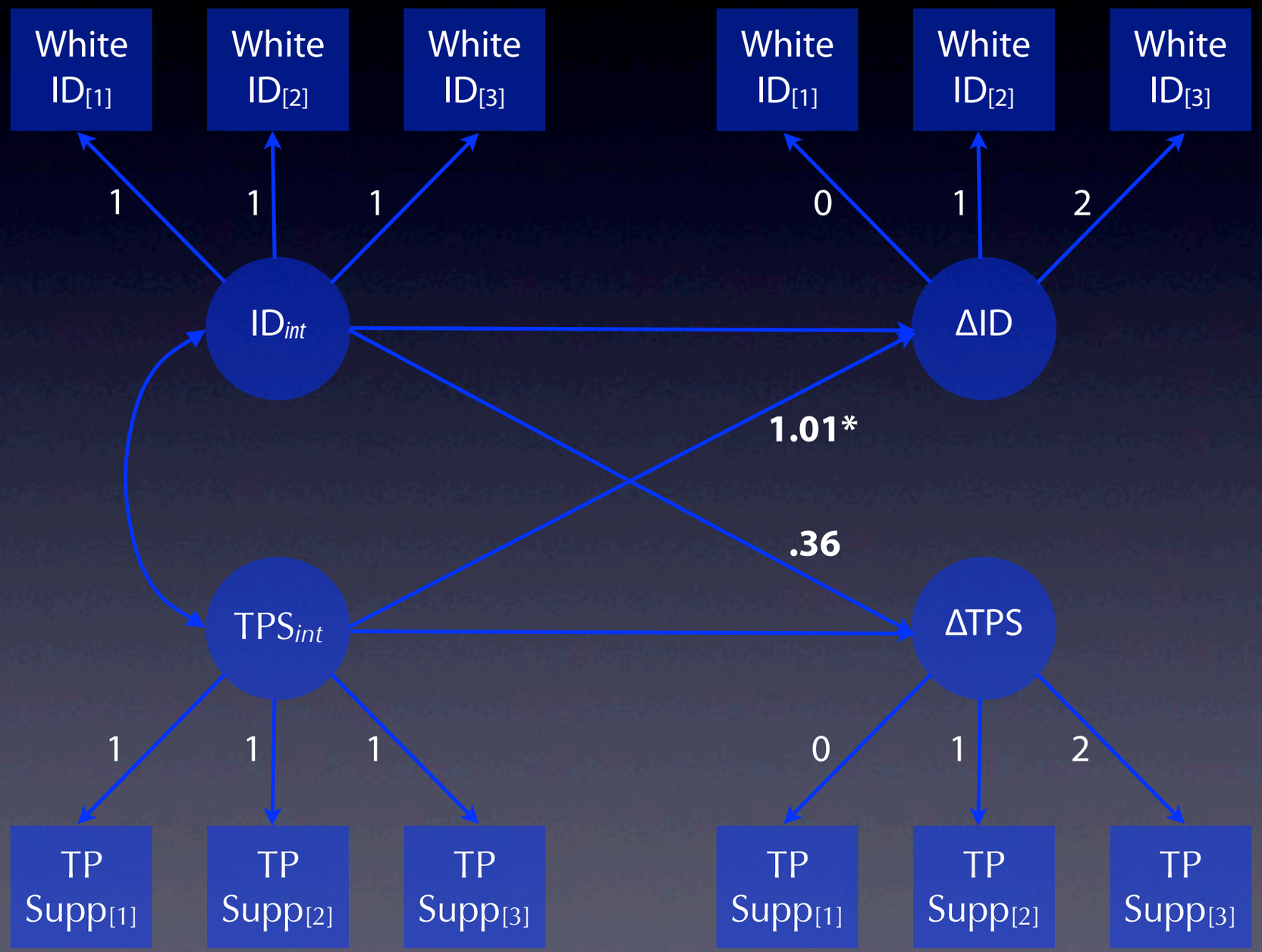
Time 2
October, 2010

- Racial Common Fate
- Tea Party Support

Time 3
Mid-January, 2011

- Racial Common Fate
- Tea Party Support

Precursors of Tea Party Support



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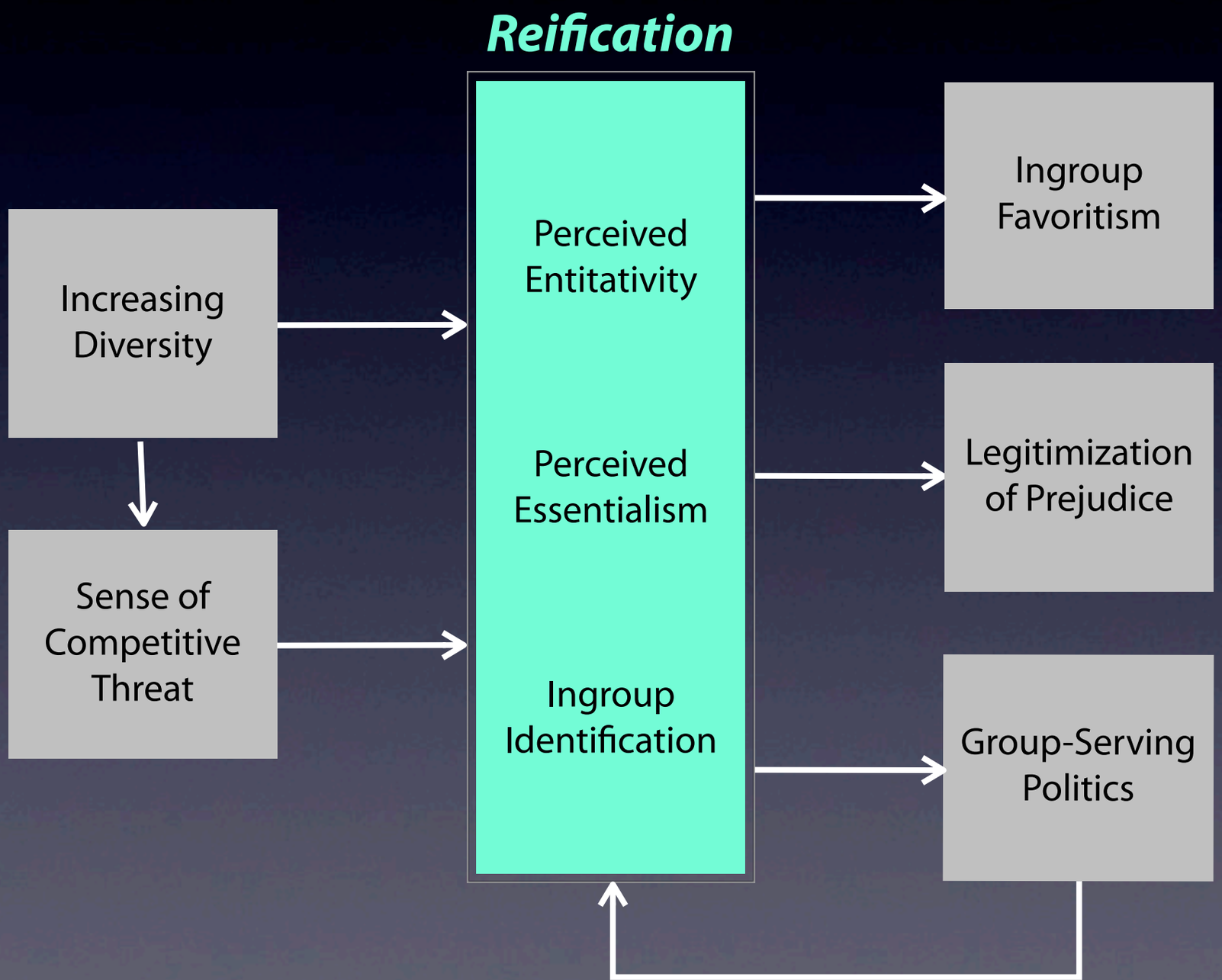

This is Important

- Though destined to become a minority, whites aren't going lose their hegemonic status anytime soon[1]
- How whites use their outsize voice in social and political life will hinge on how they respond to their smaller and smaller share of the population

[1]Oliver & Shapiro (1995)

Acknowledgments

- Daniel Effron
- Brian Lowery
- Rebecca Schaumberg
- Elizabeth Shulman

Testing the Reification Model

- Comprehensive longitudinal study measuring reification (entitativity, essentialism, identification) and intergroup consequences
- Probability sample of white Americans

Testing the Reification Model

- Nuanced measures of intergroup contact[1]
  - Dissimilarity index
    - Spatial differentiation (vs. overlap) of two groups' home addresses
  - Exposure index
    - Likelihood that a member of group A shares a space with a member of group B

[1]Massey & Denton (1988)

Dissimilarity and Exposure

- **Dissimilarity**

$$D_{county} = \frac{1}{2}\sum_{i=1}^{N}\left|\frac{w_i}{W_{county}} - \frac{nw_i}{NW_{county}}\right|$$

% of whites or non-whites that would have to be to achieve "evenness" —**residential segregation**

- **Exposure**

$$I_{county} = \sum_{i=1}^{N}\left(\frac{w_i}{W_{county}}\right)\left(\frac{nw_i}{t_i}\right)$$

Chance a random white shares an area with a non-white person—**experiential segregation**