

'Race tests' may be fueling segregation in white evangelical churches

April 24 2017

A new study explores why nominally welcoming churches remain racially segregated in the post-civil rights era. The reason may be due to clergy and congregants in white evangelical churches who execute what the authors term "race tests" on incoming people of color.

Race tests may be used to determine whether people of color are willing to serve the interests of whites in the church or to coerce people of color into leaving. After examining data gathered from seven majority white, evangelical churches across four states, the authors provide examples of both types of race tests.

"Whiteness, like other forms of domination, is characterized by masking power under a veil of normality. Therefore, in the colorblind era, whites are discouraged from the formal, overt bigotry that most people recognize as racism," wrote the authors of the *Sociological Inquiry* study. "Instead, scholars must anticipate informal behaviors, such as [race](#) tests, that fit the interests of [whiteness](#) under the current racial paradigm."

The study is part of a special issue on racial microaggressions.

More information: Glenn E. Bracey et al, "Race Tests": Racial Boundary Maintenance in White Evangelical Churches, *Sociological Inquiry* (2017). [DOI: 10.1111/soin.12174](https://doi.org/10.1111/soin.12174)

Provided by Wiley

Citation: 'Race tests' may be fueling segregation in white evangelical churches (2017, April 24)
retrieved 27 April 2024 from

<https://phys.org/news/2017-04-fueling-segregation-white-evangelical-churches.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.