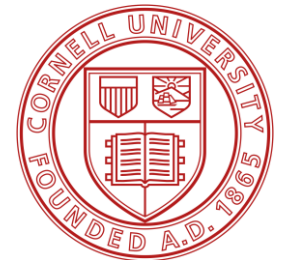


# Climate Change Public Opinion & Recognition of Inequities within the U.S.

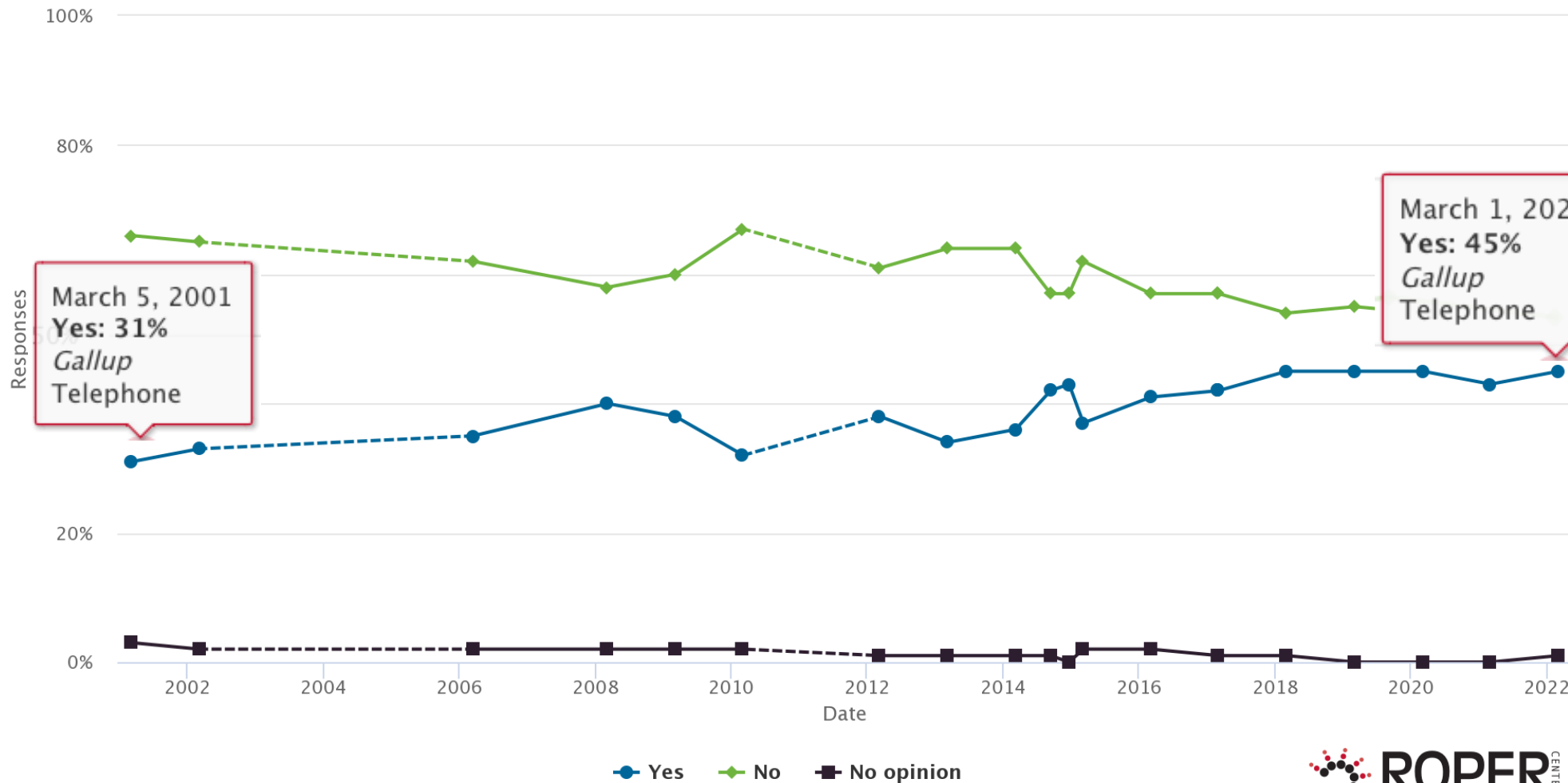
**Jonathon P. Schuldt, PhD**

Executive Director, Roper Center for Public Opinion Research &  
Associate Professor, Cornell University



## Roper Trend: Global Warming a Serious Imminent Threat

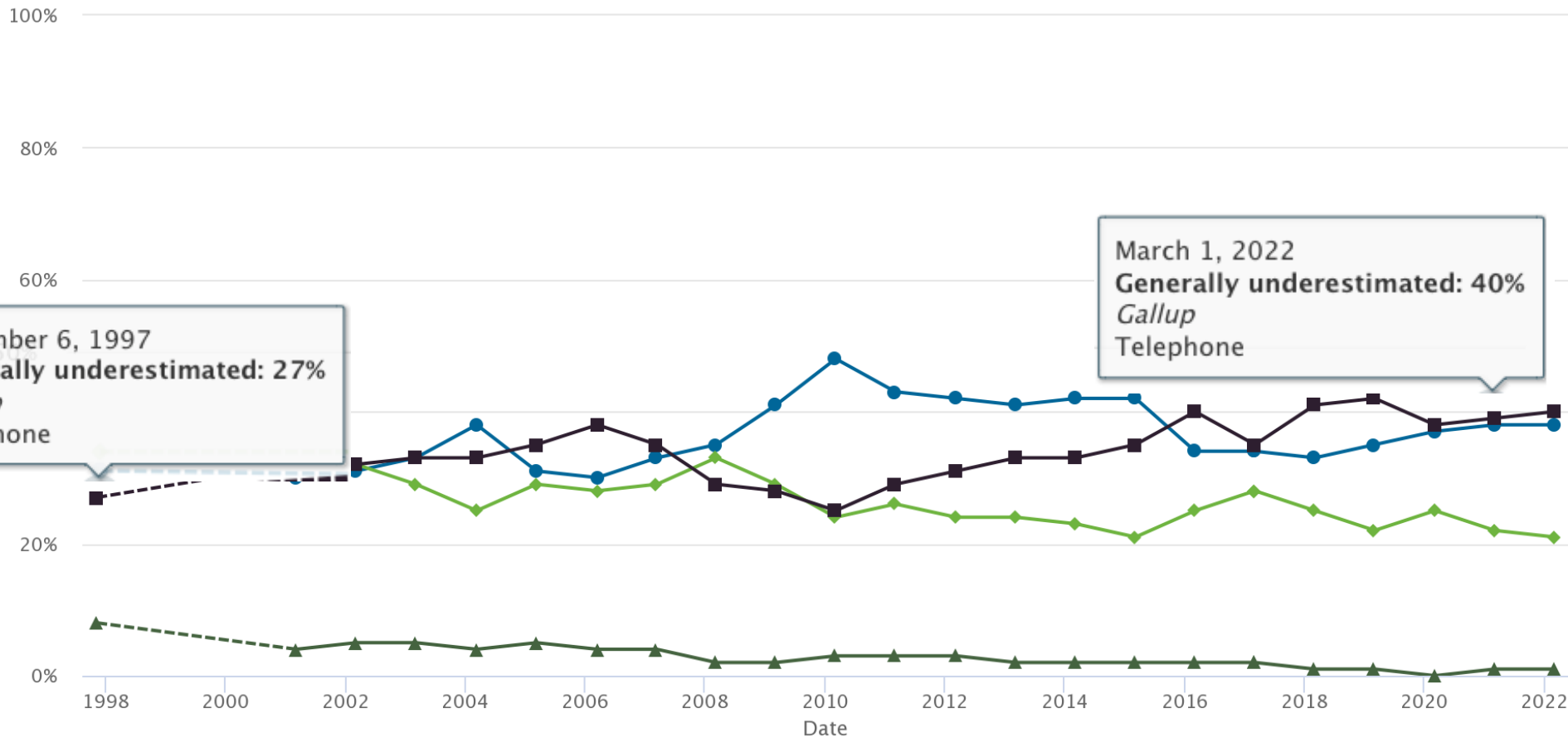
Core Question: Do you think that global warming will pose a serious threat to you or your way of life in your lifetime?



Data: Gallup, CBS News/New York Times, ORC International

## Roper Trend: Accuracy of News Reporting on Seriousness of Global Warming

Core Question: Thinking about what is said in the news, in your view is the seriousness of global warming--generally exaggerated, generally correct, or is it generally underestimated?



# Recent Polls: **Most Americans...**

- See solid evidence of human-caused global warming (Muhlenberg)
- Say effects have already begun (Gallup)
- Think it is very serious (ABC News/Washington Post)
- Are worried about global warming (Yale/George Mason)
- Feel government is doing too little (AP-NORC & Pew Research Center)

DESA Working Paper No. 152  
ST/ESA/2017/DWP/152

October 2017



# Climate Change and Social Inequality\*

*By S. Nazrul Islam and John Winkel*

See also: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2022):  
*Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability.*

# GW Concerns by Race & Ethnicity

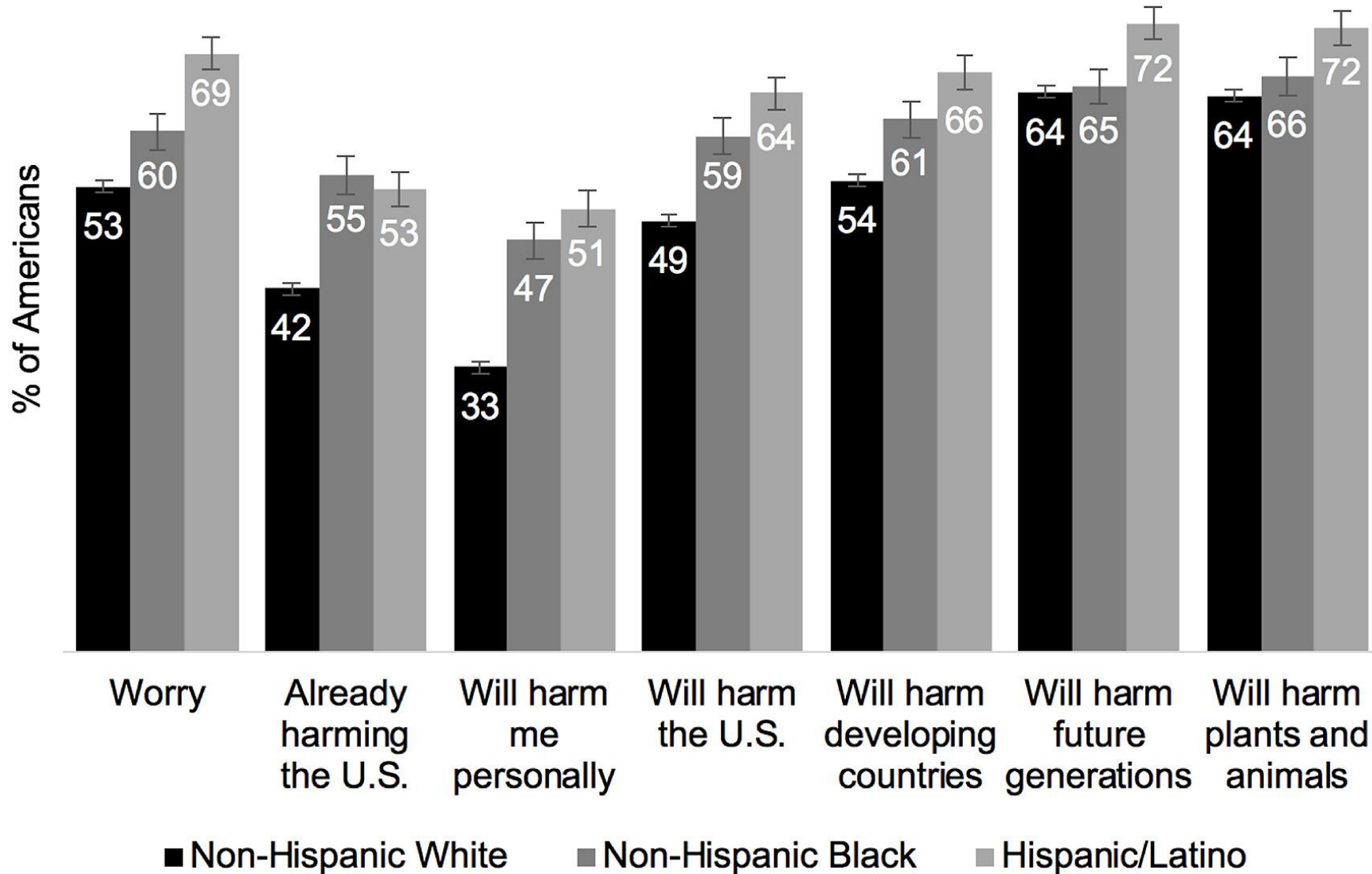
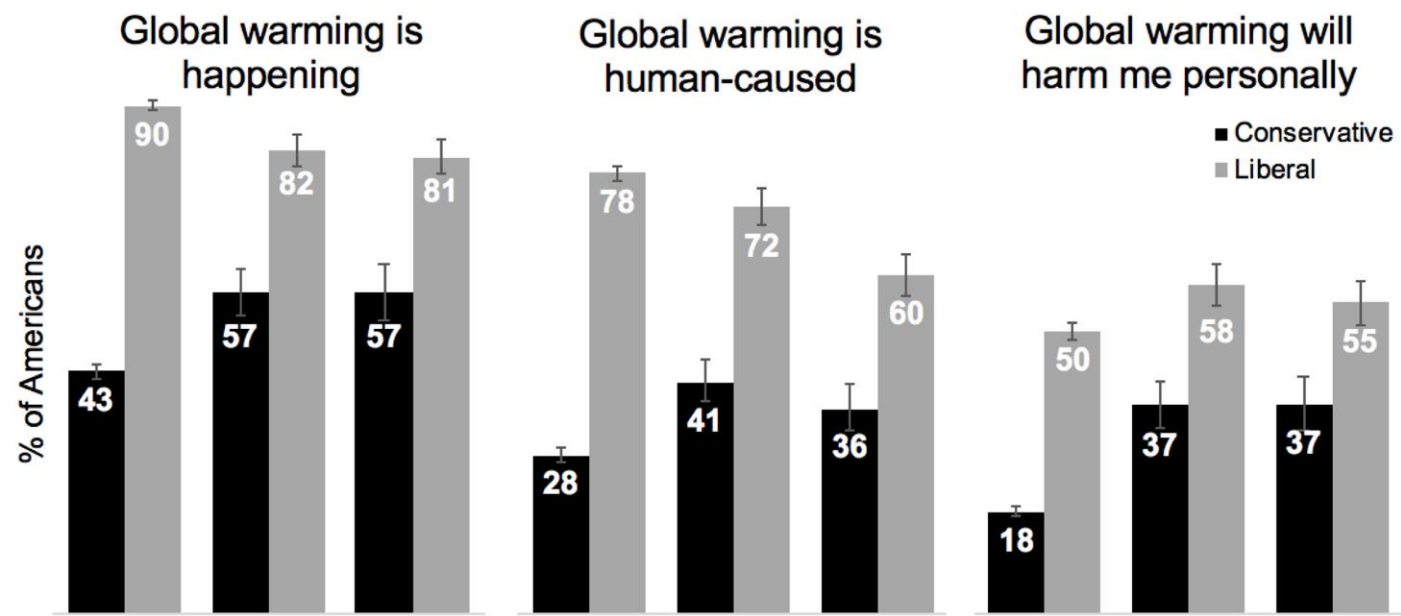


Figure: Ballew et al. (2021)  
Data: Yale & GMU (2009-2018)



# Race & Ethnicity with Political Partisanship

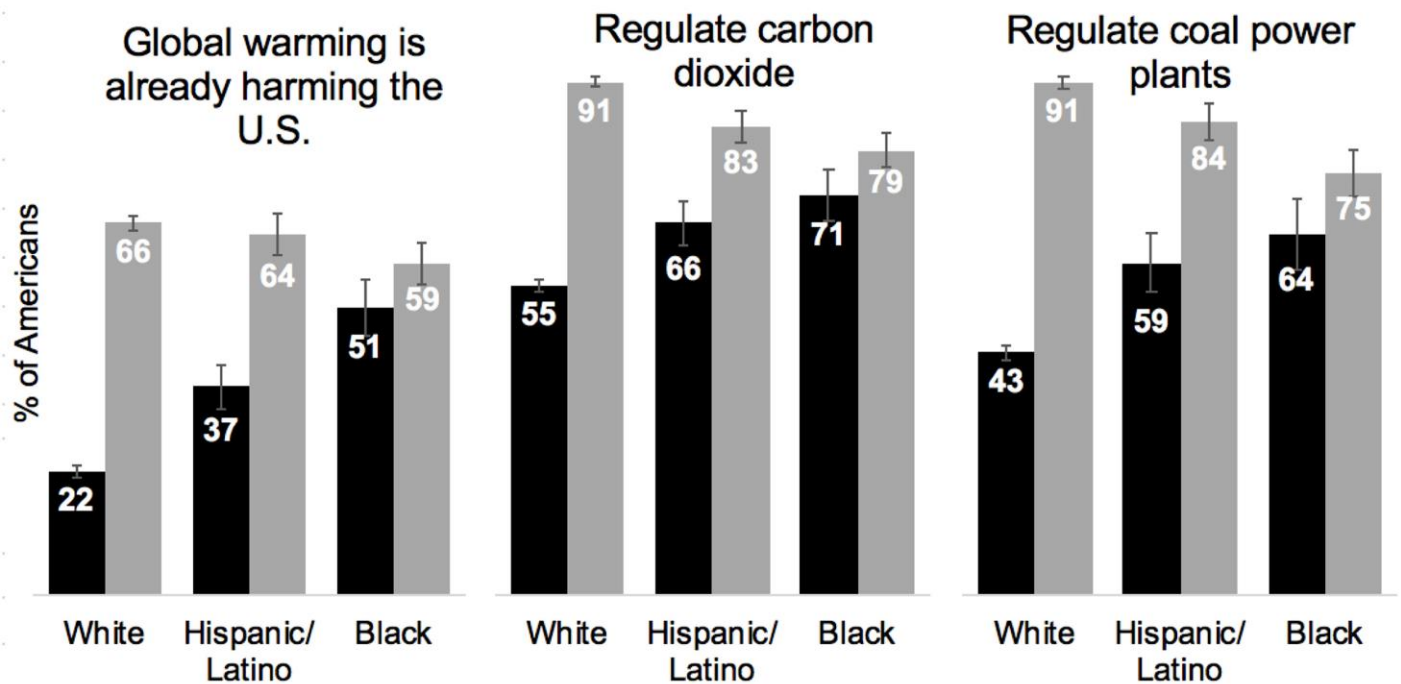


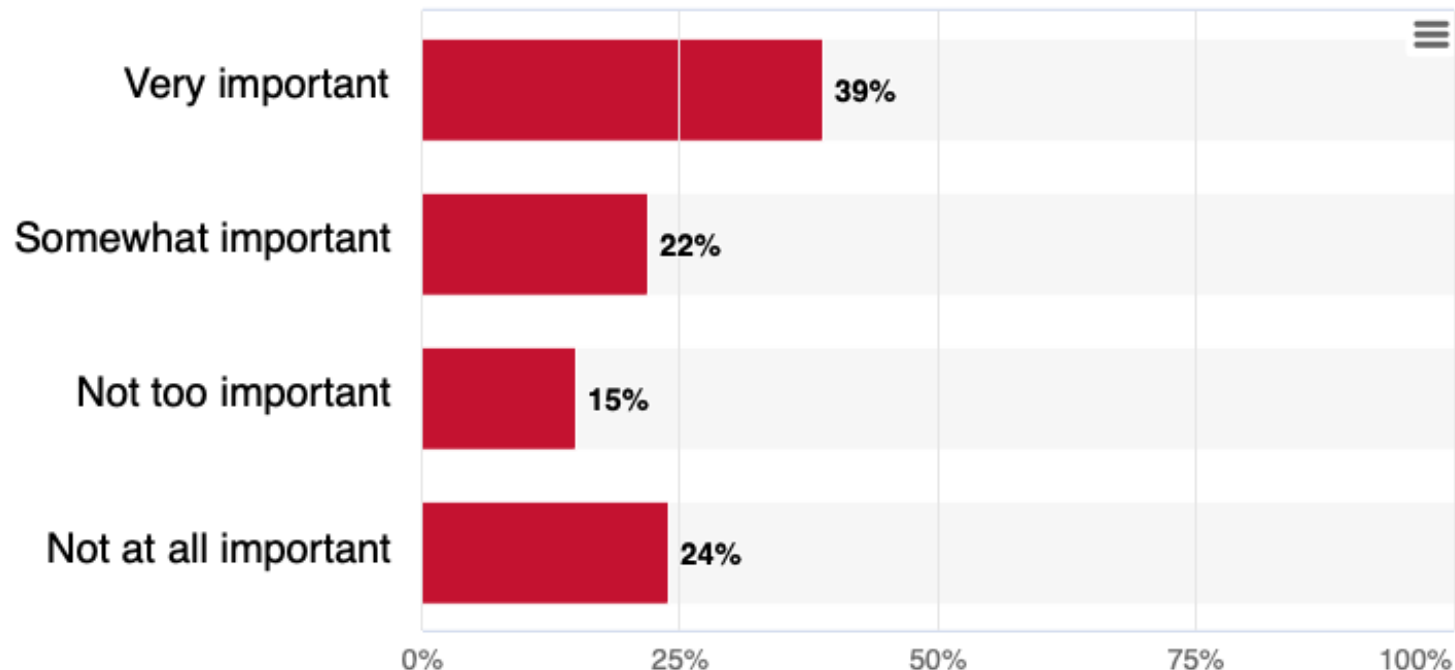
Figure: Ballew et al. (2021)  
Data: Yale & GMU (2009-2018)

## Thinking about this year's (2022) midterm elections, how important, if at all, will...climate change be in making your decision about who to vote for?

**Sample:** National adult, including oversamples of Hispanic and non-Hispanic Black respondents as well as those living in areas with high rates of COVID-19 hesitancy, potentially undocumented respondents and of prepaid (pay-as-you-go) telephone numbers (n=1502)

**Subpopulation:** Registered voters (79%)

## Registered Voter Sample (KFF)



**Source:** Kaiser Family Foundation Poll: February 2022 COVID-19 Vaccine Monitor. February, 2022. Roper Center at Cornell University

**Interview Dates:** February 9, 2022 - February 21, 2022

**Geographic Coverage:** United States

**Survey Organization:** SSRS

**Sponsor:** Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation



Question: Thinking about this year's (2022) midterm elections, how important, if at all, will...climate change be in making your decision about who to vote for?

- Study Info
- Questions**
- Cite Study
- Downloads
- Transparency

Search questions within this study...

- Topline
- Crosstabs**

- Age
- Education
- Ethnicity**
- Gender
- Ideology
- Income
- Party ID
- Race/Ethnicity
- Region

	(1) Hispanic	(2) Non-Hispanic	All Groups
Very important	<b>53%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>39%</b>
Somewhat important	<b>22%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>22%</b>
Not too important	<b>10%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>15%</b>
Not at all important	<b>14%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>24%</b>
Don't know	<b>1%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>
Refused	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>
Column Totals	<b>100%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Question: Thinking about this year's (2022) midterm elections, how important, if at all, will...climate change be in making your decision about who to vote for?

- Study Info
- Questions**
- Cite Study
- Downloads
- Transparency

Search questions within this study...

Showing 1-50 of 85 questions

- Topline
- Crosstabs**

- Age
- Education
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Ideology
- Income**
- Party ID
- Race/Ethnicity
- Region

	(1) Under \$30,000	(2) \$30,000-49,999	(3) \$50,000-74,999	(4) \$75,000 or more	All Groups
Very important	<b>50%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>39%</b>
Somewhat important	<b>26%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>23%</b>
Not too important	<b>10%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>14%</b>
Not at all important	<b>13%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>23%</b>
Don't know	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>
Column Totals	<b>99%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>99%</b>

Question: Thinking about this year's (2022) midterm elections, how important, if at all, will...climate change be in making your decision about who to vote for?

- Study Info
- Questions
- Cite Study
- Downloads
- Transparency

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Showing 1-50 of 85 questions

- Topline
- Crosstabs

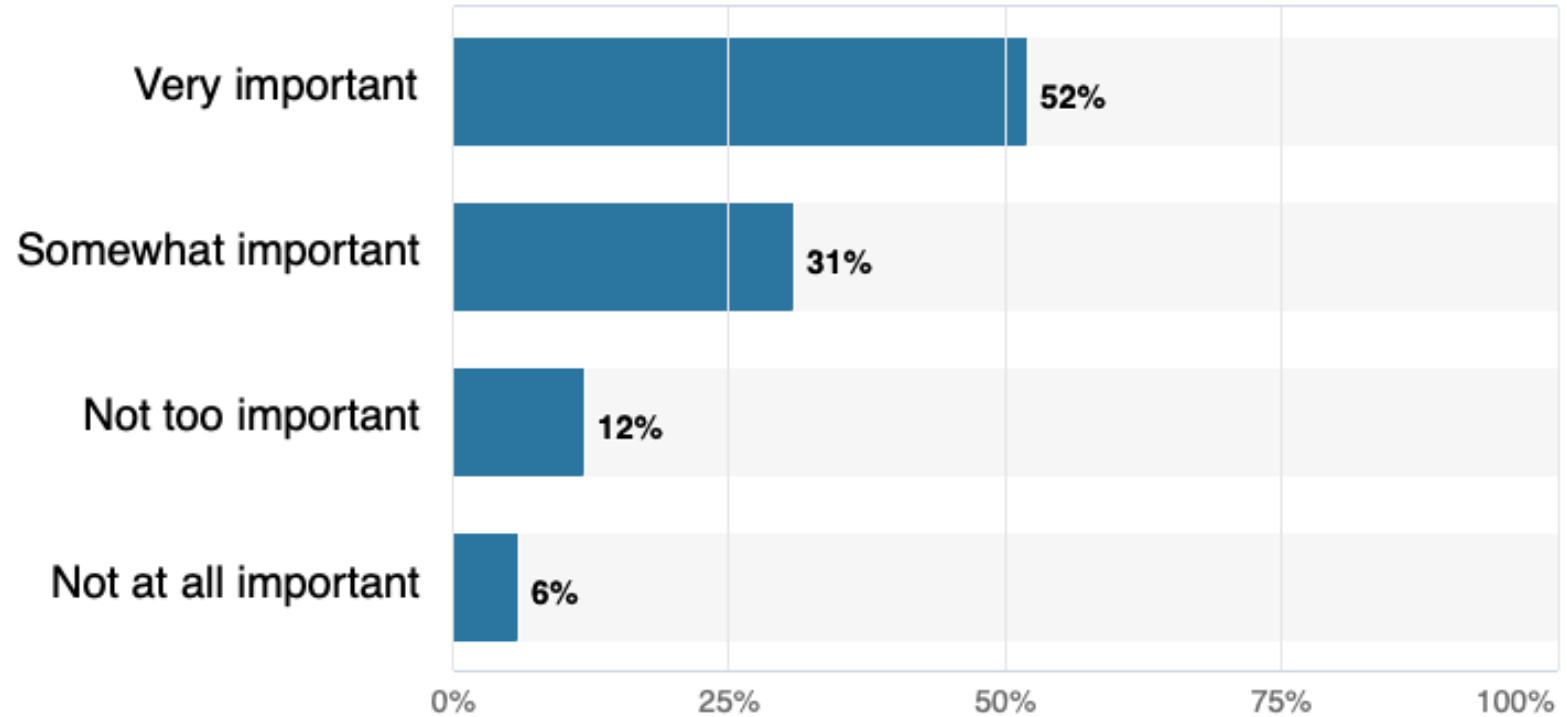
- Age
- Education
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Ideology
- Income
- Party ID
- Race/Ethnicity
- Region

	(1) White	(2) Black	All Groups
Very important	35%	60%	38%
Somewhat important	23%	22%	22%
Not too important	15%	11%	15%
Not at all important	27%	8%	24%
Don't know	0%	0%	0%
Refused	0%	0%	0%
Column Totals	100%	101%	99%

(How important will each of the following issues be in making your decision about who to vote for in this year's (2022) midterm elections?...Very important, somewhat important, not too important, not at all important)...Climate change

**Sample:** National Black registered voters (n=1000)

Black Registered  
Voter  
Sample (KFF)



**Source:** KFF/TheGrio Survey of Black Voters. August, 2022. Roper Center at Cornell University

**Interview Dates:** August 24, 2022 - September 5, 2022

**Survey Organization:** SSRS

**Sponsor:** Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation; theGrio



Do Americans accurately perceive these  
group differences?



# Diverse segments of the US public underestimate the environmental concerns of minority and low-income Americans

Adam R. Pearson<sup>a,1</sup>, Jonathon P. Schuldt<sup>b</sup>, Rainer Romero-Canyas<sup>c,d</sup>, Matthew T. Ballew<sup>e</sup>, and Dylan Larson-Konar<sup>c,f</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Department of Psychology, Pomona College, Claremont, CA 91711; <sup>b</sup>Department of Communication, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853; <sup>c</sup>Environmental Defense Fund, New York, NY 10010; <sup>d</sup>Department of Psychology, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027; <sup>e</sup>Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, Yale University, New Haven, CT 06511; and <sup>f</sup>Department of Psychology, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611

Edited by Baruch Fischhoff, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA, and approved October 2, 2018 (received for review March 17, 2018)

# Actual vs. **Perceived** Environmental Concern

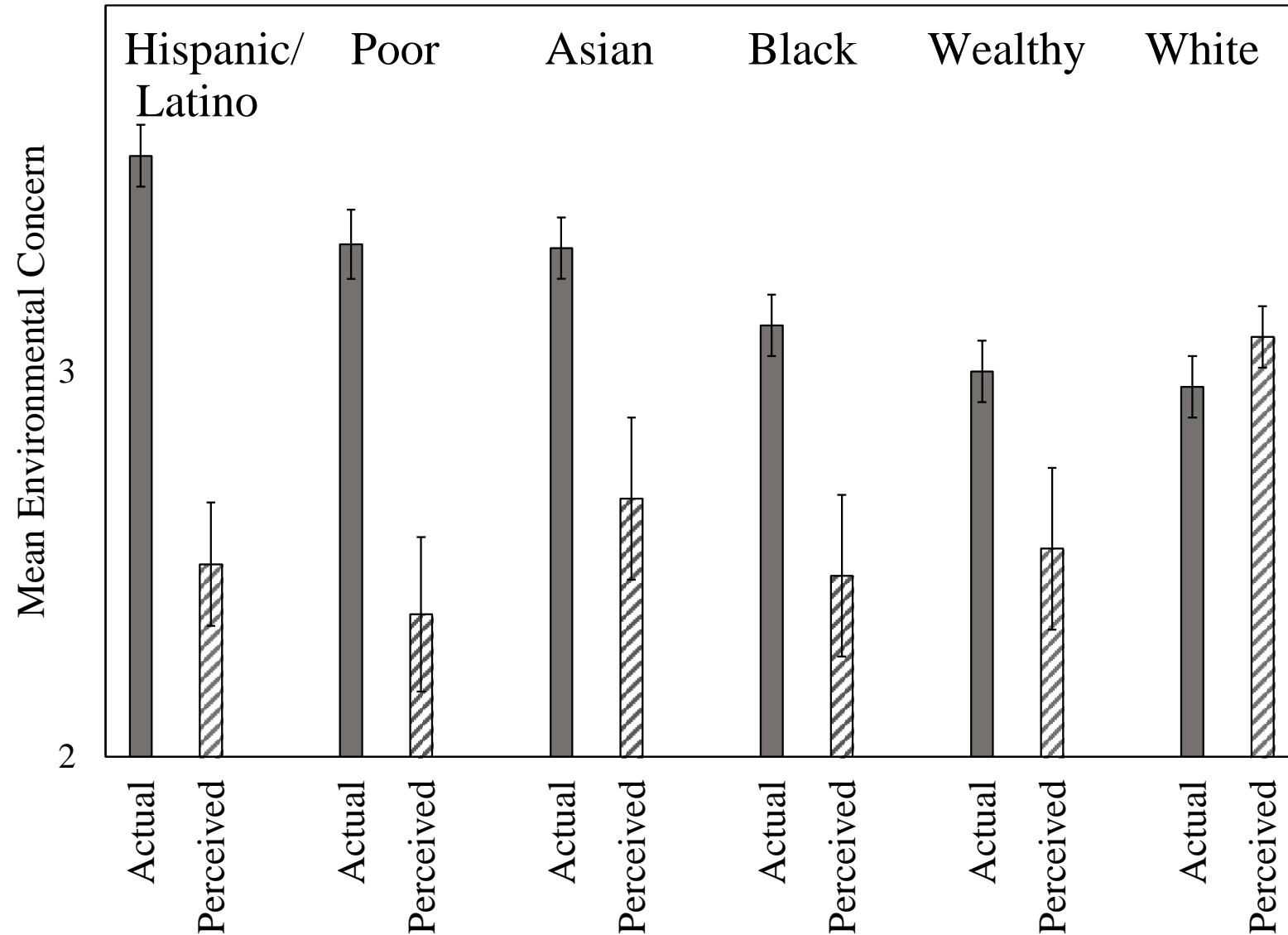


Figure: Pearson et al. (2018)  
Data: GfK/KN (2016)



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## Journal of Environmental Psychology

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/jep](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/jep)

### What counts as an “environmental” issue? Differences in issue conceptualization by race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status

Hwanseok Song<sup>a</sup>, Neil A. Lewis Jr.<sup>b</sup>, Matthew T. Ballew<sup>c</sup>, Mario Bravo<sup>d</sup>, Julie Davydova<sup>b</sup>,  
H. Oliver Gao<sup>b</sup>, Robert J. Garcia<sup>d</sup>, Sofia Hiltner<sup>d</sup>, Sarah M. Naiman<sup>b</sup>, Adam R. Pearson<sup>e</sup>,  
Rainer Romero-Canyas<sup>d</sup>, Jonathon P. Schuldt<sup>b,\*</sup>



Do Americans even recognize climate inequities?

Core Question: Which statement comes closer to your view, even if neither is exactly right?...

Poor communities and people of color in America are more likely to suffer the consequences of pollution and environmental contamination



All Americans suffer the consequences of pollution and environmental contamination equally



Skipped 2%

0% 25% 50%

Survey by Axios. Conducted by Ipsos.

Interview Date(s): 09/09/2021 - 09/15/2021

Country(ies):

# Concluding Remarks

## Public opinion & recognition of climate inequities

- Trends show **rising concern** about climate change
- Americans are **highly concerned** and **want more government action**
- Black, Hispanic and Latino, and Lower-Income Americans are among the groups **most** concerned
  - Yet are *misperceived as among the least concerned*
- **Low recognition** of the unequal impacts across groups in the U.S.