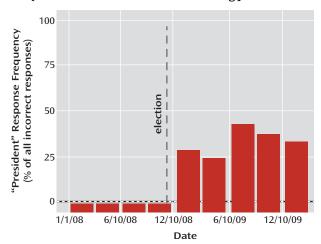
significant differences were observed on measures of demographic characteristics, forensic findings, or cognitive performance between those who answered "President" or gave a different incorrect answer. Representation of African Americans among those who answered "President" (45%), was numerically higher than among those who gave other incorrect answers (19%; p>0.1).

Despite limitations, these results suggest that the change in answers given after President Obama's election reflects (postencoding) distortion. Such a finding implicates social stereotyping as relevant to memory distortion (6), with potential consequences for collective memory (7). For example, individuals who believe that Dr. King could have been President might be more likely to promulgate or accept views that overestimate the historical access to political power available to minorities in the United States. In this context, these results highlight the potential importance of more subtle but pervasive distortions of individual and collective memory that is caused by predominant stereotypes and allows status quo views of history to be promulgated with little question.

References

- Schacter DL: Memory distortion: history and current status, in Memory Distortion: How Minds, Brains, and Society Reconstruct the Past. Edited by Schacter DL. Cambridge, Mass, Harvard University Press, 1995, pp 1–41
- Bartlett FC: Remembering. Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, 1932
- 3. Müller GE, Pilzecker A: Experimental contributions to the theory of memory. Z Psychol Z Angew Psychol 1900; 1:1–288
- 4. Kammen M: The Mystic Chords of Memory: the Transformation of Tradition in American Culture. New York, Knopf, 1991
- Schudson M: Watergate in American Memory: How We Remember, Forget, and Reconstruct the Past. New York, Basic Books, 1992
- Banaji MR, Bhaskar R: Implicit beliefs and memory: the bounded rationality of social judgments, in Memory, Brain, and Belief. Edited by Schacter DL, Scarry E. Cambridge, Mass, Harvard University Press, 2000, pp 139–175

FIGURE 1. The Frequency of the Response "President" to the Question "Who was Martin Luther King Jr.?" a



- ^a Shown as a percent of all incorrect responses from January 1, 2008, through December 31, 2009. The date of the election of Barack Obama is indicated with a dotted line.
- Hirst W, Manier D: Towards a psychology of collective memory. Memory 2008; 16:183–200

P.T. MORGAN, M.D., Ph.D.

From the Clinical Neuroscience Research Unit, Yale University Department of Psychiatry, New Haven, Conn., and the Office of Forensic Evaluations, Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, New Haven.

Dr. Morgan reports no financial relationships with commercial interests.

Dr. Morgan thanks Jo-Ann Holmes, Barbara Richards, Philip Corlett, and Brian Pittman for their help with this study.

This letter (doi: 10.1176/appi.ajp.2012.12101278) was accepted for publication in November 2012.

Corrections

In the letter "Transcranial Stimulation for Psychosis: The Relationship Between Effect Size and Published Findings," by Iris E. Sommer, M.D., Ph.D., et al. (Am J Psychiatry 2012; 169:1211–1211), the middle initial of one of the authors was incorrect. The third author's name should have been Christina W. Slotema, M.D., Ph.D.

In the article "Meta-Analysis of Nonpharmacological Interventions for Neuropsychiatric Symptoms of Dementia," by Henry Brodaty and Caroline Arasaratnam (Am J Psychiatry 2012; 169:946–953), Ms. Arasaratnam's degree was listed incorrectly. She has a Bachelor of Science degree with honors (B.Sc. [Hons]) in psychology.

In the article "White Matter Abnormalities in Veterans With Mild Traumatic Brain Injury," by Ricardo E. Jorge, M.D., et al. (Am J Psychiatry 2012; 169:1284–1291), the acknowledgment of funding was incomplete. The acknowledgment should read "Supported by VA Merit Research Award D7201I and by National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke grant 5R01NS55827 to Dr. Jorge."