Fate, Randomness, and Economic Policy Attitudes

Madison Deane
Senior
Thesis—BA in
Political
Science
13 December
2023

Abstract

This study examines the impact of worldviews, or "metatheories," underlying popular understandings of poverty, on attitudes toward redistributive economic policy. Existing research outlines three metatheories- individualism, structuralism, and fatalism- where poverty is attributed primarily to either individual traits and choices, social structures, or factors within neither individual nor societal control. While individualists and structuralists exhibit predictable economic policy attitudes, fatalists' attitudes remain unclear, and the metatheory fatalism as currently defined by scholars overlooks the component of fate where life events happen for particular reasons. Thus, I separate the metatheory known as fatalism into two new metatheories called fatalism and randomness, where poverty is primarily attributed to factors within neither individual nor societal control depending on whether these factors are believed to happen for a reason (fatalism) or not (randomness). Using logistic regression analysis, my research reaffirms support for previous findings that individualists are less supportive and structuralists are more supportive of redistributive economic policy, finds no statistically significant relationship between fatalism and economic policy attitudes, and discovers that randomness increases the likelihood of redistributive economic policy support. These results highlight an opportunity to frame economic policy discourse in terms of randomness and suggest future research where the way that fatalism is operationalized is reconsidered.

***

Introduction

Existing research shows that popular understandings of poverty can be sorted into a few general categories. Some people attribute poverty primarily to individual traits and choices, while others attribute it primarily to social structures, or to factors outside of both individual and societal control. These worldviews, or metatheories, are referred to by scholars as individualism, structuralism, and fatalism, respectively (Weiss-Gal et al., 2009).

The economic policy attitudes of individuals embracing the individualist and structuralist worldviews, or metatheories, are predictable, with individualists being less supportive of redistributive economic policy and structuralists being more supportive of redistributive economic policy. I am interested in the economic policy attitudes of individuals, dubbed fatalists, whose worldviews prompt them to attribute poverty to factors within neither individual nor societal control. These individuals' economic policy attitudes have gone relatively unexplored.

Moreover, existing research assessing the economic policy attitudes of individuals embracing the fatalist metatheory fails to flesh out the idea that an individual may attribute poverty to factors outside of both individual and societal control without believing these factors to happen in accordance with a plan or for any particular reason, a central component of the concept of fate.

In sum, my research focuses on how worldviews, or "metatheories," that underlie popular understandings of why some people are particularly wealthy or poor impact attitudes toward redistributive economic policy. Specifically, I am interested in metatheories I refer to as "fatalism" and "randomness" that attribute poverty to factors within neither individual nor societal control, depending on whether those factors are perceived as happening for a reason or not.

Aside from the knowledge gap and suspected misconceptualization in the existing literature on the relationship I aim to test, my research is important because of the salience of attitudes toward redistributive economic policy. The social safety net is an example of what I am referring to when using the phrase "redistributive economic policy." The social safety net, as defined in a 2023 report from the Department of Health and Human Services, encompasses a set of federal programs providing "essential support to people struggling with economic stability in order to avoid poverty and its social, economic, and health consequences" (Macartney & Ghertner, 2023). According to this report, approximately 30% of the U.S. population, or 99.1 million people, participated in the social safety net in 2019. This figure included nearly one out of every two children.

A better understanding of the factors that shape attitudes toward redistributive economic policy would allow for fuller explanations and predictions of public support for programs that millions of Americans, children in particular, rely upon. These insights could also serve to inform those composing and broadcasting important messages about redistributive economic policy, such as activists and politicians. "The way the general public perceives the poor, and especially the causes of poverty, is generally assumed to have a profound influence on the legitimacy of anti-poverty policies," which underscores the significance of these

insights (Lepianka et al., 2009).

Concepts and Theory

i. Concepts

My research focuses on how worldviews, or "metatheories," that underlie popular understandings of why some people are particularly wealthy or poor impact attitudes toward redistributive economic policy. Specifically, I am interested in metatheories I refer to as "fatalism" and "randomness" that attribute poverty to factors within neither individual nor societal control, depending on whether those factors are perceived as being predetermined or not.

As previously mentioned, scholars have established three metatheories illustrating how people make sense of poverty: individualism, structuralism, and fatalism. According to the individualist metatheory, poverty "stems mainly from the personality and behaviors of the poor" and emphasizes "such individual deficits as a lack of motivation, effort, and initiative; passivity, dependency, and lack of self-reliance; lack of job readiness; and (erroneous) perceptions of external constraints to finding and holding a job," as well as "emotional problems" or a "lack of interpersonal abilities" (Weiss-Gal et al., 2009). People who attribute poverty primarily to individual-level choices, embracing the individualist metatheory, tend to hold predictable, unsupportive attitudes toward social spending on those in need (Marquis & Rosset, 2021).

The structuralist metatheory asserts that poverty is caused by "forces such as globalization and international economic forces; the capitalist market economy and specific economic policies; limited employment opportunities stemming from local geographic, physical, or economic conditions; low wages and limited demand for or oversupply of low-skilled labor; insufficient social welfare provision and social protection; and lack of political power and systematic discrimination and deprivation on the basis of class, race, ethnicity, or gender" (Weiss-Gal et al., 2009). Predictably, people who attribute poverty primarily to social structures, embracing the structuralist metatheory, tend to support social spending on those in need (Marquis & Rosset, 2021).

The third metatheory, referred to by scholars as "fatalism," is defined as involving the attribution of poverty to "factors over which neither the individual nor the society has much control. These factors include fate and bad luck, inborn lack of ability or talent, and disability and illness, among many other unfortunate circumstances" (Weiss-Gal et al., 2009). I believe that the fatalist metatheory, as currently defined, is misconceptualized, as it disregards what is widely considered to be a central component of fate: the belief that life events happen for particular reasons.

Individuals may attribute poverty to such factors "over which neither the individual nor the society has much control," without believing these factors to happen for any particular reason; rather, they may believe that these factors arise due to random chance. Consequently, I separate the general idea that poverty can be attributed to factors within neither individual nor societal control into two

metatheories; “fatalism” (a new version by the same name), where neither the individual nor the society have much control over factors to which poverty can be attributed and these factors are believed to happen for a reason; and “randomness,” where neither the individual nor the society have much control over factors to which poverty can be attributed and these factors are not believed to happen for a reason.

My propositions as to how fatalism and randomness are related to attitudes toward redistributive economic policy are reinforced by logical connections I have made between them, as well as existing literature on fatalism and motivation.

ii. Theory

To a person who thinks in line with the fatalist metatheory, subscribing to the common expression, “Everything happens for a reason,” government intervention to redistribute income and ensure an adequate standard of living for the least fortunate may not seem necessary or urgent. If life events, including those to which poverty can be attributed, are supposed to play out in a certain way, why should we, as a society, take action to alter the outcomes of said events? In addition, the premise that life events are supposed to play out in a certain way can imply that some people are inherently more or less deserving than others, or that those experiencing poverty will eventually be rewarded for their suffering. The concept of fate has been used in this way throughout history, specifically theologically, to convince the poor to accept their societal position.

Individuals embracing the randomist metatheory, on the other hand, should see more value in government intervention to redistribute income and ensure an adequate standard of living for the least fortunate, as they have no reason to believe that there is a plan or purpose guiding life events, including those to which poverty can be attributed. If unfortunate, potentially devastating events can happen to any person at any time for no particular reason, it makes sense to invest in a floor for those who have found themselves at the bottom rungs of the socioeconomic ladder. A randomist who is relatively fortunate may even recognize that they too could have inherited a lower socioeconomic status given different circumstances.

iii. Qualitative Input

Understanding the metatheories I call fatalism and randomness becomes clearer upon reading statements made by individuals whose outlooks on life and suffering align with either category. Not only should reading such statements help to define the abstract metatheories of fatalism and randomness, but should also show that these ideas indeed exist and have significance to real people. Furthermore, it offers a glimpse into the distribution of fatalist and randomist thinking across different religious identities. In Wave 96 of Pew’s American Trends Panel, from which I source the data for my independent variables, respondents were asked, “In your own words, why do you think terrible things happen to people through no apparent fault of their own?” 5,280 respondents of different religious identities and age groups offered explanations that were unique but shared some common threads (Pew Research Center, 2021).

Falling into the category of fatalism, a spiritual but not religious respondent, age 18-49, said, “I feel like people go through things due to their karma. Also due to the fact that the things that they are put through make this who they are. Everything happens for a reason, whether they are good or bad, they make you unique.” A Catholic, age 50+, said, “God is merciful always and although difficult to understand, there is always meaning in suffering,” and an Evangelical Protestant, age 50+, said, “Nothing happens by accident, even accidents themselves. It is all for a purpose and reason in each person’s life” (Pew Research Center, 2021).

The majority of responses that I was able to sort into the four metatheories (individualism, structuralism, fatalism, and randomness), fell into the category of randomness. A religiously unaffiliated person, age 50+, said, “They happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time or had the wrong genetic cocktail when they were born. Some things are unexplainable, some things just happen to whomever happens to be there.” An Evangelical Protestant, age 18-49, said, “There is no sense of karmic balance. Just because something awful befalls someone, does not mean it is any more or less deserved than anyone else. Bad things happen.” A religiously unaffiliated person, age 18-49, put it simply: “It’s just the luck of the draw” (Pew Research Center, 2021).

iv. Existing Literature on Fatalism and Motivation

This theoretical difference in the perceived necessity or urgency of addressing poverty between those who do and do not express fatalism finds support in the existing literature on fatalism and motivation.

A 2018 study from Duke University found that increased belief in the outcome of a task being fated “leads to reduced effort on the task.” In this study, participants were told that they would be answering 30 trivia questions, and that correct answers would generate grains of rice to be donated to hunger victims. After answering 15 trivia questions, they were asked a series of questions measuring the extent to which they thought about their performance and the amount of rice that would end up being donated in a fatalistic way. Then, they were told that they had the opportunity to eliminate wrong answer choices from the remaining 15 questions- increasing their chances of a correct response by 50%- by solving anagrams. Previous research has demonstrated that solving anagrams is “a good measure of goal pursuit, since effort and persistence lead to more anagrams solved.” Results indicated “a marginal effect of belief in fate on effort, such that belief in fate negatively predicted effort expended, whether it was for the number of anagrams that participants correctly answered [...] or the number of anagrams that participants attempted” (Tang et al., 2018).

The positive correlation between belief in fate and tendencies toward passivity and reduced effort has not only been documented in experimental settings, such as the one described above, but also in real-life behaviors and outcomes.

In fact, these tendencies that are said to come as a result of belief in fate can have dangerous consequences for those who they affect. Studies have shown that belief in fate is positively correlated with unsafe activities such as driving without a

seatbelt (Cólon, 1992), failing to prepare for earthquakes (McClure et al., 2001), and missing regular health check-ups (Gullatte, Brawley et al., 2010) (Tang et al., 2018).

The COVID-19 pandemic shed light on this issue. Throughout the pandemic, individuals across the United States (and the world as a whole) were confronted with an unprecedented crisis that forced them to form opinions and make choices about how, if at all, they would protect themselves, their families, and their fellow citizens. Social scientists recognized that thoughts about life events being planned and purposeful might shape individuals' opinions about COVID-19 and their willingness to take protective measures against it. Hence, similarly to my own approach, they analyzed survey data on the matter. In fact, the following study sources its data from the same survey I will use to conduct my robustness check.

Some individuals, instead of following recommendations from scientific and governmental institutions about how to protect themselves and others from the virus, bought into conspiracy theories which are known to "prevent people from taking appropriate health-related behaviors" (Tang et al., 2018). In Chapter 2 of "An Epidemic among My People: Religion, Politics, and COVID-19 in the United States," a "measure of magical thinking" from the 2020 American Values Survey by the Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) is compared to belief in a COVID-19 conspiracy theory (Orcés et al., 2023).

The study's concept of magical thinking can be likened to my study's concept of fatalistic thinking, although it is limited to religious fatalism and thus doesn't take into account fatalism among the religiously unaffiliated, as I plan on doing. It asks if Americans completely agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree, or completely disagree with the following statement: "God always rewards those who have faith with good health and will protect them from being infected by the coronavirus." Diana Orcés, Ian Huff, and Natalie Jackson found that "the degree of agreement with the statement 'God always rewards those who have faith with good health and will protect them from being infected by the coronavirus' increases the mean predicted probability of believing the virus is lab made by 22 percentage points as one moves from completely disagreeing (49 percent) to completely agreeing (71 percent) with this statement" (Orcés et al., 2023).

Because magical thinking can be likened to fatalistic thinking, and this independent variable made individuals more likely to buy into conspiracy theories, which discourage people from taking measures to safeguard and maintain their health, this study suggests a sense of passivity and reduced effort due to belief in fate, as did the results of the 2018 Duke University experiment.

If we interpret fatalism as an opposite or alternative to "sheer luck," there is a study linking fatalism to redistributive economic policy (Krawczyk, 2010). One aspect of this 2010 study looks to "verify the existence of the link between initial distribution of chances in the society and preference for redistribution in an environment free from cultural and institutional differences, while controlling for monetary incentives." Chances in society being randomly distributed runs contrary to the idea that life events are planned and purposeful, which is where fatalistic thinking or lack thereof come into the picture. As a part of this study, respondents

participated in games where they could choose to transfer "payments" to the group of players as a whole before finding out who would actually win. When winning was said to be determined by "sheer luck" rather than performance in a task, respondents made larger payments (Krawczyk, 2010). If "sheer luck" is a valid opposite or alternative to what I call fatalism, this study could be said to lend support to one of my hypotheses.

Data and Operationalization

i. Data

My data is sourced from Waves 92 and 96 of Pew Research Center's American Trends Panel. The American Trends Panel is a nationally representative online survey panel of more than 10,000 randomly selected U.S. adults, where panelists participate via self-administered web surveys. The American Trends Panel employs stratified random sampling. Panelists are invited via address-based recruitment and offered post-paid incentives for their participation. The questionnaires I use in this study were developed by Pew with the help of Ipsos (Pew Research Center, 2021). Wave 92 was administered from July 8 to July 18, 2021, and Wave 96 was administered September 20 to September 26, 2021. The merged dataset includes 5,798 respondents, and 5,280 respondents are present on each variable in my model (Pew Research Center, 2021).

ii. Operationalization

My dependent variable, attitudes toward redistributive economic policy, is measured using the following question from Wave 92 of the American Trends Panel (Pew Research Center, 2021): "Thinking about assistance the government provides to people in need, do you think the government… (1) Should provide more assistance, (2) Should provide less assistance, or (3) Is providing about the right amount of assistance" (Pew Research Center, 2021). To capture support rather than opposition to redistributive economic policy, I coded this variable dichotomously where responses indicating that the government should provide less assistance are valued at 0 while responses indicating that the government should provide more assistance or is providing the right amount of assistance are valued at 1. Thus, a higher score on the dependent variable will represent increased support for redistributive economic policy.

Advancing to my independent variables, Wave 96 of the American Trends Panel was administered after the COVID-19 pandemic and fielded items that gauge individuals' beliefs about why bad things happen. In this survey, respondents were asked, "How well does each of the following explain why suffering exists in the world?" Statements that respondents could rate from "Not at all well" to "Very well" included "To provide an opportunity for people to come out stronger," "Sometimes bad things just happen," "Suffering is mostly a consequence of people's own actions," and "Suffering is mostly a result of the way society is structured" (Pew Research Center, 2021). I recoded this item into two dichotomous variables capturing individualism and structuralism, where respondents are valued at 1 on individualism if they indicated that "people's own actions" explain suffering "very well," and are valued at 1 on structuralism if they

indicated that "the way society is structured" explains suffering "very well."

Data from the item used above is combined with data from another item to create measures of fatalism and randomness, as I have chosen to define them. Respondents were asked, "Which of the following, if any, do you believe in?" One answer choice was "everything in life happens for a reason." (Pew Research Center, 2021). I coded two more mutually exclusive dichotomous variables, where respondents are valued at 1 on both fatalism and randomness if they indicated that "bad things just happen(ing)" explains suffering "very well," and are then valued at 1 on fatalism is they said they believed that "everything in life happens for a reason" and 0 on randomness if they said they did not believe that "everything in life happens for reason" (Pew Research Center, 2021).

To isolate the relationships among metatheories underlying popular understandings of poverty and attitudes toward redistributive economic policy, I control for potential confounding factors. I control for variables determining individuals' positions in society, such as income and education, with income at the household level and education on a six-category scale of educational attainment ranging from "Less than high school" to "Postgraduate." Since seniors disproportionately benefit from the social safety net through programs like Social Security and Medicare, I control for age, keeping it a four-category interval variable. I also control for religious denomination, recoded as a series of dichotomous variables, because people belonging to different religious denominations express unique views on both my independent and dependent variable(s) (Pew Research Center, 2021), and religiosity, measured on a on a six-category scale of religious service attendance, to hold constant the importance of religion in respondents' daily lives. I control for political ideology, measured on a five-point scale ranging from "Very liberal" to "Very conservative," to address that the ideological left tends to prioritize collective welfare and redistribution while the ideological right often emphasizes individualism and opposes redistribution. Finally, I include dichotomous controls for demographic information such as gender and race/ethnicity.

iii. Descriptive Statistics

The summary statistics for each variable are listed in Table 1:

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

	Observations	Mean	Min	Max	Standard Deviation
Support for Redistribution	5,798	0.648	0	1	0.478
Individualism	5,746	0.202	0	1	0.402
Structuralism	5,735	0.184	0	1	0.387
Fatalism	5,798	0.262	0	1	0.440
Randomness	5,798	0.196	0	1	0.397
Income	5,554	5.262	1	9	3.092
Education	5,785	4.139	1	6	1.517
Age	5,784	2.795	1	4	0.968
Male	5,785	0.444	0	1	0.497
Liberal	5,713	2.880	1	5	1.087
White	5,730	0.682	0	1	0.466
Evangelical Protestant	5,798	0.280	0	1	0.449
Secular	5,798	0.279	0	1	0.449
Protestant	5,798	0.428	0	1	0.495
Catholic	5,798	0.212	0	1	0.408
Other Religion	5,798	0.081	0	1	0.273
Religiosity	5,781	4.089	1	6	1.667

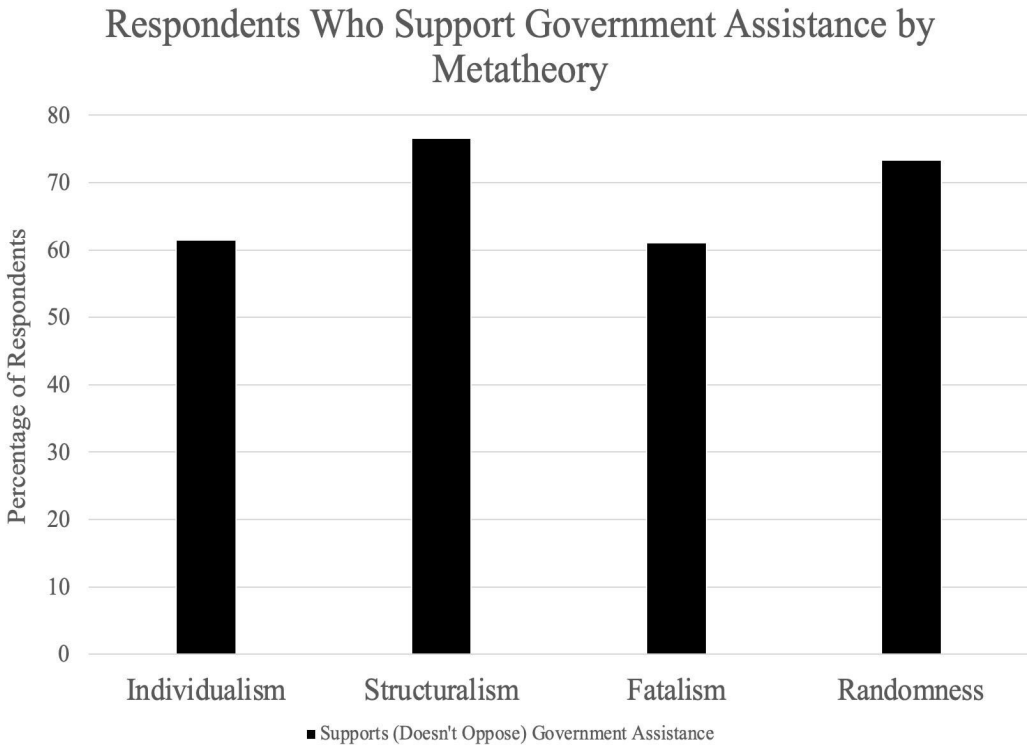
iv. Hypotheses

My hypotheses are as follows:

> *H1: Individuals who say that suffering is mostly a consequence of people's own actions (individualism) will be less likely than individuals who do not to support redistributive economic policy.*
>
> *H2: Individuals who say that suffering is mostly a result of the way society is structured (structuralism) will be more likely than individuals who do not to support redistributive economic policy.*
>
> *H3: Individuals who express fatalism will be less likely than individuals who do not to support redistributive economic policy.*
>
> *H4: Individuals who express randomness will be more likely than individuals who do not to support redistributive economic policy.*

Hypotheses 1 and 2 find significant support in the existing literature. I believe that hypothesis 3 will be correct because research has shown that fatalism decreases individuals' motivation to take action on different tasks, as they believe the outcomes of those tasks to happen for particular reasons. I believe that hypothesis 4 will be correct because individuals emphasizing the metatheory randomness may recognize that unfortunate things happen to people for no deserved, purposeful, or planned reason, and thus want to redistribute income and ensure an adequate standard of living for the least fortunate.

Findings



i. Bivariate Analysis

While it is still necessary to test for confounding factors and statistical significance using regression analysis, the bivariate analysis data appears to support my hypotheses, with individualists and fatalists showing relatively less support for redistributive economic policy (H1 and H3), and structuralists and randomists showing relatively more support for redistributive economic policy (H2 and H4).

ii. Regression Analysis

Referencing the Pseudo R^2 statistic, around 40% of the variation in attitudes toward redistributive economic policy is collectively explained by all of the variables in my model. As expected, hypotheses 1 and 2, which have been firmly established by existing research, are supported by logistic regression analysis. Compared to non-individualists, individualists are almost 20% less likely to support redistributive economic policy, and compared to

non-structuralists, structuralists are almost 40% more likely to support redistributive economic policy. Both of these figures are statistically significant.

Only one of my hypotheses of interest is supported by logistic regression analysis. Surprisingly, fatalism (H3) is not a statistically significant predictor of attitudes toward redistributive economic policy. Randomness, however, is a statistically significant predictor, and individuals embracing randomness are almost 35% more likely to support redistributive economic policy, which is in line with my fourth

Table 2. The Influence of Individualism, Structuralism, Fatalism, and Randomness on Attitudes Toward Redistributive Economic Policy (Logistic Regression)

	Support for Redistributive Economic Policy (Odds Ratios)
Individualism	0.824*
Structuralism	1.393**
Fatalism	0.885
Randomness	1.342*
Observations	5,373
Pseudo R^2	.401

p<.1, * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001.

hypothesis.

vi. Conclusions

Hypotheses H1 and H2 are both shown to be statistically significant predictors of attitudes toward redistributive economic policy in the directions I hypothesized. The support found for H1 and H2 reaffirms previous findings, which say that people who attribute poverty primarily to individual-level choices, embracing the individualist metatheory, tend to hold predictable, unsupportive attitudes toward social spending on those in need, while people who attribute poverty primarily to social structures, embracing the structuralist metatheory, tend to support social spending on those in need (Marquis & Rosset, 2021).

I find support for one of my hypotheses of interest, H4, which states, “Individuals who express randomness will be more likely than individuals who do not to support redistributive economic policy,” but I do not find support for my other hypothesis of interest, H3, which states, “Individuals who express fatalism will be less likely than individuals who do not to support redistributive economic policy.”

An insight that could be drawn from my fourth hypothesis being supported is that activists and politicians may be overlooking an opportunity to frame economic policy issues in randomness, instead opting for the traditional logic of individualism and structuralism.

One idea as to why the expected relationship between fatalism (H3) and attitudes toward redistributive economic policy did not hold up under statistical analysis is that I operationalized these concepts incorrectly. In this case, I recommend future research measuring these concepts in alternate ways, either by coding the variables differently using the same survey questions or looking for new survey questions to use as variables.

References

Corneo, G., & Grüner, R. (2000). Individual preferences for political redistribution. Journal of Public Economics, 83(1), 83–107. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0047272700001729

Cólon, I. (1992). Race, belief in destiny, and seat belt usage: A pilot study, American Journal of Public Health, 82(6), 875-877.

https://www.scopus.com/record/display.uri?eid=2-s2.0-0026628236&origin=inward&txG id=8c557b14af2a445efcdbf4aa726c15af

Ervasti, H., & Ainsaar, M. (2012). Children in the family and welfare state attitudes. In The Future of the Welfare State: Social Policy Attitudes and Social Capital in Europe. Edward Elgar Publishing. https://books.google.com/books?id=KcJl7IVgLY8C&dq=poverty+policy+support/attitud es+United+States&lr=&source=gbs_navlinks_s

Feldman, S., Huddy, L., Wronski, J. and Lown, P. (2020). The Interplay of Empathy and Individualism in Support for Social Welfare Policies. Political Psychology, 41(1), 343-362. https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12620

Garand, J.C., Xu, P. and Davis, B.C. (2017). Immigration Attitudes and Support for the Welfare State in the American Mass Public. American Journal of Political Science, 61(1), 146-162. https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/ajps.12233

Gullatte, M.M., Brawley, O., Kinney, A., Powe, B., & Mooney, K. (2010). Religiosity, spirituality, and cancer fatalism beliefs on delay in breast cancer diagnosis in African American Women. Journal of Religious Health, 49(1), 62-72.

https://www.scopus.com/record/display.uri?eid=2-s2.0-76749167600&origin=inward&tx Gid=f32ced5fdbd3f7313ffdce3e35b42a90

Krawczyk, M (2010). A glimpse through the veil of ignorance: Equality of

opportunity and support for redistribution. Journal of Public Economics, 94(1-2) 131-141. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpubeco.2009.10.003

Lepianka, D., Van Oorschot, W., & Gelissen, J. (2009). Popular Explanations of Poverty: A Critical Discussion of Empirical Research. Journal of Social Policy, 38(3), 421-438. https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-social-policy/article/abs/popular-expl anations-of-poverty-a-critical-discussion-of-empirical-research/2D6039D7CDD11253A9 AE92EA7E294BEF

Macartney, S., & Ghertner, R. (2023). How Many People Participate in the Social Safety Net? Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation Office of Human Services Policy, Department of Health and Human Services. https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/18eff5e45b2be85fb4c350176bca5c28/h ow-many-people-social-safety-net.pdf

Macartney, S., & Ghertner, R. (2023). How Many People Participate in the Social Safety Net? Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation Office of Human Services Policy, Department of Health and Human Services. https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/18eff5e45b2be85fb4c350176bca5c28/h ow-many-people-social-safety-net.pdf

Marquis, L., & Rosset, J. (2021). When Explanations for Poverty Help Explain Social Policy Preferences: The Case of European Public Opinion Amidst the Economic Recession (2009–2014). Social Justice Research, 34(1), 428–459. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11211-021-00381-0.

McClure, J., Allen, M.W., & Walkey, F. (2001). Countering fatalism: Causal information in news reports affects judgments about earthquake damage. Basic and Applied Social Psychology, 23(2), 109-121.

https://www.scopus.com/record/display.uri?eid=2-s2.0-0035354410&origin=inward&txG id=876793632e20d4755e7e9fead3846363

Orcés, D., Huff, I., & Jackson, N. (2023). Are Religious Adherents More Likely to Buy Into COVID-19 Conspiracy Theories? In P. A. Djupe & A. Friesen (Eds.), An Epidemic among My People: Religion, Politics, and COVID-19 in the United States (pp. 28-41). Temple University Press.

Pew Research Center. (2021). American Trends Panel Wave 92 [Data set]. https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/dataset/american-trends-panel-wave-92/

Pew Research Center. (2021). American Trends Panel Wave 96 [Data set]. https://www.pewresearch.org/dataset/american-trends-panel-wave-96/

Pew Research Center. (2021, November 19). In their own words, how Americans explain why bad things happen.

https://www.pewresearch.org/interactives/in-their-own-words-how-americans-

explain-wh y-bad-things-happen/

Tang, S., King, M., & Kay, A.C. (2018). Fate as a motivated (and de-motivating) belief: Evidence for a link from task importance to belief in fate to effort. Organizational

Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 144(1), 74-84. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2017.08.003.

Weiss-Gal, I., Benyamini, Y., Ginzburg, K., Savaya, R., & Peled, E. (2009). Social workers' and service users' causal attributions for poverty. Social Work, 54(2), 125–133. https://doi.org/10.1093/sw/54.2.125