CREATING LIBERAL JUSTICE: THE SOURCES OF INEQUALITY AND THEIR MORAL WEIGHT

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By

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CREATING LIBERAL JUSTICE: THE SOURCES OF INEQUALITY AND THEIR MORAL WEIGHT

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To my wife,

Dr. Dahye Lee Hofer,

For her warm heart, patience, and love

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ABSTRACT

Inequality is always relevant in political science, but often discussed without proper context. This dissertation provides an account of justified inequality in liberal societies from its philosophic origins to debates about public policy. In the first chapter, I identify a teleological conception of labor as the proper justification for inequality within the works of archetypal liberal John Locke. Locke's account of labor as the proper mechanism of determining unequal rewards from society is built on a consequentialist argument and despite natural rights to property being based on labor, not all forms of labor are treated equally. I examine the role of the good life in Locke's writings and how Locke favors rights claims which fit his conception at the expense of alternatives. Ultimately, illustrating that natural law is used to justify inequality as Locke's conception of the tabula rasa of the mind is mimicked in his promotion of the 'blank slate' of the Earth. In the second chapter, I identify labor and individual efforts as the proper determinants of inequality within a liberal society. Then, I empirically test how foundational assessments of these individual efforts shape public opinion about the justice of inequality within twenty-three liberal democracies. My findings provide evidence that individuals who strongly believe that the inequality in their society is produced by differences in effort and ambition are significantly more likely to see inequality as just. Meanwhile, citizens who do not believe inequality is produced based on individual efforts see inequality as not justified. This illustrates an assessment of the liberal principle of justified inequality through meritocracy; citizens who do not assess their society as being meritocratic are less likely to tolerate inequality. In my final chapter, I test the assessments of meritocracy on redistributive policy preferences. Since

redistributive policies are a mechanism for the government to step in and alter the existing distributions of wealth, I posit that citizens will be more supportive of these efforts when they do not believe meritocracy to be working in their society. My results provide strong evidence that assessments of meritocracy do have an impact on redistributive policy preferences.

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Preface

The combination of free markets and democratic governments is the predominant societal structure of the liberal West. The foundations of both institutions are based on a notion of equality of opportunity. In democratic societies, equality of opportunity means the prohibition of disenfranchisement in all but the rarest of circumstances. In the free market, equality of opportunity means the freedom to do business (or not do business) without formal barriers. Despite the foundations of equality, these two institutions in tandem have produced large levels of material inequality. The free market and democracy must inevitably reward those who take part unequally. Equality of opportunity does not guarantee equality of outcomes. In endorsing equality of opportunity rather than equality of outcomes, classical liberal societies admit a conception of justice that values the opportunity afforded to individuals rather than the material outcomes. This view of justice promotes efforts on the part of the individual to maximize their own conditions; however, the specific characteristic that liberal market-based societies seek to promote is left somewhat ambiguous.

Underlying the free market, and material inequality in general, is the role of private property. To properly understand the idea of justice in liberal societies, it is essential to understand the mechanisms of property acquisition. Once it is understood how material wealth should be gathered according to the philosophical founders of liberalism, then an understanding of the ideal form of just distribution can be properly understood. Beyond the philosophical justifications, liberal societies themselves will operate under these principles of distribution, which permeate to the mass public as a dominant ideology. The conception of justice which promotes interaction with the free market, must also promote the individual to buy into the mechanism for distribution to be truly effective. The reason classical liberalism is the paradigm of advanced industrial nations is because it has an intuitive appeal to the public. I posit that this appeal is based on justice through individual efforts, specifically labor and initiative. By understanding the philosophical foundations of some liberal societies built on the notion of labor in the liberal philosopher John Locke, there can be context to the development of popular opinions on justice in distribution across liberal societies and the corresponding demands for government action.

Although there cannot be a monolithic or essentialist definition of liberalism, one common theme in liberal political thought, especially classical liberal and libertarian thought, is that market-based liberal democracy creates a form of meritocracy. This type of thinking can be seen in the works of many classical liberals, but is perhaps most pronounced in the works of JS Mill (1895), Adam Smith (2010) and John Locke (1860). In Mill's (1895) account, the marketplace of ideas and the actual economic marketplace promote a competition that ultimately rewards the best by allowing lesser competition to be defeated through open competition. In Locke's (1860) conception, inequality between individuals is the result of different levels of labor and the rewards produced through labor. Meanwhile, Adam Smith (2010) sees inequality that results from fair competition as the most efficient way for societies to produce what is needed without arbitrary government interference. In all three classical liberal accounts, a nascent conception of what is now known as meritocracy emerges and in these accounts meritocracy itself is a benefit to society. By allowing fair competition without arbitrary barriers, the best and brightest will be rewarded with wealth while others will be incentivized to change course. This underlying premise in much of liberalism is undoubtedly part of the reason why liberal societies tolerate vast amounts of inequality; however, it has not been systematically studied using an interdisciplinary approach.

Meritocracy and the public perception of meritocracy has become an emerging topic in the public policy literature; nonetheless, the existing work on meritocracy typically does not bridge the academic divide between public policy and political theory (Solt, Hu, Hudson, Song and Yu 2016; Mijs 2019; Newman, Johnston and Lown 2015). The current literature in public policy has identified that as inequality grows, citizens increasingly believe in meritocracy as a justification for inequality (Solt et al. 2016). This research illustrates the complexity of inequality in liberal societies that has been recognized for some time (Hirschman and Rothschild 1973). The literature has focused on what shapes beliefs in meritocracy, but has largely failed to recognize the role of classical liberal thought in the formation of tolerance for inequality through meritocracy. Research in this area frequently lacks the philosophical context for meritocratic views resulting from classical liberal and libertarian thought.

The position of inequality in classical liberalism is at the nexus of the market economy, private property, and equal opportunity. Inequality poses unique challenges for liberal societies, because it has the potential to undermine political equality and in extreme conditions equal opportunity in the market; however, it is also morally necessary within classical liberal societies. Inequality in many forms of liberalism has the potential to be the greatest strength or greatest weakness in the pursuit of justice. As a strength, inequality is the adequate rewards of liberal society for individual efforts. As a weakness, inequality is the arbitrary distribution of societal resources. Inequality must be conceptualized with context, it cannot be understood in a vacuum. In liberal societies, any discussion of inequality without understanding the benefits of rewarding equal opportunities unequally or the problems inequality poses for institutions will miss the real issue. Inequality cannot be understood as good or bad on its own right; instead, the rationale and practical sources for inequality must be examined. By identifying and examining the premise of meritocracy in much of liberal political thought, it is possible to better understand the moral implications and practical impacts of inequality.

While scholars in philosophy, political science and public policy have written volumes upon volumes on inequality, I aim to understand inequality within classical liberalism using a hybrid of all three approaches. In the following chapters I will explore the relationship between inequality and justice from the perspective of the philosopher, the policymaker, and the mass public. I start with the philosophical justifications of private property in the works of John Locke to identify how the concept of labor shapes his justification for inequality. As one of the most influential liberals, Locke's work sets the goal posts for just property acquisition. In my second chapter, I explore how the liberal conception of justice has permeated to the public using survey data responses from 23 liberal economically-developed countries. This examination of the public view of justice in distribution highlights the legitimacy that labor confers onto some types of inequality in the public mindset. Finally, I identify how the perceptions of justice in distribution shape demand for redistributive social policies in liberal societies. The goal of this approach is to understand how a concept of meritocracy in liberal political thought has become an accepted principle among liberal citizens and how this view shapes the policy actions taken by liberal governments.

This dissertation makes an important scholarly contribution by understanding the foundations for justice in distribution in liberal societies through an interdisciplinary perspective. Inequality is a noteworthy topic of study for liberal societies because it demands a rich understanding of the underlying conception of justice for any meaningful contribution to scholarly research. I argue that this hybrid approach, using the theme of labor, can help to explain the philosophic origins of justified inequality through meritocracy in relation to contemporary opinions about inequality held by the public and policymakers. Ultimately, the aim of this dissertation is to highlight the underlying rationality of meritocracy in classical liberalism as it manifests in the philosopher, policymaker, and average citizen. This view of justice is the benchmark to which actual outcomes are compared. Today's philosophers, policymakers and citizens use a concept of the classical liberal ideal to judge the degree of justice within their own societies. From these judgments there is much to learn about the performance of specific societies, policies, and the entire enterprise of liberalism. My dissertation will illustrate how the conception of liberal justice has dramatic implications for the future of liberal societies.

An Introduction to Inequality in Liberal Societies

Contemporary liberalism champions the principle of equality of opportunity. At the same time, liberals accept—and seek to justify—the fact that this equality of opportunity will not translate into equality of outcomes. Liberal theorists disagree, however, about which principle to prioritize. Welfare state liberals tend to focus on equality of opportunity and the systematic obstacles to its achievement; meanwhile, classical liberals emphasize the inequality of outcomes as the result of individual achievement and merit. This common disagreement across liberal societies is reflected in a familiar way in partisan disputes between the left and right in America today. Unfortunately, contemporary literature in political science largely ignores these normative judgments in its analysis of the formation of policy preferences. In this dissertation, I add to academic understanding by examining the origins and development of these normative judgments, and how they inform and shape policy preferences today.

The philosophical roots for competing social justice principles, and how these different normative values significantly shape the mass social policy preferences can provide a more nuanced understanding of inequality tolerance and demands for redistribution. Bringing political theory back to the study of public policy, I develop a comparative framework to explore how the labor market system becomes the mechanism for allocating material resources in advanced industrialized democracies, which in turn produces varying degrees of tolerance of inequality. According to liberal theorists, individual efforts are what ought to distinguish individuals in the market place—these individual efforts are usually conceptualized as labor and initiative.

My approach to understanding justifications for inequality begins with an examination of the concept of labor in the works of John Locke and his philosophic justifications for private property rights. I offer a unique reading of Locke that illustrates humans are meant to labor for development of the Earth in his writings. While classical liberal theory typically avoids conceptions of what the ultimate end of human activity should be, Locke's account of labor as the only justified source of property acquisition implies an understanding that humans are meant to labor according to natural law. Considering Locke's underlying assumption, there is a compelling argument that Locke sees labor as the morally superior way to unequally distribute resources. This conception of labor has become ubiquitous in contemporary liberal societies. His account of profit-generating labor as superior to subsistence labor justifies inequality through the free market and lays the groundwork for many of the assumed justifications of inequality today.

Debates about the prioritization of natural law or natural rights have dominated scholarship on Locke. Recently, Seagrave (2011) has advanced this debate by highlighting a synthetic account of natural rights derived from natural law in Locke. Seagrave offers compelling textual evidence which can explain some of the dissonance between Locke's political and philosophical works. Applying Seagrave's synthetic account to Locke's discussion of property and inequality, I provide textual evidence that inequality in Locke is ultimately derived from natural law, not natural rights. Although the standard interpretation of inequality in the *Second Treatise* is due to natural rights, this account misses the underlying premise for natural rights (and inequality) based in natural law and a conception of a human telos. In this chapter, I examine the role of the good life in Locke's writings and how Locke favors rights claims which fit his conception at the expense of alternatives. Ultimately, illustrating that natural law is used to justify inequality as Locke's conception of the tabula rasa of the mind is mimicked in his promotion of the 'blank slate' of the Earth.

My second chapter explains how labor confers the notion of 'deservingness' to unequal outcomes in the market economy. Using cross national data, I explore how foundational beliefs about the role of individual traits for advancement in society have a significant impact on an individual's conception of justice in distribution. In this chapter, I use political theory to inform a new theoretical framework for mass policy preferences. The new theoretical framework focuses on moral justifications for inequality found among the public. Utilizing this framework, I add to existing the literature by revealing a rationale for considerations of justice beyond current explanations. Specifically, I incorporate existing accounts which highlight the importance of belief in meritocracy, partisanship, and economic rationality. This chapter establishes a connection between liberal theories of justice in unequal outcomes based on individual efforts, which have been adopted by the mass public in liberal societies.

Why do citizens in liberal democracies tolerate vast economic inequality? This question has been the subject of frequent debates within political science. In Chapter 2, I offer a novel theory of inequality tolerance based on the philosophical understandings and justifications for economic inequality found within liberalism. Economic inequality is justified within liberalism so long as it is based off individual efforts and all parties are allowed the opportunity to participate in the market economy. Using survey data on individuals' assessment of the causes of inequality and their perceptions of fairness, I test the appeal of liberal justifications for inequality among the mass public in twenty-three liberal democracies. I find that when respondents believe inequality to be the result of the efforts of the individual, they are much more likely to tolerate inequality; meanwhile, respondents who do not believe inequality to be the result of individual efforts are more likely to view inequality as unjust.

In Chapter 3, I posit that individual assessments of the sources of inequality dramatically shape policy preferences for government expenditures. The source of wealth is particularly important, because it is linked with the notion of deserving versus undeserving recipients of social welfare provisions. I test the relationship between the perception of the efforts necessary for prosperity and the support for government efforts to redistribute wealth. I find that individuals who believe that their society rewards individual efforts are less likely to support government efforts to reduce income inequality, government aid to the unemployed, and government spending on the poor. This study highlights the importance of considering how normative beliefs about fairness partially shape one's policy preferences and accounts for variation in policy preferences beyond current explanations of partisanship and economic circumstance.

Conceptions of justice and the formation of social policy preferences depend on an understanding of how things ought to be. In liberal societies, many people believe that their individual efforts ought to distinguish them from others; however, they are confronted by imperfect societies where their efforts may or may not be adequately rewarded. This assessment of meritocracy in a society shapes the perception of those who succeed, underlies justifications for inequality, and efforts to combat inequality. Using the International Social Survey Programme Social Inequality IV (2009) Data Set, I explore how foundational beliefs about the role of individual traits for getting ahead in society have a significant impact on an individual's support for government redistribution and social policy preferences. Results support the notion that individuals who believe hard work and ambition bring prosperity are less likely to support government redistribution and social expenditures. This study highlights the importance of considering how normative beliefs about fairness partially shape one's policy preferences.

Through this dissertation project, I hope to address some shortcomings in our existing understanding of inequality in liberal societies. By identifying a justification of individual efforts as the proper determinants of unequal rewards from society, I establish a philosophical connection from liberal theory to the practical considerations of public policy. Although inequality has been a popular topic for academic research, much of the academic focus has been confined to either political theory or public policy with little work done to identify the role that normative foundations based in theory play in the demand for redistribution and conception of recipients' deservingness. Incorporating a broader perspective on inequality allows an adequate framing of the issues inequality presents in liberal societies. One of the major advantages of the approach of this dissertation is that I examine 23 liberal democracies in the empirical section. Using data from these countries allows me to test meritocratic beliefs in a variety of political, cultural, and institutional contexts. Since inequality is relative, there is additional complexity in analysis of views of inequality. Many moving parts in political societies shape the opinions of the mass public and values foundations rooted in philosophy are only part of the story. Analyzing liberal democracies using cross-national data advances scholarship by allowing rigorous testing of multiple hypotheses and provides robust results.

My dissertation offers several major contributions to political philosophy and public policy. First, I use a hybrid approach to provide rich philosophical understanding to considerations of justice, which I then empirically test. This is an advancement of public policy literature that has not adequately recognized liberal political thought and the role it plays in shaping individual values. By recognizing the importance of political theory in shaping foundational values among the public, we are better able to understand the rationale driving policy preferences. In the policy literature, new research has recognized how beliefs in meritocracy shape policy preference, but this is usually done without acknowledgment of the philosophical origins and justifications for meritocracy in societies. Second, I explain public policy preferences that assume the individual to be rational. This explanation advances existing literature in public opinion, political economy and political psychology, by providing strong evidence that individual preferences are rational if we assume they are based on foundational assessments of justice rather than economic context or political ideology. My findings in the empirical sections show that social equity values supersede the impacts of income and partisanship in social preferences regarding tolerance of inequality. Finally, I provide an account of social justice derived from liberal archetype John Locke and provide evidence of its historical significance for policy makers as well as its prevalence in contemporary debates about inequality.

Chapter 1 Locke, Natural Law, and the Purpose of Human Labor

Locke's liberalism is built on freedom, equality, and tolerance; however, there is a paradox to his writings. Despite his egalitarian views on the state of nature, Locke provides a justification for inequality under the law of nature. By understanding the role of natural law and natural rights in Locke's works, it is possible to trace the classical liberal justification for inequality back to its origin. Further exploration of natural law in Locke's work illuminates the rationale behind justified inequality under a consequentialist argument that it rewards behavior that maximizes returns for humankind as a whole. In this chapter, I examine the paradox of equality requiring inequality in classical liberal thought and in the process identify a nascent conception of meritocracy in Lockean liberalism.

Previous attempts to understand the inequality paradox in Locke's work have yielded dramatically divergent interpretations of Locke. In his interpretation, MacPherson sees Locke's arguments on property as an endorsement of unfettered capitalist accumulation (Macpherson and Cunningham 1962); however, these claims for vast inequality preferences are controversial and countered by interpretations from Tully, among others, who see Locke in a more egalitarian light (Tully 1982, 1995). Scholarship has traditionally prioritized either natural law or natural rights in Locke's work. The source of natural equality in the state of nature is usually conceptualized under natural law; however, the common answer for Locke's justification of inequality is that it is the result of natural rights. I provide evidence that this natural rights argument for inequality fails to address the complex view and hierarchy of human activity conveyed in Locke's writings. Instead, Locke's arguments illustrate a foundation for inequality in natural law, which presents a clear image of the good life as Locke's notion of the tabula rasa for the human mind is mirrored in his conception of the proper development of Earth.

In the *Second Treatise on Government*, Locke provides the justification for private ownership and inequality using the concept of labor and the right to self-ownership (Locke 1860). This justification is one of the strongest arguments for Locke as a natural rights theorist; however, this account of Locke neglects the complexity of self-ownership in Locke's works. Using the framework of Seagrave, I advance the literature by adopting a synthetic natural right/natural law reading of John Locke. While Seagrave (2015) focused broadly on natural rights, natural law, and ownership, I incorporate his reading of Locke to address the contentious debate about Locke's justification of inequality.

By closely examining the justifications and limits Locke places on inequality, the traditional natural rights narrative for inequality is less compelling. Natural rights arguments which do not account for their foundation in natural law cannot adequately explain Locke's frequent appeals to claims of a broader good when overriding rights claims. One notable example of this complexity is Locke's limits on property claims when they violate the duty to leave others with the necessary materials for subsistence in the Lockean proviso. Another is found in Locke's dismissal of Native American rights to land they used and improved to hunt game. In both circumstances, Locke denies rights claims to promote a larger good derived from a concept of natural law. This new perspective supports a natural law justification and helps to clarify Locke's discordant treatment of rights resulting from labor. I challenge the rights-based account and propose a natural law justification for inequality by examining how Locke promotes greater appropriation through certain forms of labor.

Locke's justification of property through labor contrasts with accounts of inequality as justified by divine right, feudal order or arbitrary values-judgments in a society; however, Locke's unequal valuation of labor illustrates an underlying conception of why humans should labor. His emphasis on labor does not avoid making judgments on what humans ought to be doing. In some cases, Locke's account substantially undermines labor-based, property right claims.[1] Locke's justification of private property shows a hierarchy of human labor from the absence of labor (idleness) to labor from preagricultural to industrial agriculture. Within this account of labor as the justification for private property, it becomes clear that natural rights are preceded by a natural law account, which has already been noticed within the broader debate between natural rights and natural law in Locke (Seagrave 2015, 2011).

Locke argues that some forms of labor are worthier of material reward and therefore provide a foundation for inequality. The basis of Locke's claim is that he sees the world, like he sees the

[1] I will cover this in much greater depth in the text, but an easy account of this is the property claims of Native Americans in comparison with colonizers.

human mind, as a tabula rasa, on which there should be development in the form of industrial agriculture. Thus, Locke assesses claims from hunter gatherers to ownership as unworthy of possession over land. Ultimately, Locke's account reveals a natural law foundation for this inequality built on the notion of human beings as developers of the Earth.

In the following pages, I lay out the foundations of political equality in John Locke and the complex justification for inequality derived from the primitive common. Next, I identify Locke's arguments against spoilage as an example of resource utilization (or lack thereof) which does not comport to the law of nature. These limits, which Locke places on spoilage, illustrate a teleological account of natural resources and later serve as justification for denying some rights claims. Then, I take a broader view of Locke's tabula rasa and draw parallels between Locke's conception of proper human development with the notion of developing the Earth through labor. Finally, I illustrate how Locke undermines certain property rights (and natural rights) claims when they come into conflict with the duties of natural law.

The Dilemma: From Communal Ownership to Private Ownership

Scholarship on Locke tends to identify theistic Locke with a natural law view, and atheistic Locke with natural rights. However, Locke's religious belief is irrelevant to whether he is a natural rights or natural law thinker. Natural law is frequently conflated with religious arguments, but this need not be the case. Natural law is the belief that certain rights, values and responsibilities are inherent to human nature and can be rationally deduced. This view of human nature sees a code of conduct of what humans ought to do based on logic. Meanwhile, natural rights are entitlements granted to each human simply by nature of their existence. Usually, natural rights are derived from some conception of natural law and Locke is no exception. Locke's own claims in the *Second Treatise* base natural rights on natural law derived logically from a created order.[2]

[2]The 'Locke as atheist' account relies on the minimal discussion/role of God in Locke's account and Locke's claims about the law of reason, which is available to all developed minds. This foundation in Locke's work does promote rationality and minimize the importance of a deity; thus, combined with Locke's other works, especially in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, in which, God is notably absent produces some reason for questioning the sincerity of Locke's theism (Locke 1841). While *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, does lead the reader toward a skepticism of innate religious knowledge, the evidence in support of Locke's theism is more substantial. Locke exempts atheists from toleration in his work *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, due to their apparent immorality and nihilism. He wrote in defense of religion toward the end of his life, especially *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, and in multiple instances attempted to harmonize religion with logic to provide a rational proof of the existence of a deity (Locke

Scholars have pointed to a conception of natural rights as primary by focusing on the aspect of self-ownership within Locke's works (Zuckert 2002), but these accounts of self-ownership require one to abandon Locke's explicit statement that "they are his (God's) property, whose workmanship they are." Locke's apparently contradictory statements about man as both self-owner and divinely-possessed requires extensive review of his works. One compelling explanation is that there is a concept of dual ownership in Locke's writings and this framework developed by S.A. Seagrave (2011) will be used throughout this chapter. By granting humans special faculties, which Locke lays out in detail in the *Essay*, God is owner of these faculties. Despite God's ownership of the faculties, the development of the 'self' using these faculties is how individuals become self-owners through their labor. Thus, the apparent contradiction can be resolved if we consider the labor beyond human control (gained by birth) and the labor within human control (acquired through learning and experience). This account is compelling because it harmonizes much of the apparent incompatibility in the *Essay* and *Second Treatise*; meanwhile, it resolves the conflicting accounts of ownership in the *Second Treatise*. This will be discussed in further detail later in the text.

Debates over Locke's theism may obfuscate the philosophical result of his argument and the baseline he creates by appealing to a religious origin. Locke must justify equality among humans that can be assumed as a starting point for his philosophical exploration of the purpose of government; a religious foundation provides this option, but further complicates Locke's arguments, because he must then justify religion as rational. In this attempt to provide rationality to a created order, Locke appeals to deduction starting from human existence through the law of nature. Thus, Locke's theism is irrelevant for understanding his idea of natural law, because both are built on rationality. The justification for inequality that Locke sets out after describing the equality of the state of nature by specifically highlighting types of labor which ought to distinguish one at the expense of the other illuminates the Lockean good life. Whether the state of nature and natural equality originates in sincere religious belief or carefully constructed nods to atheistic rationalism, it is the point after this origin that my arguments are concerned. I have adopted theistic language akin to Locke himself, but it can easily be adapted to a nontheistic reading by simply substituting God with the law of reason. Rather than focus on questions of theism, it is more important to

1764).

examine what Locke accomplishes with his religious arguments.[3]

Theistic accounts in Locke provide an easy justification for enjoying the Earth in common and a foundation for a rational created order. Locke's account of the world and the creation of Earth by God for the purposes of humankind leaves all things in common ownership. Locke is left with the premise that God created humans to freely enjoy their surroundings and faculties. His philosophical endeavor takes on a practical consideration at this point, because if the Earth is meant for humans to enjoy, but it is owned communally and requires consent to use it, then no one can enjoy it. For the Earth to serve its purpose, it must be divided into personal property.

> God, as King David says (Psalms cxv.16), has given the earth to the children of men—given it to mankind in common. This is clear, whether we consider natural reason, which tells us that men, once they are born, have a right to survive and thus a right to food and drink and such other things as nature provides for their subsistence, or revelation, which gives us an account of the grants that God made of the world to Adam and to Noah and his sons(Locke 1860, II, 25).

In this passage, Locke used reason to argue that the gift of human life comes with the right to subsistence. This subsistence is inevitably linked with the surroundings of humans or in this instance, the commonly owned resources of Earth. The philosophical foundation is straightforward. Individuals are given the gift of life and with this gift comes the essential right to maintain their own existence through their faculties using resources available to them and held in common (Locke 1860, II, 26). Simply put, whatever created human life must have also wanted to see it continue. Otherwise, why create just to let the products of this act of creation go to waste?[4] Locke sees this human tendency to survive through labor as a natural act. Reason tells him that once granted the gift of life, it would be illogical that the other natural gifts given to humans in the form of intelligence and physical faculties are not to be utilized to continue that life.

> God, who hath given the world to men in common, hath also given them reason to

[3] The existence of a God is tangential to my research question. Locke uses the Law of Reason to justify the natural rights of humans based on natural law derived from his minimalist theistic "potter God." See: Seagrave (2011) and further discussion of this relationship in this paper. Locke's hybrid natural right based on natural law approach allows significant flexibility to interpret his "god" in different ways.

[4] The very idea that God would waste energy is contrary to the concept of divinity. It would imply imperfection. Or in the case of non-theistic created order, this would imply that the creation lacked order.

> make use of it to the best advantage of life, and convenience. The earth, and all that is therein, is given to men for the support and comfort of their being (Locke 1860, II,26).

Locke's account lays out a purpose for both human faculties and the Earth in the form of advantage and convenience. Humans are surrounded by an environment of unrefined resources under natural law and these resources meant to be consumed for subsistence. Locke's law of reason seems quite intuitive here, as humans have historically claimed resources from nature for their own survival without fear of proper ownership.[5] For humans living in the primitive common, they are surrounded by raw resources, which they regularly improve and consume for their survival. If these resources truly belong to everyone it may follow that they require the consent of all humans to be properly consumed. Agreement among all living beings on Earth at any one point in time would be a virtually impossible task, let alone, receiving this permission every time resources are needed for basic subsistence. The property conditions of the common, using this understanding, are potentially unworkable without some way of avoiding consent among all parties. As Locke put the problem, "(i)f such a consent as that was necessary, man had starved, notwithstanding the plenty God had given him (Locke 1860, II, 28)."[6]

Subsistence through the combination of labor and reason have worked for humankind in the state of nature. Labor added to materials in the common is tantamount to the transfer of rightful ownership. Humans must add their labor to their environment for basic survival. In this act, they are legitimately appropriating property for survival. Philosophically, Locke has established a right to the opportunity of subsistence with the caveat that, according to natural law, it requires labor from the individual.[7] Locke set out to prove that acquisition of resources from the common through labor is necessary for survival. Labor is his justification for property, but this is done using a right to life (and corresponding right to subsistence). Without claiming property, humans would be given the richness of human life only to wither away and die. Through his justification of a labor-oriented theory of property he has set labor as the proper means for attaining subsistence; meanwhile, he

[5] Humans in the state of nature probably have some property issues, but these are more focused on proper possession rather than actual legal ownership and claim justification.

[6] "And will any one say, he had no right to those acorns or apples, he thus appropriated, because he had not the consent of all mankind to make them his? Was it a robbery thus to assume to himself what belonged to all in common? If such a consent as that was necessary, man had starved, notwithstanding the plenty God had given him. We see in commons, which remain so by compact, that it is the taking any part of what is common, and removing it out of the state nature leaves it in, which begins the property; without which the common is of no use (Locke 1860, II, 28)."

[7] Labor to Locke can mean labor paid for using money and it should be taken in its broadest possible sense.

has claimed this life-maintenance as part of a broader right to life. In the case of property rights, Locke has grounded them in natural law, which sees a duty for humans to survive. Locke's account of humans and Earth include a purpose both for human faculties and the Earth, which can only be carried out through natural rights. Building upon a foundation in natural law, John Locke illustrated that humans are meant to subsist; this subsistence labor justly appropriates property through the concept of a natural rights.

This relationship between labor, subsistence and life are the foundation for Locke's private property claims; however, the specifics remain largely undefined. What can be gleaned from this broader overview is an assumption on Locke's part that humans must work for their subsistence. Ultimately, the act of work is what justifies their ability to appropriate from the common and the inequality created as a result.

Spoilage

In the Lockean Proviso, the spoilage caveat has been a frequent subject of contentious debate (Macpherson and Cunningham 1962). Generally, the debate is not over the definition of spoilage itself, but instead focuses on the combination of guidelines and context in Locke. Private property can be claimed so long as it is not wasted. I argue that the philosophical justification for the spoilage caveat is built from a teleological conception of the role of natural resources.[8] His justification proposes a purpose for natural provisions, they are meant to be utilized by humans for human advancement. This conception comes into play multiple times in Locke's arguments and will be revisited. For now, it is necessary to see the telos behind 'natural provisions.'

> Nothing was made by God for man to spoil or destroy. And thus, considering the plenty of natural provisions there was a long time in the world, and the few spenders; and to how small a part of that provision the industry of one man could extend itself, and ingross it to the prejudice of others; especially keeping within the bounds, set by reason, of what might serve for his use; there could be then little room for quarrels or contentions about property so established (Locke 1860, II, 31).

[8]Locke justifies taking from the common because the natural resources there were intended for human beings to use and enjoy. The only thing standing in the way of convenience was the necessity of labor.

The broadest rule about spoilage that Locke makes is simply—don't. Even Locke's emphasis on labor has the caveat that labor can justify accumulation of property only if this property accumulation leaves enough for others so that they can survive; thus, avoiding the spoilage of the human body.[9] Waste is problematic on several fronts. First, Locke's justification makes wasting a violation of natural law. Second, waste is egregious in a world where all resources are derived and then appropriated from the common, because this waste is to the detriment of others who have a stake in communal property.

Throughout any discussion of waste or spoilage, it is important to recognize that these are value-loaded terms. For instance, when Locke is discussing the acquisition of property he makes a human-centric argument. As Locke says,

> (I)f he also bartered away plums, that would have rotted in a week, for nuts that would last good for his eating a whole year, he did no injury; he wasted not the common stock; destroyed no part of the portion of goods that belonged to others, so long as nothing perished uselesly in his hands (Locke 1860, II, 46).

Locke disapproves of one person's labor controlling perishable items and allowing them to rot rather than be consumed. The idea of spoilage here is from the human perspective, because in a world without humans the process of plums being eaten by insects, other animals or degrading into the soil would not properly be considered waste. The nutrients and benefits of the plum are still benefitting the surrounding environment. Natural law dictates that humans ought to use Earth's available resources "for their benefit, and the greatest conveniences" in Locke's account (Locke 1860, II, 34).

The human-centric account of the world is a mundane assumption for natural resources; however, these assumptions about the purpose of nature are best considered by examining this loaded term of 'waste'. In the case of natural resources, Locke sees them as meant for human consumption and development. As will be discussed further, Locke has a consequentialist account of developing Earth for expanding (nearly infinitely) its bounty. In this debate about spoilage, Locke is clearly

[9] As Locke argues: It being by him removed from the common state nature hath placed it in, it hath by this labour something annexed to it, that excludes the common right of other men: for this labour being the unquestionable property of the labourer, no man but he can have a right to what that is once joined to, at least where there is enough, and as good, left in common for others.

identifying 'waste' as denying these resources for human consumption. Further examination of the concept of spoilage or waste helps to highlight the teleological assumptions underpinning Locke's philosophy.

The Human Telos: How to Waste a Life

The spoilage of plums is not the only form of waste with which that Locke is concerned. Locke's account of humans elsewhere in his writings provide valuable insight to his concept of people in relationship to their creator and environment. Perhaps most importantly, the distinctions between labor, personhood and body can be easily overlooked in Locke's works; however, a focus on what Locke believes humans are forbidden from doing provides some clarity.

> Though the earth, and all inferior creatures, be common to all men, yet every man has a property in his own person: this no body has any right to but himself (Locke 1860, II, 27).

In the *Second Treatise*, Locke famously writes that "every man has a property in his own person." This quote appears straightforward, but further examination leads to additional complexity. Locke claims that man 'has a property' which can be simplified to saying owns, his own person. Taken at face value this is a redundant statement. Substituting property (instead of person, which Locke claims as property) into this quote and it makes the problem apparent: every man has a property in his own property. The purpose of this statement in Locke's work, as has been illustrated by other scholars, only makes sense in the context of Locke's writings in *Essays on the Law of Nature* and elsewhere in the *Second Treatise*.[10]

To remove the redundancy, there must be an understanding of who ultimately owns their own person and what definition of 'person' is being used.[11] Locke's complex account of personhood and ownership have led to extensive debate about whether humans are self-owners or divinely owned. Before it is possible to understand ownership, it is essential to understand Locke's personhood.

[10]This complexity in Locke's view of the self has been noted by other scholars and has played an especially important role in the works of Michael Zuckert. See: Zuckert (2002) More discussion of the complexity will follow.

[11]This debate also corresponds with the debate about a natural right or a natural law foundation in Locke's liberalism, which will be discussed further.

> The labour of his body, and the work of his hands, we may say, are properly his. Whatsoever then he removes out of the state that nature hath provided, and left it in, he hath mixed his labour with, and joined to it something that is his own, and thereby makes it his property (Locke 1860, II, 27).

While Locke is certainly making a case for the self-ownership of labor, when he expands his description of what is properly owned his focus is not on the physical body, but rather the labor resulting from the body. The hands are not the crucial aspect for ownership, rather the labor of the hands is what gets Locke's attention. Locke does use the phrases 'his body' and 'his hands' but there is good reason to believe the phrases are meant more as context than as a strict definition of ownership. Notably, Locke makes a conflicting claim when he discusses ownership. Throughout the section, Locke makes the distinction that labor is the key element added to properly appropriate rather than the physical body. This distinction is an integral part of Locke's concept of the self.

If Locke views the human body as the sole property of the individual without caveat, an easy case for appropriation of berries or game would be the physical addition of these resources to the human body. Instead, Locke emphasizes the labor added rather than the physical body.

> It being by him removed from the common state nature hath placed it in, it hath by this labour something annexed to it, that excludes the common right of other men: for this labour being the unquestionable property of the labourer, no man but he can have a right to what that is once joined to, at least where there is enough, and as good, left in common for others (Locke 1860, II, 27).

If Locke is truly a believer in absolute self-ownership this is a strange argument to make. You can have what you need through your own labor, but only so long as it does not rob others of the opportunity for subsistence. We can read it like Nozick as a bare minimum conception of left in common for others that would allow pretty much anything to be claimed or we can consider this passage a type of feel-good but ultimately usurped principle like MacPherson (Nozick 1974; Macpherson and Cunningham 1962). The key is the principle which Locke deemed to be more important than appropriation through labor—subsistence. This responsibility to others is founded on the notion that the primitive common consisted of natural resources meant for human consumption and continued survival. The implication of this complicates the debate between divine ownership and self-ownership.

Locke's own accounts of prohibitions for human activities, mainly—suicide and selling oneself into slavery—point to nuance in Locke's writings. First, suicide is prohibited by Locke in an odd way. Given Locke's consistent use of Bible quotes within his works, it would seem obvious for Locke to resort to well-known religious arguments against suicide. Instead, Locke writes "he has not liberty to destroy himself, or so much as any creature in his possession (Locke 1860, II, 6)." While there are obvious religious arguments made including this line of logic, the fact that Locke chose not to simply cite a Bible passage or church doctrine as he did elsewhere points to a potentially more complex rationale for the prohibition.[12] In the *Second Treatise*, Locke argues

> (M)en being all the workmanship of one omnipotent, and infinitely wise maker; all the servants of one sovereign master, sent into the world by his order, and about his business; they are his property, whose workmanship they are, made to last during his, not one another's pleasure...(Locke 1860, II, 6).

Locke does not believe that humans own themselves outright; otherwise, why explicitly say "they are his property, whose workmanship they are." Locke believes the human body to be properly owned by God; hence, the prohibitions on some activities despite the freedom that Locke believes humans are entitled. This reading of Locke allows a better understanding of Locke's claim that individuals own their own person; meanwhile, prohibiting them from some actions using the rationale that they are properly owned by God. The distinction between labor, personhood and physical body point to the teleological conception of humans underpinning Locke's writings. Individuals do not own their own bodies outright. Their bodies were created by God's labor then given to them along with their faculties and freedom.[13] Synthesizing Locke's arguments which seem to waver between divine ownership and self-ownership has proven difficult in the scholarly community; this debate mirrors broader debate about Locke's prioritization of natural rights or

[12]An easier option would have been to simply cite 1-Corinthians 3 :16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? The choice to not include an overtly religious argument here (and elsewhere) are part of the case for atheistic Locke.

[13]Even an esoteric reading of this passage, would have parents as the initial creator of the individual and then the individual creates the rest by filling the tabula rasa.

natural law.[14]

From the outset, Locke focuses his attention on the natural traits given to human beings that allow them to follow natural law. In the *Essays on the Law of Nature*, Locke spells out his view about the relationship between distinctly human traits and the Creator.

> It does not seem that man alone is independent of laws while everything else is bound. On the contrary, a manner of acting is prescribed to him that is suitable to his nature; for it does not seem to fit in with the wisdom of the Creator to form an animal that is most perfect and ever active, and to endow it abundantly above all others with mind, intellect, reason, and all the requisites for working, and not assign to it any work, or again to make man alone susceptible of law precisely in order that he may submit to none (Locke 1841).

This account of humans under the law of nature spells out a purpose for humankind. The good life is to make use of the faculties granted to humans to labor as the Creator intends. Hence, Locke is especially critical of individuals who fail to use their faculties.[15] Locke's criticisms are founded on a fundamental principle that humans were given faculties for a purpose. A created order which precedes humankind has endowed humans with special faculties and the ability to reason; thus, they must have an end or goal. This focus on natural law seems contradictory for a philosopher best known for justifying the natural rights to life, liberty, and property. Locke's works straddles the typical dichotomous view of natural rights vs. natural law. This passage highlights part of the complexity; although Locke is using the terminology of law here, in many other places, Locke emphasizes natural right.

The most compelling solution to the ownership question in Locke's philosophy also helps to identify the apparent redundancy in "every man has a property in his own person (Locke 1860, II, 6)" as an important distinction. This view is best articulated by concept of nesting property or a hybrid account of simultaneous ownership of humans, which incorporates the two distinctions

[14]See: Zuckert (2002); Seagrave (2015).

[15]He gave it to the use of the industrious and rational, (and labour was to be his title to it;) not to the fancy or covetousness of the quarrelsome and contentious (Locke 1860, II, 34). Ashcraft has made a similar point about the prohibition of waste; in his account there are numerous textual examples of Locke's "positive endorsement of laboring activity, productivity and commercial expansion, and a corresponding critique of idleness and waste, however these attributes are expressed in any particular social context (Ashcraft 1986, p. 266)." See also: Hull (2009)

of humans in Locke's writings (Seagrave 2011). Locke conceives of persons in two forms, which cannot be separated from each other. The idea is that God does not loan or lease out use of the human body, but rather creates the "substance-man" which allows the individual to share in the process of their own creation through their own labor. This is the process of creating the "person-self" which is the domain and self-owned part of the individual. Together, there is a simultaneous ownership, both divine and self-owned (Seagrave 2011). Since humans are both the result of divine workmanship and their own workmanship, they are concurrently owned by the divine and themselves. Or as Seagrave (2011) puts it,

> The picture of property in the individual human being that emerges from Locke's complex treatment is thus a kind of "nesting" property. The property which the human being possesses in himself is identical in kind with the property which God possesses in the human being. God's property in the human being, however, is more noble or higher than the human being's property in himself. Both rights of property, moreover, coexist in a single human being (Seagrave 2011, p. 720).

This parallels the relationship of natural rights and natural law in Locke's work as natural law is used to ground natural right. The foundation or created order inherent by existence implies preexisting construct, but one which can interact with human logic through the law of reason and can be understood even without revelation. In this way, natural rights are a logical extension of natural law in Locke.

The prohibitions on human activity that Locke concludes are logical illustrate Locke's underlying assumptions about the world. This becomes apparent when Locke limits natural rights claims which are perceived to conflict with the 'good'. The individual freedom that Locke promotes in his writings is curtailed when this behavior would lead to the unauthorized destruction of God's property.[16] The development of human intellect and development of Earth through human faculties are part of Locke's general Enlightenment viewpoint. Humans are given the gift of freedom so that they may be able to experience the world, develop ideas, and create their own self. Locke's belief in the tabula rasa is consistent with this notion of development and advancement as part of the

[16] While humans add labor to their own person and slowly shape themselves, the initial act of creation of life is beyond their labor and control so they have no right to destroy themselves.

purpose of human beings. Humans cannot bring themselves into being. They are not responsible for their own existence and the creation of a blank slate; however, they are responsible for filling it. The extensive discussion of the formation of ideas in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* points toward this formation and creation of knowledge through experience.

> Let us then suppose the mind to be, as we say, white paper void of all characters, without any ideas. How comes it to be furnished? Whence comes it by that vast store which the busy and boundless fancy of man has painted on it with an almost endless variety? Whence has it all the materials of reason and knowledge? To this I answer, in one word, from experience (Locke 1841, p. 311).

An Essay Concerning Human Understanding lays out the development of the human mind. The blank slate is slowly filled with simple ideas which then grow into more complex ideas. The whole time, these ideas are created by the human mind leveraging experience to further develop their faculties. Freedom ties into this by allowing individuals the chance to explore new experiences and shape new ideas. This development of the human mind uses the gift of existence as a mechanism to better the human faculties and ultimately create more resourceful human beings. The returns granted to those who develop their faculties are the purpose for uniquely human faculties in the created order.

While Locke does not believe humans own their own physical bodies absolutely, the knowledge that they appropriate through their own intellectual efforts is distinctly their own. They are given a blank slate by their creator, which requires other God-given assets such as experience and freedom to fully shape; however, the intellectual labor and development they create through their own labor is what shape their personhood.

Tabula Rasa: Cultivation of the Mind/Cultivation of the Self

Locke's complex view of ownership, specifically that through labor individuals begin to own themselves, has been noted by previous scholars.[17] To understand how humans are meant to come to own themselves, we must first understand, what Locke meant by the self, and how the development of the self in this light points to intellectual cultivation as a part of the human telos. This

[17] See Zuckert (2002); Seagrave (2011)

cultivation ultimately reveals the law of reason to able minds. It produces equality in the state of nature by allowing the existence of a created order to becomes a logical conclusion.

As Zuckert, among other Locke scholars, have pointed out the 'self' which Locke seems most concerned is not the physical self, but rather the mind or ego. The self-awareness of the past, present, and future actions committed and the assertion of ownership over past actions and accomplishments breaks from many other accounts of the self (Nimbalkar 2011). Locke wrote against the Cartesian conception of the self, which presupposes innate understanding of basic logical positions and against the Augustinian conception which holds man as guilty of original sin.[18] Specifically, Locke defines the self as,

> (T)hat conscious thinking thing, (whatever substance, made up of whether spiritual, or material, simple, or compounded, it matters not) which is sensible, or conscious of pleasure and pain, capable of happiness or misery, and so is concerned for itself, as far as that consciousness extends (Locke 1841).

The self is the developed mind, a collection of experiences, sensations, and reflections—the mental labor starting from infancy, which molds the individual into themselves. This self is the one that is truly self-created; although, it does have a connection to the physical body and it is the result of the original creation, not caused by the individual.

The blank mind is the starting point. The process of filling the blank slate with experience and the development of the self is the process of self-ownership, but it is not done by gift of God or mere physical existence. It is done by intellectual labor. This non-physical labor is what makes them the true owners of their own 'person' through their own development. The physical body is the same way, the process of subsistence is what humans are meant to do, by adding their labor to themselves they take ownership. Humans are created by the labor of others, but what they create (including the development of themselves through labor) becomes their own. This distinction is how Locke can claim that 'every man has a property in his own person' without being redundant.

The purpose of human beings is to experience, learn and labor in Locke's writings. This is the inevitable result of a created order which justifies human freedom and provides intellectual

[18]Nimbalkar (2011) is a good example of scholarship on the concept of the self and Locke's associationism.

faculties. Locke sees human faculties and the tabula rasa as connected. Through intellectual labor, simple ideas and experience become complex and the created order is revealed.

> Whereas had they examined the ways whereby men came to the knowledge of many universal truths, they would have found them to result in the minds of men from the being of things themselves, when duly considered; and that they were discovered by the application of those faculties that were fitted by nature to receive and judge of them, when duly employed about them (Locke 1841, Ch. 3, Sec. 25).

This process of refinement of mental faculties is meant to be the way that all can come to understand the law of nature. Or as Locke puts it, "(t)he state of nature has a law of nature to govern it, which obliges every one: and reason, which is that law, teaches all mankind, who will but consult it...(Locke 1860, II, 6)" Locke's very foundation for understanding the world and natural law presupposes humans have the capacity to understand it so long as they actually apply their mental faculties to the task. Similar to Locke's arguments about spoilage in the *Second Treatise*, he lays out arguments against idleness and ignorance in An Essay Concerning Human Understanding. The compounding returns of human faculties are a signal of following the correct purpose of activity under natural law. These resources given to humans as their faculties are not meant to be wasted, but rather applied to the world around them for the betterment of all.

There is an obvious virtue in doing these things for the sake of subsistence at the bare minimum, but the emphasis that Locke places on human development through different types of labor shows that he believes this labor can lead humans toward their full potential. This type of development of the human mind through intellectual labor and the physical existence of experience is mimicked when it comes to the development of Earth. Just as Locke sees the rightful development of the mind, he foresees a rightful development of the Earth with strong teleological implications.

Tabula Rasa and the Cultivation of Earth

In the same way that Locke sees the mind as a blank slate to be developed, the Earth itself is also meant to be developed for a specific purpose. Locke's labor-oriented theory of acquisition of property does not merely shape the life sustaining activities of humans. It also dramatically impacts the Earth itself. Locke's justification of the appropriation of property from the primitive common is based on a betterment of the total resources on Earth.

> (L)and that is left wholly to nature, with no improvement through cultivation. . . .is rightly called 'waste', and we shall find the benefit of it amount to little more than nothing. This shows how much better it is to have a large population than to have a large country; and shows that the great art of government is to have the land used well, and that any ruler will quickly be safe against his neighbours if he has the wisdom—the godlike wisdom—to establish laws of liberty to protect and encourage the honest industry of his people against the oppression of power and narrowness of party (Locke 1860, II, 42).

Locke's view of natural resources is a story of development and increased production. Locke criticizes Earth that is left untouched as wasteful. Parallel with Locke's writings about the mind, the Earth is a tabula rasa, which ought not be left blank. The relationship between the Earth and human labor is symbiotic. The development of Earth, just like the development of human mind must be done by human labor. Again, the Enlightenment conception of progress appears behind much of what Locke is writing. Locke believes that the addition of labor to the Earth is better than leaving it untouched, because it can yield nearly infinite returns.[19] Nobody can rightfully claim to be harmed by the use of previously unused land and natural resources, because the simple act of adding labor to them for human needs yields greater total benefit than leaving them untouched.

The addition of human labor to the land is crucial for understanding the telos of human labor. While Locke sees the labor involved in hunting and gathering to be a way to claim property from the primitive common. It is obvious from the cited passage above that not all types of labor are created equal. Even in an area of land used for hunting, the land itself is still properly considered waste according to Locke, because there is no cultivation. Meanwhile, Locke sees the labor necessary to subsist on hunting game as a credible means to appropriate property, this land-dependent activity is not considered an appropriate means to claim ownership over the land. The relationship of land-dependent activities and the lack of credible ownership claim implies it is an insufficient act of labor

[19]Unlike Locke's time, now our societies are beginning to view untouched lands as beneficial. This points to the commercial aspect of Locke's argument, which will be discussed later, but for now the relationship between cultivation and profit generation simply should be noted.

to justify ownership of the land. Since land is a necessary component of hunting and gathering, Locke's statements about cultivation must take priority over other uses of the land.

When it comes to the purpose of land, Locke is quite clear. Land, like the brain is meant to be used for compounding returns. Just as simple thoughts lead to complex ones, simple uses of the land lead to more and more productive uses for the land via agriculture. Locke's praise for England and the great population is an obvious ode to the increased productivity of a small area of land through human industry and advancement. Locke's writing about the scientific advancements in agriculture are proof that Locke was aware of the progression of agricultural craft (Locke 1766).[20] The story of development and perfectibility generating complex philosophy from a blank slate is analogous to the perfection of vineyards and the refinement of grapes into fine wine. Despite subsistence being a right according to the law of nature, the ideal 'good life' in Locke is to subsist while developing the Earth and, in the process, producing excess returns.

Locke's Enlightenment roots shine through much of his writing and perhaps the most consistent trend in his writings is the promotion of a type of human evolution which can yield greater returns from the base of natural resources. Locke's emphasis on the addition of human faculties to themselves and their surroundings illustrate that human labor is not simply a necessity for survival. It is also the purpose of human beings on the Earth, which rightfully distinguishes the amount of material reward individuals should draw from the common.

Exclusion through Telos: From Egalitarian Origins to Material Inequality

Locke's account of labor initially appears quite inclusive and to at least some extent, this fits Locke's general goal of greater toleration. Richard Tuck points to the motivation of Locke. He argues that Locke and his contemporaries were living in a time of interaction between deeply different cultures from those within Europe to the preagricultural peoples that Europeans encountered during exploration (Tuck 1994).[21] While Locke's philosophy of development offers an optimistic view of what human potential could be, it also implies a lesser status of some forms of human labor. This implication has had significant impacts on the lives of many people who do not share the

[20]According to David Armitage, the most likely reason why Locke went to the efforts to record this information about cultivation in the 'Observations. . . " was so that these skills could be used for the cultivation of unused lands in the Carolinas. See: Armitage (2004).

[21]See also, Farr (2008)

same belief in human progress and social evolution. Locke's account of the returns from labor are used to denigrate the labors of other cultures and eventually used to justify the taking of 'unused' hunting lands by Europeans.[22]

> There cannot be a clearer demonstration of any thing, than several nations of the Americans are of this, who are rich in land, and poor in all the comforts of life; whom nature having furnished as liberally as any other people, with the materials of plenty, i.e. a fruitful soil, apt to produce in abundance, what might serve for food, raiment, and delight; yet for want of improving it by labour, have not one hundredth part of the conveniencies we enjoy: and a king of a large and fruitful territory there, feeds, lodges, and is clad worse than a day-labourer in England (Locke 1860, II, 41).

The population of the Americas was unequal to the population of England and the justification from Locke stems directly from the agricultural revolution in Europe and the lack thereof in the pre-agricultural Americas.[23] This is a result of the developmental account of labor for the Lockean good. Nature left alone provides no value, it is only when labor is added that it becomes valuable. Locke gives a clear indication of his disdain for land left in its natural state when he criticizes the "wild woods and uncultivated waste of America (Locke 1860, II, 37)." Whether Locke specifically wrote this section to exclude some land claims is up for debate, but the ramifications of his philosophy are clear. Land that was not improved specifically through agriculture became open for the taking. Locke's justification of property allows 'industrious people' to take ownership, because they improve the land and create additional industry through their efforts.

> As much land as a man tills, plants, improves, cultivates, and can use the product of, so much is his property. He by his labour does, as it were, inclose it from the common. Nor will it invalidate his right, to say every body else has an equal title to it; and therefore he cannot appropriate, he cannot inclose, without the consent of all

[22] The preagricultural Native Americans were allowed their basic property claims for subsistence; however, since this subsistence was based on the animals on the land rather than agriculture, Locke had basically claimed the Americas as open for colonization. This is in contrast to Locke's also negative views on unused aristocratic estates in England, which we in no way necessary for subsistence, but still allowed to be retained as property.

[23] It is important to note here that Locke had experience with only a small portion of the Amerindian population. He was most familiar with Amerindian tribes interacting with English colonizers during his lifetime. It would have been telling to see whether Amerindian cultivation of the land as a means to attract buffalo herds would have been deemed proper for the appropriation of that land.

> his fellow-commoners, all mankind. God, when he gave the world in common to all mankind, commanded man also to labour, and the penury of his condition required it of him (Locke 1860, II, 32).

The exclusionary implications for Locke's labor-oriented appropriation of property has been noticed by many political theorists. There are multiple competing theories about why Locke chose agriculture as a mechanism for claiming land. One argument is that Locke was attempting to undermine French claims to land that had been used in their trapping empire (Armitage 2004). Other, more plausible rationales for agriculture as the means to appropriation focus on the Native American population. Just like the French, the Native Americans had claims to land ownership that competed with the English colonial claims. It has been argued by James Tully, among others, that Locke wished to undermine the Pennsylvania Colony and the land ownership rights afforded to Native Americans there (Tully 1995). Even closer to Locke's interest may be the claims of tribes in the Carolinas where Locke had some stake in the Carolina colony (Armitage 2004). As David Armitage points out, Locke's specific references to hunting deer and game would be something he would have known based on his activities in the Carolinas before his composition of the *Second Treatise* (Armitage 2004). In the *Second Treatise*, Locke does approach the property claims of the preagricultural Native Americans and offers an account of the extent of their ownership.

> Thus this law of reason makes the deer that Indian's who hath killed it; it is allowed to be his goods, who hath bestowed his labour upon it, though before it was the common right of every one (Locke 1860, II, 30).

They necessarily own the game that they hunt for subsistence; however, Locke does not mention the necessity of land for this activity, nor does he give this activity any credence as an appropriate claim to the land later in the document. The reason why the populations of the Americas are not equal to the populace of England is the development of the Earth in degree from untouched to developed. Locke's account fails to recognize the accomplishments of societies on the land in the same way and undermines rights claims through the labor of hunting. Advancements in hunting techniques and production are not properly considered for their refinement of the Earth. Instead, Locke focuses almost entirely on the benefits of agriculture as the means for appropriation.

> God gave the world to men in common; but since he gave it them for their benefit, and the greatest conveniencies of life they were capable to draw from it, it cannot be supposed he meant it should always remain common and uncultivated. He gave it to the use of the industrious and rational, (and labour was to be his title to it;) not to the fancy or covetousness of the quarrelsome and contentious (Locke 1860, II, 34).

Locke has an underlying assumption of the purpose of human faculties, specifically, humans are meant to labor. This labor can be both physical and nonphysical. In fact, agriculture is a combination of the two. While it is essential to physically plant crops, Locke of all people, was aware of the non-physical labor such as breakthroughs in science (both agriculture science and political science) as necessary preconditions for the physical act of cultivation. Locke spent an extended period of time in France observing the advancements in agriculture there (Armitage 2004). In *Observation on Wine, Olives, Fruit and Silk*, Locke laid out detailed descriptions of the processes for commercial agriculture in the production of crops that were suitable for the Carolinas (Locke 1766). In this instance, a strong argument can be made that Locke even knew the particular developments of crops that he believed would eventually be grown for profit in the Carolinas. He foresaw the purpose of the land of the Carolinas as rivaling those of developed European agricultural societies. Even the stake of future ownership of the vacant lands in the Americas was foreseen by Locke. He wrote of European farmers "let him plant in some inland, vacant places of America" this movement of planters to the 'vacant' lands of the Americas was the purpose for humans, the addition of labor to previously unrefined 'wasted' natural resources (Locke 1860, II, 36).

Locke's emphasis on agriculture systematically excluded pre-agricultural societies from claiming land based on their preferred form of industry. The right to claim land necessary for agriculture was allowed when one man "inclose(d) it from the common" for tilling (Locke 1860, II, 32); yet this same land essential for hunting game for the pre-agricultural societies did not warrant a valid rights claim. A view of natural law illuminates the rationale. Although, the natural rights argument for Native American ownership of the America would be reasonable, especially considering they did improve the land for the sake of more productive hunting, Native Americans were denied this natural right. Instead, Locke promotes European farmers to enclose the land and put it to 'more productive' purposes. In effect, Locke is arguing that agriculture is producing greater returns by adding labor directly to the land without this land development, Locke sees this land as simply waste.

> So small a part that even here in England land that is left wholly to nature, with no improvement through cultivation. . . .is rightly called 'waste', and we shall find that the benefit of it amounts to little more than nothing. This shows how much better it is to have a large population than to have a large country; and shows that the great art of government is to have the land used well. . . (Locke 1860, II, 42)

The benefit of cultivation of the Earth is that it can provide compounding returns from labor. Locke obviously sees the practical value in the development of the Earth; hence, his continued illustrations of the values of cultivated lands as opposed to lands left in their natural state. He believes the small land mass of England to be more valuable than the massive untamed wilderness of the Americas. The development of this land inevitably produces inequality, which is not simply an unfortunate byproduct of development but just rewards for the addition of labor to previously uncultivated lands. Locke promotes this type of inequality through meritocracy of labor, writing, "And as differences in how hard men worked were apt to make differences in how much they owned. . . (Locke 1860, II, 48)" This is in stark contrast to merely living off the land for basic subsistence. According to Locke's philosophy, the land necessary for subsistence of the Native American (or hunter-gatherer) communities can be appropriated justly by others who enclose the land for industrial agriculture.[24] This disparity in reward illustrates a concept of natural law and a purpose for natural provisions to be maximized. To make sense of this we must view Locke's concept of the development of Earth in the same way as he views the development of the mind.

In both cases, humans find themselves with a blank canvas which they can develop through their own efforts. Locke develops a hierarchy of what humans ought to be doing based on a law of reason and foundations in a created order. Given resources and the ability to utilize them, Locke rationally concludes that there is a purpose for both the natural resources and humankind. When humans leave the mental blank slate and Earth's physical blank slate undeveloped it is an obvious violation of their respective purposes. Developing the mental tabula rasa means acquiring understanding

[24]This is clearly illustrated in his calls to European farmers to settle the vast inland expanses of Americas in the *Second Treatise*. And elsewhere, Locke claims that land in the condition of the American wilderness are properly considered unowned, even if enclosed. II, 36 and 38.

of the law of reason. Developing the unrefined Earth, means acquiring knowledge of agriculture and putting this knowledge into practice developing the land. Similar to the development of the mind which continues to produce better and better outcomes for the individual, Locke's account of the Earth's development leaves everyone in a better relative position by increasing the potential output of resources from the Earth. In both cases, the consequences of development are increased enjoyment and compounding returns from human efforts, which Locke logically concludes are their purposes and should be rewarded by society. As a result, Locke can deny the Native American the land necessary for subsistence (violating his natural rights) in order to grant use of that land to someone who would use it for its best purpose (according to natural law).

Again, Locke provides a teleological preconception of human activity. The development of human society from preagricultural to agricultural are part of the process of reaching full human potential. Locke's account of God giving the land to the industrious begs two questions. First, what is the definition of industrious? The answer Locke provides is cultivation and increased productivity. Second, why did God give the land to those people specifically? The answer is that they are using their God-given capacities to make the most of the resources of the common. Humans use their mental faculties to find natural resources that they can appropriate and since the land was untilled, the wise and industrious will inevitably act to find land for cultivation. In this case the truly industrious, according to Locke, will recognize the value of the land for agriculture and plant crops. The Native Americans that occupied the land had simply not developed their faculties to the proper degree necessary to see the value of agriculture. They subsisted by hunting the animals that lived on the land instead of shaping the Earth itself to produce more resources; they were content simply to take little more than was necessary for their subsistence.[25] This lack of additional labor and production meant there were better stewards of the land available. Their choice to labor for subsistence alone is the justification for their unequal claims to proper ownership.

In the Lockean world, humans were meant to labor, natural resources were meant to be developed and this 'progress' was in accordance with natural law. Part of the explanation for this is the idea of waste or spoilage in the Lockean Proviso. Not only can spoilage occur by an active act of waste, but also, it can occur by the failure to use resources to their full potential. A created

[25] This was at least the common 'wisdom' of Locke in his assessment of the Native Americans and the Americas generally.

order would not allow humans advanced faculties and advantages from natural resources if they were not meant to be enjoyed. Humans must be meant to work because they were created with numerous faculties both physical and intellectual. These faculties are what ultimately allow for the appropriate use of natural resources for the enjoyment of the world. Locke's writings have a strong implication that the labor humans provide fits in the story of the purpose of the Earth and the humans that inhabit it; however, when humans fail to fit the story, their ownership claims are overlooked.

Discussion of Labor, Subsistence and Telos

In summary, Locke's account of appropriation starts with a justification of property based on labor used for subsistence. The basic argument is that humans must work to survive and that the process of laboring makes the acquisition of resources from the common acceptable. From the starting point of labor for subsistence, Locke derives two teleological arguments. First, that humans are meant to labor as demonstrated by the need to labor for subsistence. Second, the Earth is meant to be developed by human labor; otherwise, it would be improper to justify property claims based on labor beyond subsistence claims. The relationship between labor and subsistence then develops into more than merely subsisting. Locke's account of the Native Americans justifies their right to live off the land and subsist through hunting; however, his justification for the appropriation of property might leave them little land on which to hunt game. It also views the labor necessary for mere survival as somehow inferior to the industrious activities of producing excess and profit.

> An acre of land, that bears here twenty bushels of wheat, and another in America, which, with the same husbandry, would do the like, are, without doubt, of the same natural intrinsic value: but yet the benefit mankind receives from the one in a year, is worth 5l. and from the other possibly not worth a penny, if all the profit an Indian received from it were to be valued, and sold here; at least, I may truly say, not one thousandth (Locke 1860, II, 43).

The improvement of the land measured in money is used as a representation of value beyond what is being provided to the individual laborer as subsistence. Locke is alluding to the development of the land measured by labor with the creation of value through labor as superior to leaving the land untouched, even when the land in question does not need to be developed for the sake of human survival. His justification of labor as a means of subsistence for removing property from the primitive common shifts into an argument about development and profit-generation. This view of the appropriate role for labor in society goes beyond Locke's day and age. Locke is one of the first philosophers to popularize the idea of labor as a dignified act and ultimately the purpose of human existence. Although, generally hidden by language of development and profit this concept of justified inequality equates to the Lockean good life.

The reward for this good life and proper development is to take the excesses as one's own. In the case of the human mind, that which we develop becomes our 'self'. When land is properly developed beyond subsistence it becomes our property. Thus, according to the law of nature we are granted the net production of our efforts and justly rewarded for our industry. Simply put, "as differences in how hard men worked were apt to make differences in how much they owned... (Locke 1860, II, 48)."

Conclusion

Even though Locke starts from a natural equality in the state of nature, this equality does not result in a society with material equality. Locke's justification using labor provides all with the opportunity to acquire the basic resources essential for subsistence, but Locke's further clarification of what constitutes industrious labor illustrates a hierarchy that favors development of the Earth in accordance with natural law. Although subsistence labor does warrant justification for continued survival and appropriation of essential resources, it will not result in the accumulation of wealth. Equality in the state of nature gives all the right to a minimum of subsistence, but beyond this base of equality, there is room for vast amounts of economic inequality. Locke implicitly develops a meritocratic justification for inequality based on how humans are meant to develop themselves to gain self-ownership and develop the land to properly acquire it. By incorporating a hierarchy of activities meant to be rewarded from the primitive common, Locke cannot escape a view of the 'good life'. Inequality is justified from a naturally equal starting point so long as a basic equality of opportunity exists for subsistence and even appropriation through labor.

From a scholarly perspective, I explain Locke's convoluted arguments, which appear at times to side with natural law and at other times natural right when justifying inequality. I add depth to the literature which suggests there is a dualism in much of Locke's work that cannot be easily fitted to natural law or natural rights accounts. Building on Seagrave (2011), I propose that Locke's view of inequality based on natural rights is derived from a foundation in natural law, which is both used as the justification for natural rights accounts and at times is utilized to undermine rights claims. Contrary to many modern libertarian readings of Locke and inequality, I side with natural law justifications based on limits proposed on accumulation (spoilage) and different amounts of validity given to natural rights. In this pursuit, I illustrate how Lockean inequality justifications systematically exclude certain types of property rights claims based on labor while promoting other types of labor which develop the physical tabula rasa of the earth in the same way as Locke discusses the proper development of the mental tabula rasa.

My arguments in support of a natural law interpretation of Locke have serious implications for Locke in relation to modern liberalism. Modern liberalism attempts to avoid conceptions of the 'good life' and remain neutral on most larger issues of how people ought to live;[26] however, in Locke's archetypal account of liberalism, there is a clear justification for denying property rights claims based on a conception of natural law. Without an underlying natural law justification for the development of the earth, the distinction between the labor of Native Americans living off hunted game and the European living off the land cannot be made on the grounds of natural rights. The right to appropriate land through labor in the case of the European but not the Native American illustrates how labor in the service of natural law supersedes labor for subsistence only. The implication of Locke's acquisition through labor claims leaves open the Native American's hunting grounds for appropriation by others despite the necessity of this land for hunting game. It promotes developing a system of industrialized agriculture for the sake of capitalistic exchange, which comes directly at the expense of other forms of life that do not share these values.

Ultimately, Locke's philosophy in the *Second Treatise* and *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* represent a dramatic move toward equality. Locke elevates labor as the proper means to determine unequal outcomes, a stark break from more aristocratic conceptions which saw it as undignified. Writing at a time when diverse cultures were interacting, Locke wrote on toleration

[26] An example of this would be Rawls (2005)

and the importance of allowing individual freedom; however, Lockean philosophy, underpinned in a conception of natural law, does have a view of the good life. In pursuit of the Lockean good life, qualifications for ownership of land benefitted those who sought profit and production, not subsistence. When the Lockean end necessitated undermining the natural rights of others to their ancestral lands and, in effect, the resources they counted on for survival, Locke's natural law foundation superseded rights claims. In the end, the development of the blank slate of Earth required industrial agriculture and Locke's philosophy rewarded those who would pursue this course with wealth accumulation; meanwhile, those engaged in lesser forms of labor were left out of this prosperity.

Chapter 2 Creating Just Inequality: Classical Liberalism and Individual Rewards

The continued rise of economic inequality has garnered much research and political attention; however, inequality is still tolerated and even justified by large portions of the populations in individualistic, liberal democracies (Mijs 2019; Solt et al. 2016; Newman, Johnston and Lown 2015; Hirschman and Rothschild 1973). Political scientists have long focused on the distribution of income and wealth with arguments attempting to predict the choices of government, preferences of the populations, and even justifications for inequality. Using inequality in healthcare and education I revisit the traditional topic of inequality and test a novel theoretical approach focusing on the normative beliefs of classical liberalism; specifically, the belief that inequality tied to differences in individual effort is justified.

I set out to answer a question frequently posed by political scientists: Under what conditions is inequality justified among citizens in liberal democracies? In my approach, I explain the preferences of the mass public within liberal democracies by considering the process of inequality generation within the context of liberalism. Since classical liberalism is founded on a concept of justified inequality (see Locke in particular) and the claim that citizens would rationally choose to live in liberal societies, it is important to consider how the mass public regards the liberal justification and process for producing inequality. By understanding the normative foundations of classical liberalism, I explain why scholars continue to find poor people who believe large amounts of inequality are justified.

While much of the literature has focused on preferences for inequality in relationship with individual economic self-interest, there is ample evidence that citizens do not use rational economic calculations when voting (Alesina and Giuliano 2009). In fact, political scientists frequently find individuals who vote and hold preferences against their economic self-interest (Alesina and Giuliano 2009; Andersen and Yaish 2012). The apparent lack of economic rationality among the mass public is problematic, because numerous models of inequality tolerance have been developed based on this idea (Lupu and Pontusson 2011; Iversen and Soskice 2001; Meltzer and Richard 1981). I advance the literature by incorporating a theoretical framework, which conceptualizes inequality preferences based on normative beliefs derived from political philosophy. Rather than testing justified inequality solely on the basis of income inequality, I test beliefs about healthcare and education inequality, which are a result of income inequality. Within liberal societies, inequality can be philosophically justified as the result of personal freedom and meritocracy (Mijs 2019; Solt et al. 2016).

As scholars rightfully turn toward normative justifications for inequality, they have found that as inequality grows, citizens tend to increasingly believe in meritocracy as a justification (Solt et al. 2016; Hirschman and Rothschild 1973). There is also evidence that inequality is more tolerated when social mobility is higher (Shariff, Wiwad and Aknin 2016). The nascent literature on meritocracy provides an intriguing new angle for our understanding of support of inequality; however, it is hampered by some major shortcomings which I hope to address in this chapter. Existing literature tends to lack the appropriate amount of context for meritocracy. It is philosophically inadequate in the description of the role that liberalism as an ideology plays in promoting this viewpoint. As a result, the broader importance that these beliefs play in liberal societies, along with the potential biases that they bring, go unconnected to other related trends. The inadequate context has limited the scope of study for these projects; specifically, the literature tends to promote meritocracy as a distinctly American concept. I advance this literature by connecting the concept of meritocracy into the broader philosophical justifications for inequality within classical liberalism and expand the focus to all liberal societies. Empirically, I contribute a more nuanced exploration of the relationship of political institutions, existing conditions, and traditional explanations of beliefs about inequality using a cross-national account. By examining 23 liberal democracies, it is possible to understand how a diverse array of potential explanations may shape citizen preferences.

In the following pages, I lay out a brief overview of the existing literature on the subject. Then, I present a simplified classical liberal justification for inequality based on the concept of individual freedom, the choice of a market economy, and equality of opportunity. Afterward, I test the appeal of the liberal justification for inequality by examining the mass public's perception of justifiable inequality in healthcare and education. My project offers several advances in the literature. First, I examine the overlooked role of classical liberalism itself in shaping the public perception of justified inequality. Second, I empirically test arguments in political theory in a diverse array of liberal democracies providing robust and generalizable results about classical liberalism. Finally, I explain a large degree of variance in the perception of inequality while including the traditionally important explanations in the literature.

Self-Interest, Partisanship, and Existing Explanations

Tolerance for inequality has been extensively studied in the literature and explanations have been made based on the levels of individual income and political partisanship. Major consideration of preferences for redistribution can be simplified down to a calculation of whether attempts at economic equalization will be beneficial or detrimental to an individual (Lupu and Pontusson 2011; Iversen and Soskice 2001; Meltzer and Richard 1981). Despite the economic motive to prefer redistribution (and less tolerance of inequality) among the lower income brackets of many societies, political scientists find that short-term rational self-interest alone cannot account for the variation of redistribution preferences (Alesina and Giuliano 2009). Even as inequality grows, it tends to produce increased acceptance of economic inequality among citizens in society

Despite the complex forms self-interest may take, political scientists frequently find citizens who vote against their economic interests (Sears, Lau, Tyler and Allen 1980; Alesina and Giuliano 2009). If the public is somewhat rational, there must be a calculation on the part of the public extending beyond mere economic self-interest. Attempts to explain the lack of economic rationality have produced an emphasis on the role of partisanship in predicting preferences for inequality. Partisanship may encourage voting against economic self-interest especially in two party systems, such as the United States, where social hot button issues may drive voters away from their economic interests (Frank 2007). Partisanship under these circumstances may be a compounding factor as political parties (and elected officials) generally respond to the preferences of the affluent rather than the poor (Bartels 2018). In Bartels (2018) explanation, partisanship and short-term considerations of income have produced right-leaning voting tendencies; although, these voters may be voting against their long-term economic interest. Partisanship and the electoral structures in which they operate have a large amount of explanatory power over voter tolerance of inequality with right-leaning parties supporting the largest amounts of inequality (Iversen and Stephens 2008; Kemmerling and Bodenstein 2006). The existing partisan explanations for tolerance of inequality and redistribution preferences are useful but may only provide part of the story. As in many cases, partisan preferences are not motivated by economic policies but rather social or cultural issues, which may supersede economic self-interest (Frank 2007).

Tolerance for inequality within liberal democratic societies has been typically studied with a focus on the individual-level characteristics like income and partisanship. There is also an existing literature which highlights the role of institutional factors to explain cross-country explanations (Korpi and Palme 1998; Hacker and Pierson 2010). Although both individual and country-level characteristics offer some explanatory power, they focus on differences between individuals and institutions across countries rather than the broader justification made for inequality across all liberal democracies. Rather than focusing on the structures at play within these societies, I propose that the assessment of mechanisms which produce inequality within liberal societies are an understudied aspect of tolerance of inequality.

Freedom, Individualism, and Liberal Arguments for Inequality

While the levels of income and the partisanship of individuals are important predictors of mass public preferences, the focus on the individuals within liberal societies has neglected the role of liberalism itself in shaping the preferences for inequality. To answer the question, why do individuals in liberal democracies tend to have higher level of tolerance for vast amounts of inequality, it is important to broaden the scope of consideration beyond the individuals in the society, to the society itself. Classical liberalism is an individual-oriented political doctrine, which promotes freedom through the enforcement of equal rights. It may appear to be a political philosophy opposed to large amounts of inequality; after all, two of the main components of classical liberal philosophy are individualism and equality. Yet, the emphasis on individual freedom interacts with the concept of equality in such a way as to justify inequality resulting from the decisions of the individual and the amount of effort an individual put into their society. This type of justification for inequality has existed from the beginning.

Classical liberal archetype, John Locke, lays out a rational argument for dividing up the communal property of pre-social contract man based on the individual's labor and efforts. Starting from a world of social and economic equality before the social contract is agreed upon, Locke lays out a justification for material or economic inequality based on the results of individual action, freedom, and choice (Locke 1860). The result of allowing citizens to freely determine their actions leads to a large amount of variation in outcomes, but these outcomes are acceptable so long as they start from a foundation of equality of freedoms and rights for the individual. This justification for inequality highlights the principles of liberalism used to justify markets and the resulting inequality from markets.

Justification of Inequality and Free Markets

While liberal thought is not monolithic, the basic principles of classical liberalism, individual rights, equality of opportunity, rule of law, and maximum freedom, necessitate some degree of economic inequality, namely unequal distribution of income and wealth. The result of individualism and freedom is unequal material outcomes in society. In John Locke's account of removing property from the communal to the individual, it is the result of giving individuals what they have earned through their efforts and choice to be productive (Locke 1860).

> And as differences in how hard men worked were apt to make differences in how much they owned, so this invention of money gave them the opportunity to continue and enlarge their possessions (Locke 1860, II, 48).

The process of an individual appropriating property from nature through their efforts to utilize raw materials for a more productive purpose spelled out in Locke's account lays out a general principle of justified inequality. Freedom necessitates that an individual is entitled to the consequences of their choices and actions. Within liberal thought this basic premise is the justification for inequality and one major reason why liberal societies use market economies for the distribution of goods and services.

John Locke's political liberalism set up a system, which started with individual equality in terms of rights and freedoms. From this platform of equal rights and freedoms individuals could use their expansive freedom to pursue property. Locke's account of removing or appropriating materials from the communal to the individual is one example of justified inequality; however, even during Locke's time, this process of acquisition was not all that common. The reason for this is simple: most of nature's resources had already been divided up among the population. This is where the works of John Locke meet the arguments for markets proposed by Adam Smith. In Smith's justification of markets, the values and freedoms promoted by the market significantly overlap with the values of classical liberalism. In *The Wealth of Nations*, Smith (2010) highlights how markets produce benefits to society generally by allowing a large degree of specialization, consumer driven consumption, and promoting people to direct their efforts toward tasks deemed productive by the markets. The benefits of the market for society also benefits individuals in society.

The combination of Locke and Smith provides a view of a democratic assessment of value based on freely made choices, which will be discussed later. It also produces a view of markets within classical liberalism producing a positive sum as the result of individual interactions. Free markets produce positive results as individuals set different values on things and exchange tends to benefit both. As Murray Rothbard (2007) explains:

> Each one values the two goods or services differently, and these differences set the scene for an exchange. I, for example, am walking along with money in my pocket but no newspaper; the newsdealer, on the other hand, has plenty of newspapers but is anxious to acquire money. And so, finding each other, we strike a deal (Rothbard 2007).

The marriage of market systems and liberalism provides an ideal way to distribute material wealth because it largely removed the power of distribution away from the government and determined prices based on supply and demand agreed upon by individuals. Robert Nozick (1974) famously used the example of basketball superstar Wilt Chamberlain to illustrate how free choices led to inequality. Chamberlain's basketball abilities meant that he had millions of fans and most of these fans would be willing to spend a small amount to see him continue to play. So even in a world with perfectly equal distribution of wealth at time one, after people began giving money to see Chamberlain play there would be large amounts of inequality based on freely made choices. Further, the market allows individuals a large degree of freedom to choose first, whether they want to interact with the market and then second, the degree and nature of this interaction.

Another famous liberal philosopher J.S. Mill believed that minimal government involvement and a system of meritocracy was not only the most moral way of distributing wealth, but that with a proper system in place, meritocracy itself could help elevate the living conditions of the working class and poor (Mill 1895). The poor would be better served in this environment of inequality based on their own inputs and competition decided democratically by the free market with the government only stepping in to tax inheritance and ensure market integrity (Mill 1895). This viewpoint from Mill corresponds with his progressive views of gender equality. During his lifetime, women were generally not allowed to compete with men in commercial enterprise and did not enjoy the basic protections of equality under the law. Mill believed this government interference, which promoted *de jure* inequality between the genders was profoundly unjust and that by allowing women the chance to compete would ultimately benefit society. In Mill's case, the view of inequality produced by meritocracy was a societal good which would help advance the overall well-being; the only thing standing in the way was the removal of legal barriers which maintained an unfair arena of competition (Mill 1895).

While Mill focused primarily on the government as a rule provider and enforcer of a just system, philosopher T.H. Green had more tolerance for government interference in markets and a less rigid political philosophy. Green's philosophy recognized the value of property and the necessity of inequality as a moral good (Martin 2007). Through possessions and adding labor, individuals were able to live a free and authentic life according to their own sense of personal development. Capitalist accumulation makes this development process an improvement for everyone as the wealth of the rich is used to raise everyone's standard of living (Martin 2007). Despite his defense of capitalism, Green offers a broad justification for redistribution through taxation to promote a broader goal of eternal consciousness. His view is that these efforts which limit the absolute property rights of owners are necessary when the conditions do not allow other individuals the freedom to realize their will. In this way, inequality generated through the free market can only be justified so long as inequality itself does not lead to the virtual enslavement of the lower classes (Martin 2007).

In these different justifications for inequality among liberal political thinkers, the common trend is to justify capitalist accumulation and free markets because they provide a non-arbitrary way to distribute private property and as a result produce inequality. Markets provide the benefit of allowing citizens the ability to choose their own course of action and then rewards their efforts based on the assessments of the market rather than a government or any individual. The market economy also provides the benefits of allowing individual rights and equality in entrance to the market while also allowing the consequences of freedom which produce unequal economic outcomes. The foundational assumption of market economies, as justified for liberal societies, hinges on the idea of individual rights and the related concept of equality of opportunity.

The Equal Opportunity Debate in Liberalism

Arguments over promoting freedom and equality within liberalism are rooted in a larger divide between libertarians and welfare-state liberals. Both schools of thought promote freedom and equality; however, their definitions of these terms vary significantly. In the case of the libertarian justification voiced by Nozick, freedom is seen in a negative sense. It is freedom from outside interference or freedom from restrictions. Equality is simply the equal enforcement of basic rules to guide the market and society; equality is achieved when all are subject to the same rules and enforcement (Nozick 1974). This contrasts with the Rawlsian concept of fair equality of opportunity. Rawls promotes welfare-state liberalism, which sees freedom in a positive sense, the freedom to live at a basic standard and to take meaningful part in society (Rawls 2001). For Rawls, equality results from the proper protection of vulnerable individuals so they can compete in a basic meritocracy based on their personal choices, not those determined by the fortunes or coincidences of birth (Rawls 2009). Both views see the market as a foundation for producing justified inequality through individual efforts; however, Rawls is in support of government interference to help mitigate inequalities which are not the result of individual choice.

Markets are the chosen mechanism for distribution within most liberal societies for the benefits they provide including freedom, democratic assessment of value, and efficiency. Despite these benefits, the usefulness of the market system is contingent upon the opportunity to engage with the market. Without the ability to take part in the market, either due to laws which forbid access or other potential barriers, the process of unequal distribution as a result is not truly free nor democratic. The solution in liberalism is equality of opportunity; however, the question of what constitutes equality divides liberalism between classical liberals and welfare state liberals. Both share the belief that Formal Equality of Opportunity (as defined by Robert Nozick) is an essential for liberal fairness; although, for welfare-state liberals this is a necessary but not sufficient standard for equality.

For Nozick (1974), 'equality' in the market place means formal equality of opportunity. This entails being allowed the opportunity to pursue one's own career plan without a formal limitation or restriction forbidding the pursuit. This account of equality of opportunity would overlook things such as *de facto* disqualifications for positions and only attempt to remove all *de jure* obstacles to opportunity. This approach continues the classic liberal philosophy to government authority and minimal interference; however, this minimal approach fails to reach a threshold of equality of opportunity that satisfies other liberals. A good example of this is the response of John Rawls and his conception of 'fair' equality of opportunity (Rawls 2009).

Much of the classical liberal and libertarian perspective gives the individual a significant amount of credit for their efforts. This may ignore the randomness of other factors, which play a significant role in the success of the individual. Rawls (2001) introduces Fair Equality of Opportunity to mitigate these inequalities, which have nothing to do with individual choice or actions. The reality of life means that all people begin their lives as adults with unequal foundations in natural talents, but Rawls seeks to minimize other arbitrary factors, which produce inequality, such as being born into a wealthy family versus a poor family (Rawls 2001). Rawls also believes demographic factors such as a person's religion, race, gender or ethnicity should not preclude them from a fair competition for the highest-level positions within their society. While not formal barriers technically, because they are not legal barriers, these factors still significantly impede the life prospects for some.[27] Rawls believes these arbitrary (from the individual's perspective) causes of inequality are barriers to a substantive form of equality. Poverty prevention policies and some interference with market outcomes are justified, if they ultimately help to make inequality become the result of free choice and actual equality of opportunity (Rawls 2009). These policies include a redistributive component in terms of progressive taxation, robust social welfare, and policies, which promote education and opportunity enhancement for the least fortunate in society.

Despite dramatic difference in how welfare-state liberals and classical liberals view the context around individual efforts, the two schools of liberalism share the same beliefs in inequality being justifiable when it is based on the freely made choices of individuals. Akin to many debates within liberalism the exact definitions of equality and freedom are contentious, but the basic structure of

[27]For instance, a young child denied an education or adequate care will be highly unlikely to be able to compete with another child who attends the best schools.

support for property rights and inequality remain roughly the same.

Liberalism and the Justification of Inequality

Starting from a point of political equality, liberalism generally prioritizes individual rights and freedoms. These equal rights and freedoms allow citizens the potential to shape their lives through their own efforts and choices. Inequality as an expression of freedom and individual rights is justified. Markets are chosen to distribute wealth in liberal democracies due to the freedom of choice and democratic assessment of value which underpins the market. Although markets produce vast amounts of inequality, this is justified if it is the organic result of freely made choices starting from a platform of equality of opportunity.

Despite different conceptions of equality of opportunity, liberals agree that unequal outcomes because of freely made choices are justified. The question for liberals is whether the unequal outcomes resulting in economic inequality are the result of a process that rewards individuals for their choices and actions. Thus, economic inequality is a normative good under ideal conditions within liberal societies. When considering tolerance for inequality in liberal societies, the assessment of this process of unequal rewards should alter citizens moral conception of inequality. My argument is that these justifications of inequality found within liberal societies have shaped public opinion about inequality. Thus, assessments about the causes of inequality and the individual's potential to shape their own economic future will add to the extant literature on tolerance of inequality. In the following sections, I lay out my theoretical expectations for tolerance of inequality and its relationship to the perception of justified liberal inequality; then, I empirically test these expectations using a large-N data set.

Just Rewards Theory

One of the major justifications of markets is that they reward individuals for their efforts and innovation. The focus on the individual's contribution is why markets are so popular among liberal societies; they can allow people large amounts of freedom, opportunity for advancement within society and are founded upon a liberal conception of equality. Under this distributive regime, personal traits that benefit society should be rewarded by the market. Two of the least controversial traits a market society ought to reward are ambition and hard work. The moral legitimacy of the market economy is based on a conception of the market as an unbiased arbitrator for distribution of benefits. These individual-level characteristics with obvious benefits to the market economy and society are ideally rewarded. Individual efforts being essential for success in the market is part of its larger appeal; it allows social mobility based on merits determined by the value assigned by others. Without the opportunity for the individual to succeed through their own efforts, the individual freedom espoused by liberalism is not produced and market outcomes may be considered arbitrary or unfair.

The necessities for success in a society carry a significant moral tinge regarding unequal societal rewards. A pure meritocracy with high levels of inequality can be morally justified; meanwhile, in a society with substantial bias, (i.e. racial bias, gender bias, class bias, etc.) even small amounts of inequality cannot be morally justified following liberal principles. Inequality founded upon different levels of input (hard work) or energy (ambition) is easier to justify morally than inequality founded upon unchangeable or unearned characteristics. The level of importance placed on certain traits as essential for success provide the foundation for the perceived justice of unequal distribution; therefore, the foundational belief about what is essential for success in market societies underlies the significant variation in opinions about the justice of distributive inequality. Individuals who strongly believe ambition and hard work are rewarded in their society will perceive the outcomes of the market economy as just consequences, which are properly distributed to individuals who possess these beneficial traits.

- Hypothesis 1: Individuals who believe hard work to be important for getting ahead in their society are more likely to have higher tolerance for market inequality.
- Hypothesis 2: Individuals who believe ambition to be important for getting ahead in their society are more likely to have higher tolerance for market inequality.
- Hypothesis 3: Individuals who believe in personal efforts will be more supportive of inequality via market outcomes.

The foundational beliefs that individuals hold about rewards in their society frame the question of morality. Liberalism tends to promote a conception of individual responsibility and the primary source for distribution of rewards is the market. Assuming the basics about liberalism and the market, it is not a stretch to see how individual responsibility through the marketplace becomes a virtue within liberal society. People tend to believe that their efforts should distinguish them from others as individuals (Mijs 2019; Solt et al. 2016; Marshall, Swift, Routh and Burgoyne 1999). This means there should be some form of equity for internally controllable traits like hard work and ambition. If respondents do not believe that ambition and hard work are important for success, then the market is not adequately providing the opportunity for individual responsibility, which requires that individuals have some agency over their ability to attain economic prosperity. When people see the individual efforts of others as unimportant for their prospects of success, then a violation of the most basic benefits of the market economy emerge and individuals do not believe that they can control their own destiny.

The values of individual responsibility in liberalism become internalized and form a standard to judge reality. Economic consequences lack moral authority in a liberal society when they are not the result of individual efforts. In less abstract terms, people who believe the wealthy have earned their prosperity through working harder and being more ambitious than others tolerate inequality as the appropriate reward for positive behavior. At the same time, people who believe they can be both ambitious and hardworking but will never prosper see inequality as unjustified, because it is indirectly linked to their efforts and beyond their responsibility. If malleable personal traits of the individual are not seen as the primary cause of prosperity, then people will see inequality as unfair; meanwhile, people who believe hard work and ambition are essential will generally see inequality as market-meritocracy rewarding those with good individual traits. The major question is what amount of responsibility for unequal market outcomes can be properly attributed to individual control. This assessment naturally shapes perceptions of inequality and demands for redistribution.

Empirical Design: Sample, Variables, and Empirical Analysis

To test whether liberal justifications of inequality carry moral weight with the populations of liberal societies, I draw empirical data on individuals' beliefs about the causes of economic success and their views on just inequality. The International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) 2009 module on Social Inequality (Wave IV) offers suitable empirical data to test the above mentioned hypotheses.[28] This cross-country survey dataset includes over 56,000 respondents from 23 countries from 2008-2010.[29] The major theme of the survey was to track sentiments about social inequality through the lens of economic opportunities, responsibility of government, and the relationship of individual traits with success. In this chapter, I draw cases from 23 liberal countries from the 2009 ISSP survey, supplementing the individual-level ISSP data with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Social Expenditure Database (OECD SOCX, 2010), which supply various measures to capture country-level contexts.[30]

Testing the Just Rewards Hypotheses: Tolerance for Inequality

Testing sentiments about just rewards requires identifying citizens' tolerance for inequality. The ISSP Social Inequality IV (2009) Survey provides the opportunity to explore the relationship between the perceived justice of unequal distribution and the level of importance placed on certain traits as essential for success. Perceptions of the appropriations of inequality means asking citizens if inequality is fair. To get an idea of this tolerance of inequality, I utilize inequality in a tangible and vital service. The survey question asks respondents about the distribution of quality health services between different economic groups. Respondents were asked:

> Is it just or unjust – right or wrong – that people with higher incomes can buy better health care than people with lower incomes?

This question brings the moral considerations behind the rewards into focus. Assuming everyone wants to have quality healthcare and the significant impact that healthcare has on prolonging and improving life, this is a service that appeals to everyone. The distribution of this service for money means unequal distributions of wealth enable the rich to purchase better healthcare than the poor. Using this personal and necessary service as an example of inequality, the survey question is asking whether it is justified. To simplify analysis, I collapsed the different degrees of evaluations

[28]ISSP Research Group (2017): International Social Survey Programme: Social Inequality IV - ISSP 2009. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA5400 Data file Version 4.0.0, doi:10.4232/1.12777

[29]Countries included in Analysis (some dropped in particular models due to data limitations): Australia, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States.

[30]OECD (2010), OECD.Stat, (database). doi: 10.1787/data-00285-en (Accessed on 25 May 2017)

as just or unjust into a binary response. These responses were coded as 0 if respondents believed this inequality was unjust (very or somewhat unjust) and 1 if respondents believed the inequality to be just (very or somewhat just); 'neutral' and 'don't know' responses were dropped.

Inequality in outcomes are not confined to individual level traits; indeed, the unequal distribution of rewards often means individuals who are not at all responsible for the acquisition of rewards still receive a benefit from them. The next dependent variable captures an important insight about the tolerance of inequality and immediate family connections. Respondents were asked:

> Is it just or unjust – right or wrong – that people with higher incomes can buy better education for their children than people with lower incomes?

Respondents answering this question are influenced by their conception of how the higher incomes were earned in the first place. Respondents who attribute higher incomes to personal traits of hard work and ambition are more likely to justify the discrepancy of educational quality than respondents who believe the inequality was created by some other mechanism. Responses were coded as 0 if respondents believed this inequality was (very or somewhat) unjust and 1 if respondents believed the inequality to be (very or somewhat) just; 'neutral' and 'don't know' responses were dropped.

The dependent variables were collapsed into two categories by excluding neutral responses and coding 'strongly agree' with 'agree' and 'strongly disagree' with 'disagree.' This decision was made for two major reasons. First and most important, the magnitude of support is not a major consideration of this project. The theoretical rationale behind the inclusion of these additional magnitudes of support is not clear cut. The scope of this project is to determine what leads to support or disapproval of policy preferences and moral justifications for inequality. Second, given the large number of statistical claims being tested in this project, the addition of a generalized ordered logistic models would increase the amount of analysis with minimal theoretical gains. Rather than cluttering this chapter with the more burdensome analyses of the additional response options, I have presented the results from the generalized ordered logit models in this appendix along with distribution histograms.

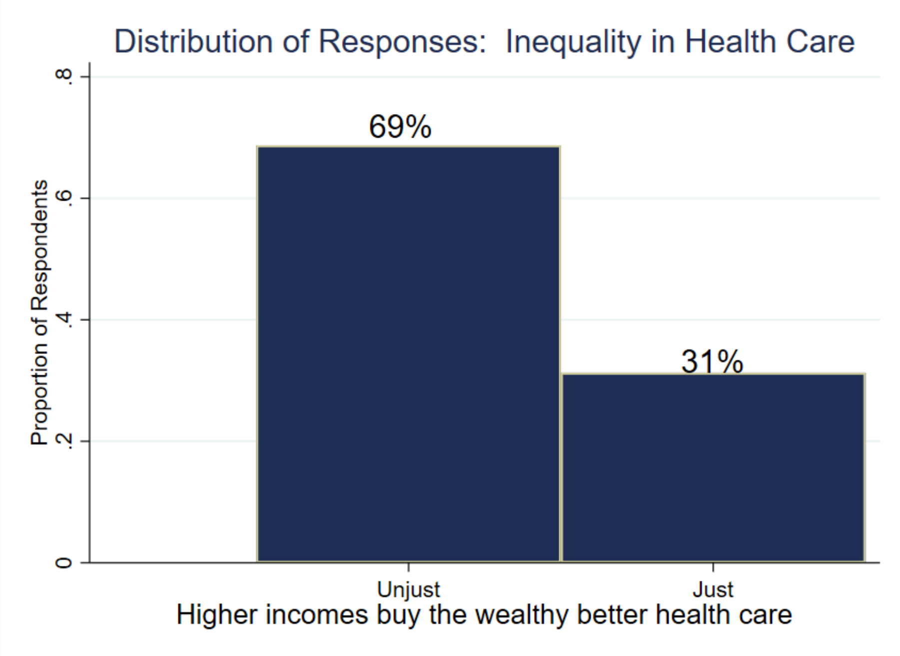

Figure 1: Aggregate Distribution of Responses to Health Care Inequality

Overall, respondents were more likely to think that inequality in the context of health care and education was unjust. In both cases, around 67 percent of respondents believed that these forms of inequality were not justified and roughly 33 percent saying this inequality was just. The responses varied significantly by country. The United Kingdom is an example of the variance, nearly 55 percent of respondents there believed inequality in education was justified, which was over 20 percent higher than the average; meanwhile, the French overwhelming saw this form of inequality as unjust with only 15 percent of respondents agreeing inequality in education to be justified. The findings for education inequality were closely related with country level sentiment about inequality in health care.

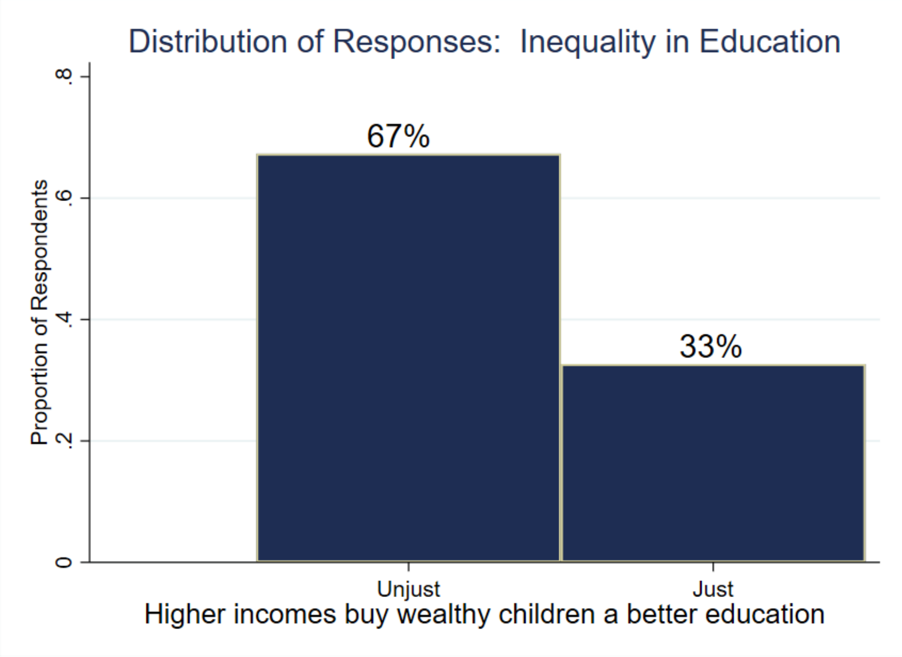

Figure 2: Aggregate Distribution of Responses to Education Inequality

Using the same example countries, the UK had high levels of support for unequal healthcare with 53 percent say it was just; meanwhile, the French again provide a counterpoint, with less than 10 percent of respondents there believing inequality in healthcare to be just. The variation between countries provides an opportunity to better compare the differences in opinion due to institutions and country-level factors as well as normative beliefs stemming from liberalism.

Key Independent Variables: Liberal Beliefs in Meritocracy

The key independent variables in this project measure the amount of importance placed on ambition and hard work for getting ahead in life. The ISSP survey includes several questions that reflect to what extent individual respondents hold liberal beliefs in meritocracy. These questions include: How important is (hard work/having ambition) for getting ahead in life? The respondents could answer: Essential, Very Important, Fairly Important, Not Very Important, Not Important at All or Can't Choose. These responses were then converted into ordinal variables (1-5) with higher values representing more importance placed on these traits. A value of 5 corresponds with the belief that these traits are 'essential' while a value of 1 corresponds to an assessment that these traits are 'not important at all.' Individuals who responded, 'Can't Choose' were dropped from the data set.[31]

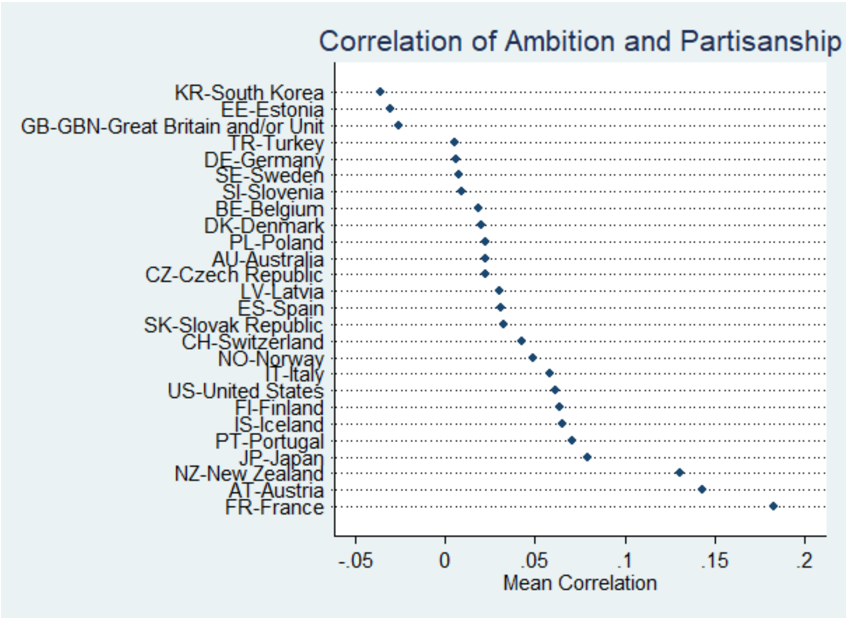

Figure 3: Country Level Correlation: Ambition and Party

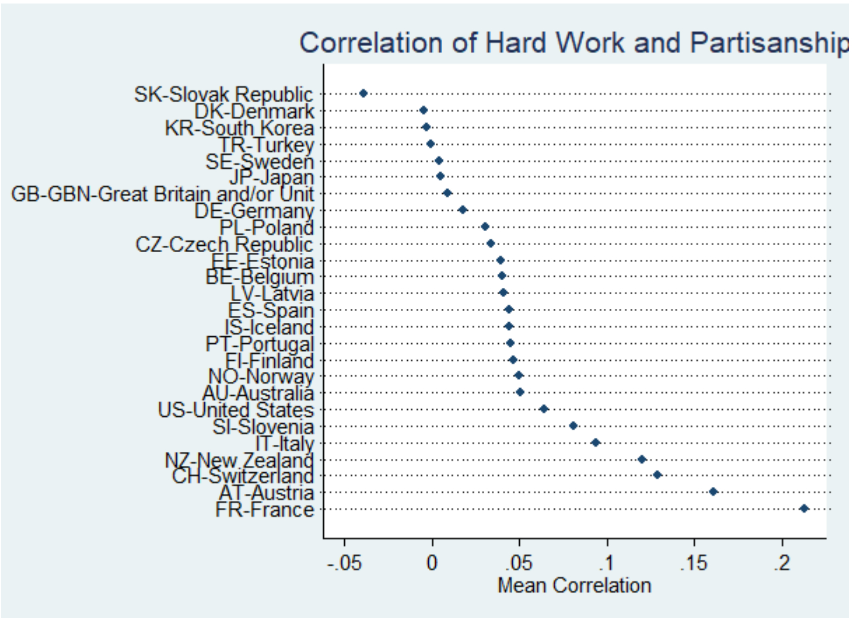

Figure 4: Country Level Correlation: Hard Work and Party

The ambition and hard work variables are especially helpful for this project, responses to the question of getting ahead through hard work and ambition are not strongly correlated with partisanship, nor is there a strong correlation between the levels of importance associated with ambition and hard work. The correlation between partisanship and a foundational assessment about the

[31] Can't Choose responses accounted for less than 1 percent of responses in both models.

value of individual efforts is weak, even in more philosophically individualistic countries, such as, the United States and United Kingdom. Another benefit of these two independent variables is that they are not politically controversial; responses to these questions cross-cut traditional political groupings and provide some insight for differences of opinion within political parties.

Control Variables

Included in the logistic regression models are numerous controls for both individual-level traits and country-level traits. All individual level controls were collected by the ISSP Social Inequality IV (2009) Survey.[32] In order to control for country-level effects from institutions, I compiled country-level statistics about existing social programs from the OECD Social Expenditures Data Set (2010). Whenever possible, I tried to compile data from 2010; however, in cases where that was not possible I deemed data from 2008-2010 acceptable for the purposes of this project (more details about data in Appendix A).

Individual Level Control Variables

Research has shown demographic characteristics of respondents influence their level of support for inequality, levels of government redistribution, and levels of government social expenditures (Alesina and Giuliano 2009). For this reason, I have included several typical control variables to capture differences resulting from individual respondent's age, education, income, employment status and partisanship. The age control measure is just the age (in years) of the respondent; likewise, education is measured in years of formal education attained by the respondent. Employment status was controlled for with a series of dummy variables; these variables operationalize employment status in one of four categories: unemployed, employed part time and out of the labor market; which leaves the employed full time as the baseline category. Income, which is consistently important in the literature, was measured in deciles corresponding to respondent's annual income decile within their native country. Finally, partisanship was controlled using the ISSP aggregated measure of partisanship; lower values correspond with support of left-leaning parties while higher values correspond with increasingly right-leaning parties.

[32] Detailed rationale for inclusion of specific control variables can be found in Appendix A.

Individual level attitudes also potentially impact an individual's assessment of inequality. I controlled for the individual's attitudes about their society using a factor measure capturing other traits that respondents considered to be important for getting ahead. First, I generated a factor index variable to control for individual attitudes regarding the role of demographic factors for getting ahead in their society. These questions asked about the importance of race, gender, and religion. The questions used in the ISSP Data Set was: How important is a person's (race/gender/religion) for getting ahead in life? The respondents could answer: Essential, Very Important, Fairly Important, Not Very Important, Not Important at All or Can't Choose. The respondent's answers were then used to generate a factor measure, which captured the level of importance that respondents associated with these demographic factors for getting ahead in their society.

Individual attitudes about the role of social connections for getting ahead in their society were included by generating a factor measure. Respondents were asked to what degree knowing the right people, having political connections and giving bribes played in getting ahead within their society. The question was worded: How important is (knowing the right people/having political connections/giving bribes) for getting ahead in life? The respondents could answer: Essential, Very Important, Fairly Important, Not Very Important, Not Important at All or Can't Choose. The respondent's answers were then used to generate a factor measure. Together the two generated factor measures capture foundational attitudes that individuals have about what it takes to thrive in their society on the dimensions of social connections and individual level demographic traits.[33]

Country Level Control Variables

Political scientists believe that a variety of country level characteristics and institutional features shape the levels of support for government redistribution and social spending (Edlund 2007, 1999; Iversen and Soskice 2006). One of the major advancements of this project is that it takes into account cross-country differences in economic conditions and institutional arrangements. First, the economic conditions are captured with two country level variables: GINI coefficients to control for inequality and the unemployment rate in each country. Existing inequality in a country has been shown to influence the preferences for individuals within the country (Kenworthy 2004);

[33] A more detailed account of the creation and justification of the generated factor variable can be found in Appendix A.

meanwhile, the unemployment rate captures the basic levels of competition for employment within the country.

There are also pre-existing institutional structures, which have been shown to influence views of inequality (Edlund 2007; Iversen and Soskice 2006). To control for existing social welfare institutions and levels of spending, I include the total level of social spending in each country reported as a percentage of GDP. I created a privatization ratio of social services by dividing the total amount of private social spending by the total amount of public social spending. This captures the existing level of privatization of social expenditures, which has been shown to impact inequality preferences (Hacker 2004). To capture institutional effects from contributions to the government, the percentage of contributions to the government from income taxes and social contributions was included in the model. Finally, to capture the effects of fiscal centralization, I created a measure for the ratio of central government expenditures divided by the total government expenditures.

Thus, the models include cross-country measures to capture the absolute levels of social spending, the degree to which they are privatized, how the contributions are acquired by the government, and the degree to which the central government spends the collected money. By controlling for so many institutional and country level factors, this project captures the institutional variables often associated with different degrees of tolerance for inequality (Larsen 2008; Iversen and Soskice 2006). The inclusion of so many previously useful explanatory variables allows me to parse out and control for the effects of existing theories.

I use two logistic regressions with clustered standard errors by country. Survey respondents evaluated types of inequality as either just or unjust; thus, logistic regression was the most appropriate way to evaluate binary responses. I evaluate the impact of two key independent variables on conceptions of just inequality. The average number of observations for each logit model is around 13,500 in 23 countries. The results reported in this paper have standard errors adjusted for the 23 clusters by country and are reported in odds ratios. A single-level model was used because the main question of analysis is how individual-level assessments of justice are impacted by individual-level assessments of the importance of hard work and ambition. In future iterations, multi-level models will also be included as robustness checks in the analysis. I examine these research questions using the ISSP Social Inequality IV (2009) Data Set.

Just Rewards?

Overall, the findings from the logistic regressions provide strong evidence of support for my hypotheses. In three of four cases, the foundational assessments of individual efforts played an important role in formulating normative assessments of justice in inequality. Existing explanations for conceptions of just inequality were also statistically significant in the models; notably, partisanship and individual income had the expected relationship with conceptions of justified inequality.

Health Care Model	Logit Coefficients	Odds ratio	**Country-Level Variables**	Logit Coefficients	Odds Ratio
Ambition	**0.117*****	**1.124*****	Inequality	0.000643	1.001
	(0.0337)	(0.0379)		(0.0295)	(0.0295)
Hard Work	**0.0822**	**1.086**	Unemployment	-0.0427	0.958
	(0.0595)	(0.0646)		(0.0896)	(0.0859)
Social Connections	-0.0385	0.962	Privatization	1.703*	5.491*
	(0.0633)	(0.0609)		(0.973)	(5.341)
Demographics	0.0322	1.033	Govt Revenue	0.0192	1.019
	(0.0451)	(0.0466)		(0.0403)	(0.0411)
Unemployed	-0.239	0.787	Spending	-0.0300	0.970
	(0.160)	(0.126)		(0.0418)	(0.0406)
Out of Labor Force	-0.273***	0.761***	Fiscal Central	2.138**	8.481**
	(0.0992)	(0.0755)		(0.894)	(7.581)
Underemployed	-0.455***	0.635***	Constant	-3.029***	0.0484***
	(0.116)	(0.0738)	Observations	13,413	13,413
Income	0.0834***	1.087***			
	(0.0146)	(0.0159)			
Age	-0.00273	0.997			
	(0.00184)	(0.00184)			
Sex	-0.285***	0.752***			
	(0.0498)	(0.0374)			
Education (Years)	0.00196	1.002			
	(0.00143)	(0.00144)			
Partisanship	0.137***	1.147***			
	(0.0386)	(0.0442)			

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 1: Liberal Belief and Tolerance for Health Care Inequality: Evidence from ISSP 2009

In Table 1, the results from the first logit model on healthcare inequality are reported. Respondents who believe ambition to be one level more important (i.e. ‘essential’ instead of ‘very important’) saw an increase of roughly 12 percent in the log odds that the respondent will consider it to be just for the wealthy to afford better healthcare. In Figure 5, the marginal effect of assessments of ambition for success is estimated while holding all other variables at their means. This graphic demonstrates a 7 percent overall difference in probability of supporting unequal health-

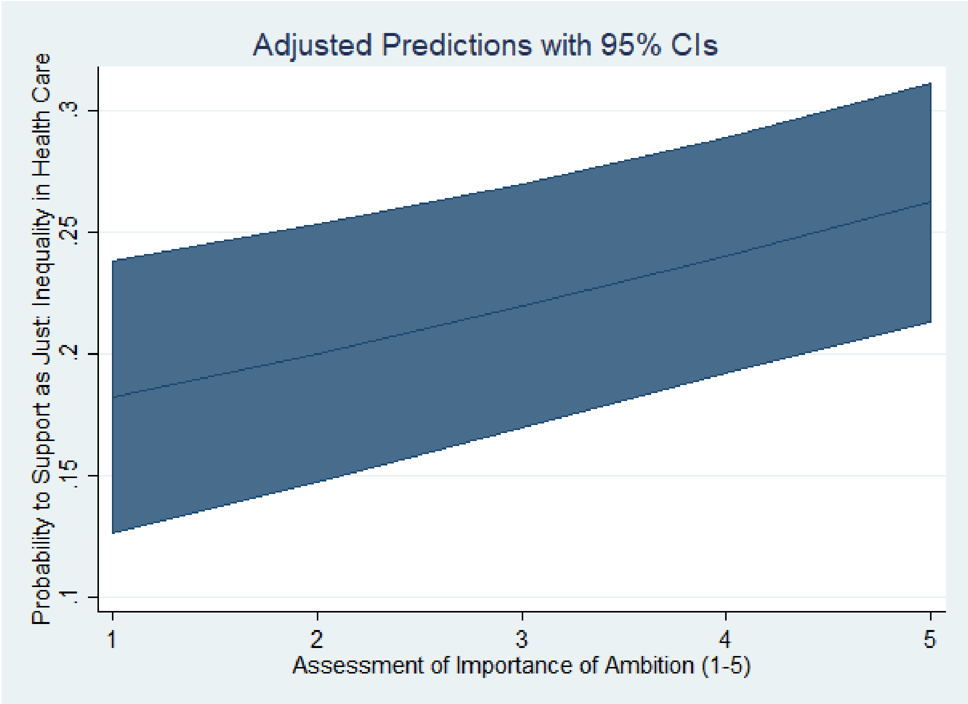

Figure 5: Marginal Effect of Ambition on Tolerance for Health Care Inequality

care as just when a respondent reports ambition to be essential compared to not important at all. The assessment of hard work, meanwhile, was not statistically significant in the healthcare model. For income, an increase in one decile of income results in a 10 percent increase in the log odds for considering the inequality in healthcare just. Income is one of the strongest indicators of individual preference with respect to the justice of inequality. Partisanship is also a key influencer of conceptions of justice. In the case of inequality in healthcare, a one-unit increase (which corresponds to moving from a leftist party to a left-leaning party or centrist party to a right leaning party) corresponds with a 15 percent increase in the log odds of considering the inequality just.

Education Models	Logit Coefficients	Odds ratio	Country-Level Variables	Logit Coefficients	Odds Ratio
Ambition	0.108***	1.114***	Inequality	0.0295	1.030
	(0.0373)	(0.0415)		(0.0315)	(0.0324)
Hard Work	0.150***	1.161***	Unemployment	-0.0562	0.945
	(0.0557)	(0.0647)		(0.0896)	(0.0847)
Social Connections	-0.0598	0.942	Privatization	1.108	3.027
	(0.0537)	(0.0506)		(1.032)	(3.125)
Demographics	0.00717	1.007	Govt Revenue	-0.0180	0.982
	(0.0449)	(0.0452)		(0.0414)	(0.0406)
Unemployed	-0.0623	0.940	Spending	-0.0178	0.982
	(0.131)	(0.123)		(0.0449)	(0.0441)
Out of Labor Force	-0.0688	0.934	Fiscal Central	1.609*	4.999*
	(0.110)	(0.103)		(0.944)	(4.718)
Underemployed	-0.246*	0.782*	Constant	-3.346***	0.0352***
	(0.132)	(0.103)	Observations	13,392	13,392
Income	0.0594***	1.061***			
	(0.0137)	(0.0146)			
Age	4.33e-05	1.000			
	(0.00205)	(0.00205)			
Sex	-0.320***	0.726***			
	(0.0499)	(0.0362)			
Education (Years)	0.00160	1.002			
	(0.00144)	(0.00145)			
Partisanship	0.115***	1.122***			
	(0.0423)	(0.0475)			

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 2: Liberal Belief and Tolerance for Education Inequality: Evidence from ISSP 2009

In the case of children's education, reported in Table 2, a one unit increase in the assessment of ambition corresponds with an 11 percent increase in the log odds that a respondent finds this inequality just. The marginal effect plot, Figure 6, illustrates the impact in the assessment of ambition on the overall probability of support for unequal education (holding all other variables at their means). This plot shows an overall change in probability of supporting inequality in education moving from 17 percent when ambition is not considered important to over 25 percent when ambition is considered essential for success. Assessments of hard work were also important in the model. Each one-unit increase in the assessment of hard work for success was associated with a 16 percent increase in the log odds of supporting inequality in education. The results for assessments of hard work, reported in Figure 7, shows that holding all other variables at their means, the difference between assessing hard work as 'not important at all' versus 'essential' corresponds with a difference of nearly 10 percent in the probability of support education inequality as just.

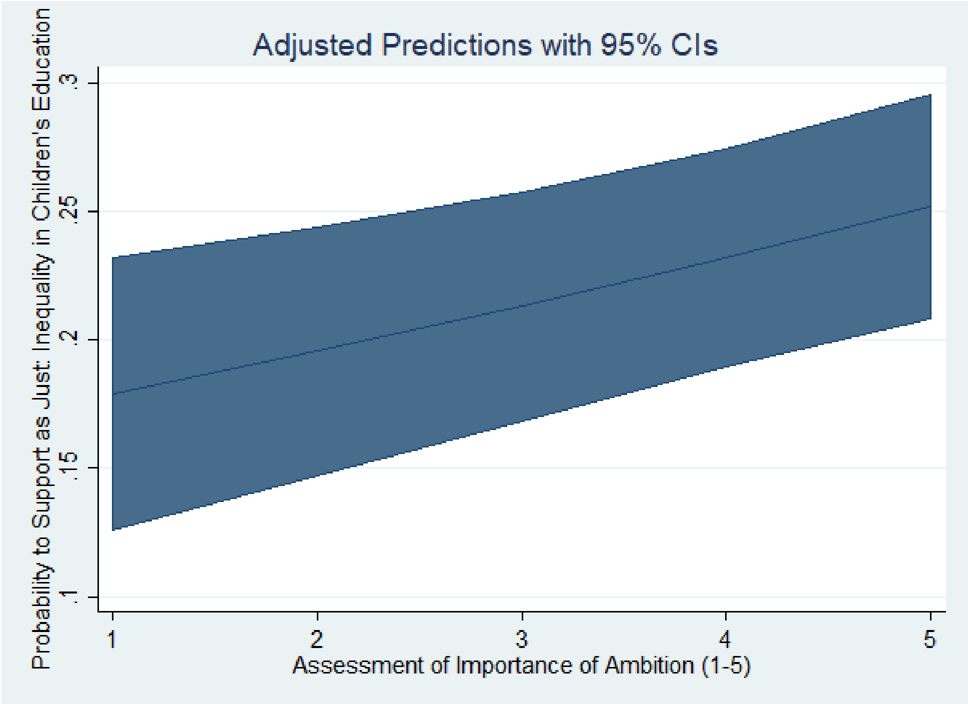

Figure 6: Marginal Effect of Ambition on Tolerance for Education Inequality

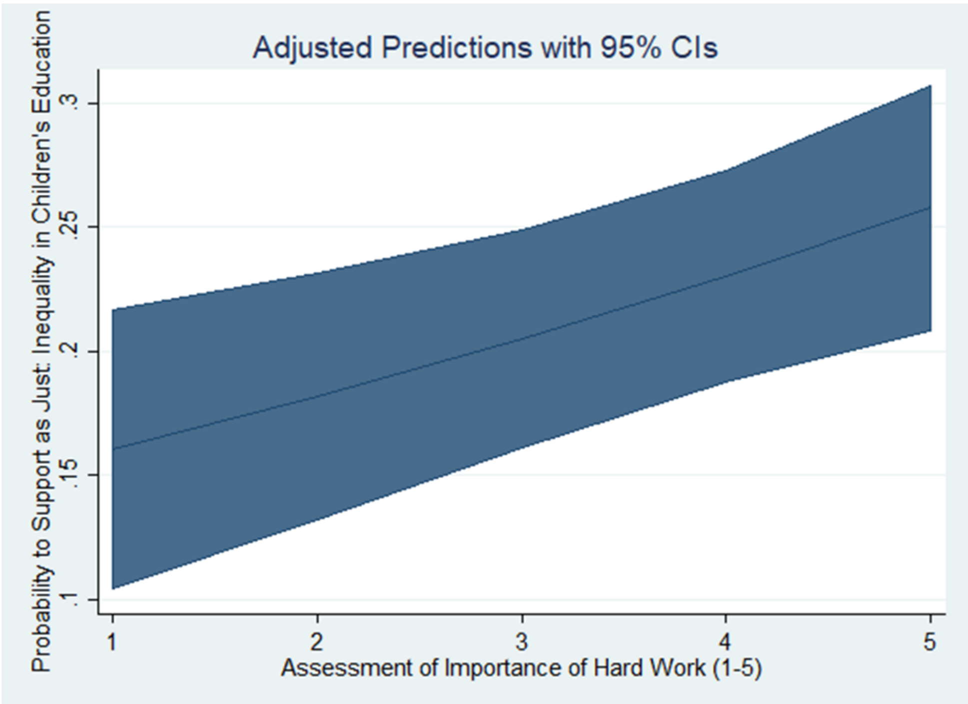

Figure 7: Marginal Effect of Hard Work on Tolerance for Education Inequality

In both models, women were less likely to consider the inequality to be justified. Other explanations for perceptions of justice were also statistically significant in the models; although, they provided less robust results. Working status was statistically significant in the case of inequality in healthcare, with underemployed individuals consistently seeing this form of inequality as unjust. Part-time employment status was significant in both models, as those working part-time were less likely to support the inequality in education and healthcare compared to other categories of employment. In the case of institutional impacts, respondents in countries with higher levels of privatization and greater degrees of fiscal centralization were more likely to see inequality in healthcare as justified. In the education inequality models, institutional dynamics did not play any statistically significant role.

Discussion

The empirical models I present in this paper provide strong evidence that the assessment of ambition and hard work, account for significant variation in the conception of justness of inequality. These traits are based on the efforts of the individual; however, there is divergence between ambition and hard work as predictors of individual preference. Hard work was not statistically significant for the considerations of justness in unequal healthcare outcomes. In a way, this divergence points more toward the idea of individual efforts. Ambition is frequently considered as a sort of self-interest and desire to better one's place in the world. If a respondent believes ambition is essential for advancement, then their foundational assessment is that those who possess the drive to succeed can; therefore, those who fail must simply not have a strong enough desire nor display enough effort. Hard work, on the other hand, captures a narrower conception of effort that may or may not be coupled with a desire to improve one's standing. An alternative explanation for this divergence can be constructed from differences in economic theories. While Adam Smith (2010) proposed a labor-oriented theory of the market economy, others such as Jean Baptiste Say (1836), proposed that ambition, ingenuity, and entrepreneurial efforts were more important for economic success. The differences presented here could be an interesting starting point for future study regarding competing conceptions of labor, effort, and just rewards.

The major takeaway from this analysis of perceptions of justified inequality is the extent to which respondents support the broadest conception of justice in liberalism. The appeal of individualism as the means to determine unequal outcomes in healthcare and education highlight the intuitive power of liberalism. Across partisan lines, economic classes, and gender divides, respondents who believe that individual efforts create prosperity are more likely to see the benefits of inequality as justified. At the nexus of market economies, liberalism and inequality, sits an assumption that freedom must allow for unequal outcomes, but this inequality is justified as just rewards to motivated individuals. In this analysis, I provide strong evidence that this liberal principle largely holds for the populations of 23 developed liberal democracies. This underlying assessment of society has predictive power that has been woefully understudied empirically and largely assumed, then forgotten in political theory.

Even controlling for the theoretically important factors of the existing explanation for tolerance of inequality (such as, institutions, self-interest, partisanship) there is still a dramatic effect resulting from moral foundational assessments. The idea that individuals are making a rational calculation based on the assessments individual efforts gives credence to the idea that the mass public does operate based on rational considerations; even though, those considerations may be based on principles of justice rather than merely economic self-interest. Political divides currently framed without these considerations may prove inadequate in the future as these moral justifications almost certainly have real political impacts on the policy preferences of the public. The results point to a broader importance of political theory in framing considerations of justice and ultimately shaping our understanding of inequality in general. This analysis provides a more well-rounded view of individuals determining their view of inequality based on considerations of liberal principles of justice.

Conclusion

The liberal justifications for inequality are significant predictors of respondent's view of justified inequality; however, the outcome from this analysis illustrates the substantial impact of these normative assessments compared to the explanation of economic self-interest and partisanship. To give some context to these findings, each increase in the assessed value of ambition in getting ahead in life was comparable to a move from the 50th percentile of household income to the 70th percentile. It had an impact similar to moving one party to the political right. In the United States, the real-world effect of these differences in justification correspond to an increase in 20,612 dollars in additional household income or a move from the Democratic Party to the Republican Party.[34] These normative conceptions of how inequality is generated are substantial in explaining a rationale for tolerance of inequality based on factors previously neglected in the literature.

In my analysis, I have utilized a data set which can capture the effects of institutions, political context, and existing inequality in liberal democracies. The combination of this analysis with a diverse data set of OECD countries provides an additional assurance of robustness. In this data set, there is a broad array of ideological traditions from a post-socialist perspective in the former Soviet bloc countries to the classic liberal perspectives of the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia. Yet, the findings presented in this chapter are relevant beyond public opinion and policy debates—they address the fundamental promise of this political philosophy. Liberalism is based on rationality of the individual and the presumption that rational people would consent to live under such a political structure due to the benefits provided to the individual (Locke 1860). When respondents confirm the process of generating inequality along liberal justifications, they are supporting the foundation for liberalism through the rational consent of the people.

[34]United States Household income percentiles: 70th percentile had a household income of 58,222 and 50th percentile had a household income of 37,610. The number reported is the difference in these numbers. Source: US Census Bureau

Chapter 3 The Political Impact of Foundational Market Assessments

To understand policy preferences for programs geared toward the reduction of inequality or social welfare, political scientists must consider the perception of meritocracy. If wealth is the result of corruption, violence, and discrimination, then the recipients of redistributive policies will be perceived sympathetically; however, if the poor merely show a lack of internal discipline, they will be perceived with disdain. Regardless, the view of an individual about the causes of success within their society will frame future evaluations of inequality from deservingness of rewards to responsibility for those who cannot subsistent independently.

What determines individuals' preferences for inequality and redistribution policies? Political scientists and economists used to answer this question in the same way. The individual, as rational and self-interested, would hold preferences about redistribution which they believed would ultimately provide them the most utility. Models based on this assumption were built around an idea of rational self-interest and the relative political power of economically vulnerable groups (Meltzer and Richard 1981). Eventually more nuance was added by focusing on specific groups, the structure of inequality, and risks faced by the individual (Lupu and Pontusson 2011; Iversen and Soskice 2001; Rehm, Hacker and Schlesinger 2012).

Despite strong reasons to believe that individual self-interest should be the main determinant of redistribution preference; pure economic rationality is not found to be the dominant calculation among citizens (Alesina and Giuliano 2009). Research continues to illustrate that economic inequality is tolerated, even justified, by broad swaths of the populace of liberal democracies despite the apparent irrationality of holding these views (Mijs 2019; Solt et al. 2016; Newman, Johnston and Lown 2015). The question of preference for inequality and redistributive efforts to reduce it has recently turned more toward the idea of meritocracy and the role of inequality in reinforcing belief in meritocracy (Solt et al. 2016).

My theory is that preferences for redistribution are dependent upon the individual's assessment meritocracy. This explanation offers a more nuanced rationale for individuals who have preferences against their economic self-interest and offers substantial descriptive power. It builds on existing literature which focuses on meritocracy by establishing a foundational connection of meritocracy to their normative beliefs about justice. The relationship between individual assessments of what it takes to succeed in a society carries an inherent moral judgment, because the recipe for success in a society provides justifications for unequal outcomes of individuals. Redistribution preferences are based on these normative foundations as well as the circumstances of the individual. Together these explanations offer a more detailed image of the formation of redistribution preferences and tolerance of inequality.

In this chapter, I offer a new perspective on existing literature on public opinion, political economy and political psychology by integrating theories of moral foundations into assessments of meritocracy. Using individual-level assessments for the determinants of success, I track the relationship between these assessments and the perceptions of inequality. I propose that policy preferences for redistribution and conceptions of inequality are based on rational assessments of individuals; however, rather than forming their preferences merely based on their economic self-interest, individuals are calculating their preferences based on their fairness foundations and beliefs regarding the determinants of success. I find strong support for key hypotheses using a cross-national survey data set (the ISSP Social Inequality 2009), which captures the varying institutional and social norms across 23 developed countries. In my analysis, I find that assessments of the importance of ambition and hard work for success rival existing explanations of income and partisanship in determining redistributive policy preferences.

Dominant Ideologies, Conceptions of Fairness, and Preferences for Redistribution

Traditionally, explanations for support of redistributive policies have focused on the calculations of the individual under different circumstances. An early account can be found in Meltzer and Richards (1981) model, which theorizes that rational individuals will perceive of redistributive policies as either a source of added revenue or increased tax burden. Therefore, the poor will support redistribution and the wealthy will oppose—the only real question is what side the middle class will take. The Meltzer-Richards model has served as a foundation for criticism and refinement for future projects. Notably, Lupu and Pontusson (2011) instead focus on the structure of inequality at the extremes. Iverson and Soskice (2001) find risk of unemployment to be an important factor that extends beyond mere economic context. Meanwhile, Rehm, Hacker and Schlesinger (2012) put together the factors of structures of inequality, economic risk and social affinity of income groups to argue support for redistribution will become relevant when a broad coalition of poor and economically vulnerable groups share the same interest. These explanations rely on a basic ability of the individual to perceive their own economic self-interests and use such pocket-book considerations to inform their preferences regarding government redistribution policies. The empirical literature, nevertheless, provides evidence that one's redistribution policies cannot be just attributed to not only economic self-interests. Mixed evidence can be found in research that shows no relationship (or even an inverse relationship) between short-term economic rationality and redistribution; however, it does illustrate some relationship between potential long-term economic rationality and redistribution preferences (Alesina and Giuliano 2009).

Another important component is the role of institutions themselves in shaping political opinions based on the institutional feedback effect. Electoral institutions shape the dynamics of redistribution by advantaging different types of political parties; there is a common trend for proportional representation bringing more center-left governments to power and majoritarian systems bringing more center-right governments to power (Iversen and Stephens 2008; Iversen and Soskice 2006). Since center-right governments will be less supportive of redistribution and center-left more supportive, electoral institutions will shape the likelihood of redistribution. Institutions providing social benefits are themselves sources of future feedback from constituents. Public support for welfare policies and redistribution is greatest when welfare institutions are universal and generous (Larsen 2008; Rothstein and Uslaner 2005; Edlund 1999). At the same time, privatized and less generous welfare policies produce diminished support for redistributive welfare policies (Hacker 2004; Jordan 2010; Gingrich and Ansell 2012; Zhu and Lipsmeyer 2015). Institutions tend to create interest groups after new policies are implemented. Some will become recipients of public policy provisions; meanwhile, others will see negative effects (i.e. higher taxes) because of redistribution and welfare policies. Over time, researchers believe the feedback effect from institutions tends to compound (Rothstein and Uslaner 2005).

Political psychologists offer explanations for support of redistributive policies in very different terms with expansive projects attempting to trace genetics to personality to political ideology and finally to policy preferences (Smith, Oxley, Hibbing, Alford and Hibbing 2011). Narrower explanations focus on the connection between personality traits and political orientation; however, multiple efforts to establish a direct connection between personality and policy preferences have not produced strong evidence (Alford and Hibbing 2007; Carney, Jost, Gosling and Potter 2008; Mehrabian 1996; Trapnell 1994). At least one account focuses on the idea of personality shaping political views through the mediating force of moral value conceptions (Lewis and Bates 2011). Other research, such as Peterson (1994), focuses on the relationship between subjective assessments of fairness as a mediating force between values and policy preference.

Kluegel and Smith (1986) studying American's perceptions of inequality, find belief in internal control or individualism drastically shape preferences for different social welfare policies. Essential to this work, is the idea of a dominant ideology that promotes internal control on the part of individuals as the primary cause of economic outcomes (Kluegel and Smith 1986). Research illustrates a psychological motive to embrace the dominant ideology and status quo of society; especially among individuals who are advantaged by the status quo (Jost and Hunyady 2005). This tendency to justify the status quo among advantaged individuals in particular has been linked to decreased support for redistribution policies (Jost and Hunyady 2005). Political psychology also finds evidence to support a trend among individuals with a strong political ideology to see problems and solutions to societal concerns in a light that suits their political predispositions (Skitka, Mullen, Griffin, Hutchinson and Chamberlin 2002) as well as to shape the very process of cognition (Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski and Sulloway 2003).

Since the dominant ideology of liberal democracies is founded on a view of individuals as the rightful cause of their own outcomes, there will be a tendency among the most advantaged to support and justify this system (Skitka et al. 2002; Jost et al. 2003; Jost and Hunyady 2005). Those who support the paradigm of liberalism with a libertarian or classical liberal lens will see different economic outcomes as the result of a justified system; thus, they will believe the causes of economic achievement derive from internal controls of the individual (Jost et al. 2003; Kluegel and Smith 1986). In turn, this justification of economic outcomes will shape the moral conceptions of responsibility that will eventually lead to their policy preferences (Lewis and Bates 2011). When an individual conceives of unequal economic outcomes from the status quo as just, they are less likely to support equalizing economic outcomes through redistribution (Lewis and Bates 2011).

The vast literature on redistribution policy shares a couple of major trends across subfields and specific country contexts. Perhaps the most significant trend is found in the conception of deservingness and social identity. In political psychology this trend can be found in system justification biases that lead advantaged groups to consider the status quo to be just, even when confronted with evidence to the contrary (Jost and Hunyady 2005). A major causal mechanism behind most of the literature appears to be an image of the target group of redistribution—the poor. Alesina and Angeletos (2005) find that the individual's perception of social competition shapes their preference for redistribution. The finding is somewhat intuitive, if the poor are assumed to be at fault for their vulnerability, then respondents are less likely to support redistributive efforts.

Research has also shown perceptions of moral values and the different ways in which social problems are conceived play a major role in the formation of policy preference (Lewis and Bates 2011; Kluegel and Smith 1986). In the political economy literature, rational self-interest often cannot account for the varying levels of support for redistribution (Alesina and Giuliano 2009); although, perceptions of the targets of redistribution policies themselves as deserving or undeserving do offer some explanatory power (Gilens 2016; Schneider and Ingram 1993; Sanders 1988). Finally, institutional feedback is largely contingent on the policy beneficiary groups created from existing institutions (Edlund 2007). Universal programs tend to reduce negative assessments of the target group by incorporating a larger coalition of beneficiaries (Larsen 2008; Rothstein and Uslaner 2005; Edlund 1999). At the same time, privatization tends to create a more negative view of beneficiary groups (Hacker 2004).

More recent works have focused on what principles of redistributive justice are desired by the public for welfare policy (Reeskens and Van Oorschot 2013). In their work on redistributive social policies in Europe, Reeskens and van Oorschot (2013) find that Europeans have mixed preferences for redistributive policies—they support equity when the policy targets effects of risk that could have been foreseen. These foreseeable risks fall under the role of personal responsibility; meanwhile, Europeans favor equality in redistribution for things like unemployment insurance that are less predictable and over which the individual exerts little control. Although these works on social justice are primarily focused on just redistribution principles, they do offer valuable insight for the preferred principles of distribution. When individuals are primed to conceptualize the issue in terms of personal responsibility, there is greater tolerance for inequality. However, these researchers fail to fully account for the relationship between foundational beliefs about what warrants success in one's society and the political calculus of the individual. Foundational beliefs provide an ideal alternative to the typical partisan approach, because they engage a larger question of justice based on the idea of equity or equal reward for equal input.

While this project extends upon the literature in a variety of fields, it is perhaps most important in political theory. The liberal paradigm has been internalized and the market economy has become ubiquitous. Thinkers as diverse as Nozick (1974) and Rawls (2009) use the market as a cornerstone of their political theories. The liberal ideology of our times has permeated into the western psyche and is used as a standard against which reality can be compared. Most forms of liberalism promote individual freedom and rewarding individual efforts via the market economy. It trains citizens to think of inequality generated (and justified) because of individual choice and efforts. Assessments of the performance of liberalism in this aspect undoubtedly shapes perceptions of the poor and the need for remedying inequality. This broader connection of political theory with the policy preferences of individuals has been neglected in the literature. The foundation of liberalism is political equality with broad justifications for inequality based on the efforts of the individual. So long as the individual is being rewarded for freely made decisions and has ample opportunity to better their economic position, liberals would generally consider economic inequality as a form of meritocracy rather than an injustice. Using extant findings in quantitative subfields, I attempt to bring justifications for inequality within political theory back into consideration.

Redistribution Hypothesis

Since market economies are the primary means of receiving subsistence within liberal countries, any assessment on the part of the individual, which perceives the market to be a biased distributor of rewards is also likely to lead them to see the government as a potential actor to remedy the deficiencies in the economy. Those who suffer more because of market failures are more likely to demand government support either in redistributing income or reducing economic risks. The market economy produces inequality in a variety of ways, but the most obvious way is unequal compensation. Income inequality motivates individuals in the marketplace by rewarding certain behaviors with higher incomes. Similar to the aforementioned relationship of morality and just rewards, the variety of opinions about the necessity of government redistribution to reduce income inequality hinge on foundational beliefs about what is necessary for success in the market economy.

Depending on the foundational beliefs of the individual, higher incomes are either the result of greater levels of ambition and hard work or they are determined by other factors beyond their control. Reducing income inequality represents a very specific policy preference, because income only involves individuals who are employed. This is a reduction of inequality specifically among working people, which captures a more marginal effect of the role of individual traits. It could be that a small amount of ambition and hard work are essential for getting a job, but that people believe there is a disconnect between income in the relationship. Since the government is another arbitrator of distribution and regulation of the market, it is an obvious source of remedy for perceived injustice in the marketplace. Foundational beliefs about causes of inequality and the traits that bring about affluence are a causal mechanism for support or disapproval of government attempts to mitigate income inequality. I expect individuals who believe the traits of hard work and ambition are rewarded in their society will not support government efforts to redistribute, because they believe individuals are directly responsibility for their own prosperity; therefore, they believe the responsibility for reducing inequality should be placed squarely on the individual in the marketplace. Thus, leading me to these hypotheses:

- Hypothesis 1: Individuals who believe ambition is important for getting ahead in their society will be less likely to support government efforts to reduce income inequality.
- Hypothesis 2: Individuals who believe hard work is important for getting ahead in their society will be less likely to support government efforts to reduce income inequality.

Social Welfare Hypothesis

The relationship of responsibility for the well-being of the least fortunate in a society are dramatically shaped by whether we can consider them to be in their vulnerable position because of personal choices or larger societal problems. The moral considerations of the necessary skills for success within a society determine whether being prosperous is a sign of behaving well. In a society where violence and deception are viewed as the most essential skills for success, people will look with sympathy upon those who are economically vulnerable. The counterpoint is that individuals who believe ambition and hard work will inevitably lead to prosperity will look upon the vulnerable as undeserving. The foundational assessment of what produces prosperity within an individual's society therefore changes the expected preferences for or against government involvement.

Support or disapproval for government aid to the economically vulnerable depends on an evaluation of why the poor require benefits in the first place. It confronts a deeper question of personal responsibility. Are the poor failing to prosper because of individual failures or is their poverty a result of larger problems within a society? From this question, the idea of government involvement becomes simple. If the poor are receiving the inevitable outcomes of laziness and a lack of ambition, then the responsibility for raising people out of poverty ought to stem from individual effort; however, if the poor are vulnerable despite their hard work and ambitious efforts—it is beyond the individual's control to become less vulnerable. Given that the poor may be poor for reasons beyond their own individual choices and characteristics, it is likely individuals will begin to look to the government for a remedy. Those who do not believe being ambitious and hardworking will get them ahead will support government programs to aid those who struggle to subsist. Meanwhile, individuals who see ambition and hard work as the means to prosperity will see government involvement as a potential moral hazard. They will promote individual responsibility through the marketplace, leading to the following hypotheses:

- Hypothesis 3: Individuals who believe ambition to be important for getting ahead in their society will be less likely to support government actions aimed to help the economically vulnerable.

- Hypothesis 4: Individuals who believe hard work to be important for getting ahead in their society will be less likely to support government actions aimed to help the economically vulnerable.

Empirical Design: Sample, Variables, and Empirical Analysis

The empirical analysis draws from the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) 2009 module on Social Inequality (Wave IV) that includes approximately 16,000 individual-level observations from 23 developed countries.[35] The Social Inequality module asks respondents for information regarding their perceptions of inequality and the beliefs they hold about inequality in their society, which makes it an ideal starting point for analyzing determinants of redistributive policy preferences. Most of the data used in this project was taken directly from the ISSP Aggregated Social Inequality IV (2009) data set while the rest was compiled using the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Social Expenditure Database (OECD SOCX, 2010).[36] This combination of data provides an opportunity to test multiple competing explanations for redistributive policy preferences by including individual-level and country-level context to redistribution preferences.

Testing Policy Preferences for Redistribution

Policy preference questions directly capture the approval or disapproval of the respondent to government efforts to mitigate inequality resulting from the marketplace. This dependent variable captures the level of support for government efforts to reduce income inequality. Respondents were given this statement:

> It is the responsibility of the government to reduce the differences in income between people with high incomes and those with low incomes.

Respondents then ranked the level to which they agreed with the statement—for this project the responses were simplified to capture either agree (1) or disagree (0).[37]

Testing Policy Preferences for Redistribution

To test how respondents' feelings about government efforts to help the most economically vulnerable people in their society, I focus on policies related to the unemployed and the poor.

[35] ISSP Research Group (2017): International Social Survey Programme: Social Inequality IV - ISSP 2009. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA5400 Data file Version 4.0.0, doi:10.4232/1.12777

[36] OECD (2010), OECD.Stat, (database). doi: 10.1787/data-00285-en (Accessed on 25 May 2017)

[37] See Appendix B for variable justification.

Individuals were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement:

> The government should spend less on benefits for the poor.

Respondents then ranked the level to which they agreed with the statement—for this project the responses were simplified to capture either agree (1) or disagree (0).

The final policy preference variable is directly linked with the idea of employment as a means for success within a society. In market societies, the unemployed are especially vulnerable because they do not receive an income and they are potentially seen as undeserving of benefits in the eyes of the public. Respondents were asked whether they agreed with the statement:

> The government should provide a decent standard of living for the unemployed.

Respondents then ranked the level to which they agreed with the statement—for this project the responses were simplified to capture either agree (1) or disagree (0).

Dependent Variables Overview

These three questions in the Social Inequality (IV) module measure policy preferences for or against government redistribution efforts. To simplify empirical analysis and to facilitate more straightforward substantive interpretation of findings, I collapsed the five responses into binary variables of support or opposition to the statements asked by ISSP. This collapsed potential answers down from five categories into two by combining 'strongly agree' and 'agree' responses into support, as well as combining 'strongly disagree' and 'disagree' responses into disapprove. Some responses were lost by dropping neutral and don't know responses.[38]

[38] Appendix B shows models that use the original five-point measurement and reports consistent findings.

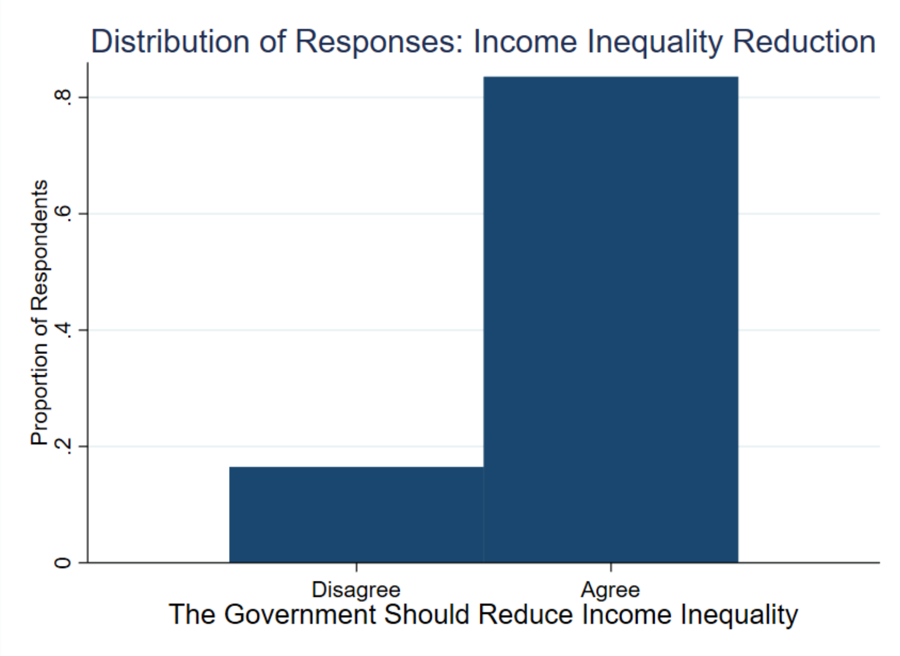

Figure 8: Preference for Government Effort to Redistribute Income

The responses to the question of reducing income inequality generated significant country-level variation in outcome despite an overwhelming amount of absolute support for government efforts to redistribute income to the poor. Figure 8 reports the aggregate responses to the question: Should the government redistribute income? Overall, 84 percent of respondents believe that the government should take an active effort in reducing income inequality in their country. There were some extreme outlier countries. In the United States, a majority (55 percent) disagreed with government redistribution efforts; this represents 40 percent less support for income redistribution in the United States compared to the 22 other developed nations included in the survey. France stands in contrast to the United States, with 91 percent supporting government efforts to reduce income inequality. Despite significantly higher levels of inequality in the United States there was scant support for income redistribution among Americans.

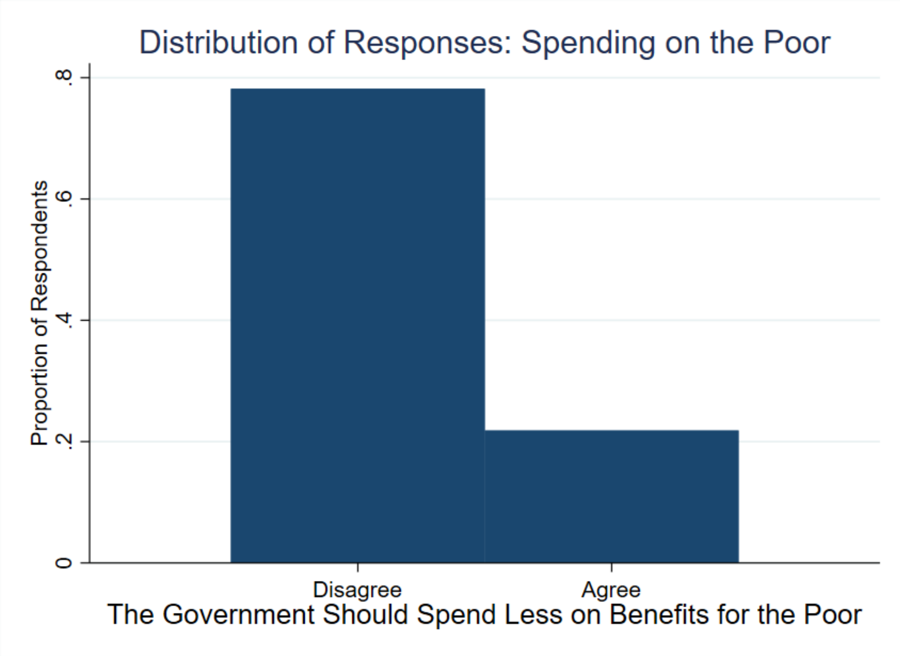

Figure 9: Preference for Reducing Government Aid to the Poor

Figure 9 reports the total tally of responses to the survey question: Should the government reduce aid to the poor? The question of reducing government aid to the poor also generated an overwhelming aggregate response with 78 percent of respondents opposing cuts to government aid to the poor. Perhaps the most interesting variation among countries was the reversal of relative position between the United States and France. In this case, 47 percent of the French supported efforts to spend less money on benefits for the poor; meanwhile, in the United States, only 23 percent believed the government should spend less on the poor. These results probably correspond with the disparate poverty reduction programs already in place. France currently has a relatively generous social support system while the United States does not.

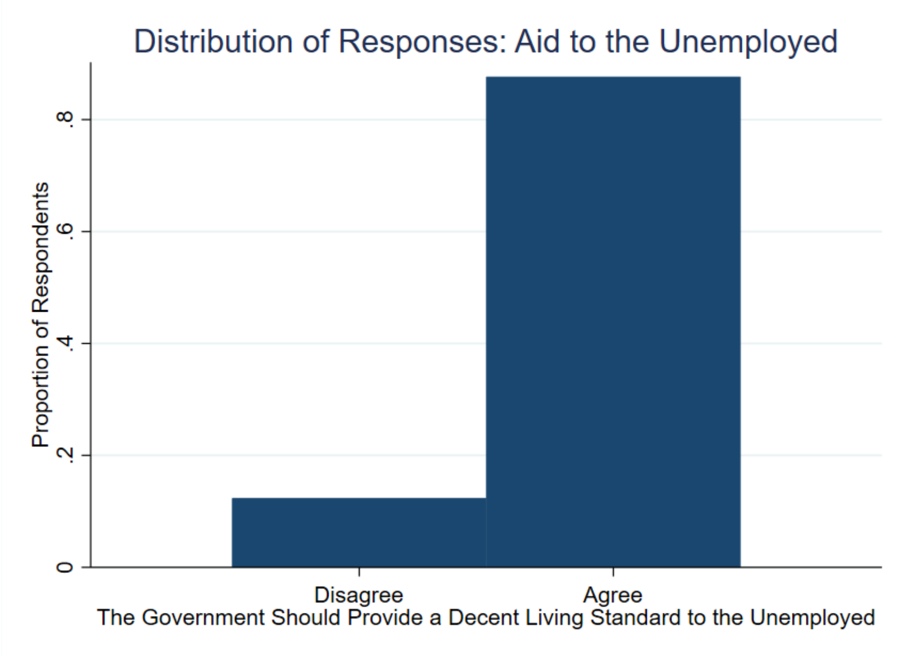

Figure 10: Preference for Providing the Unemployed with Generous Benefits

Figure 10 reports aggregate responses to the question: Should the government provide generous provisions to the unemployed? Aid to the unemployed also brought about a lopsided result among developed countries included in the survey with an overall tally of 88 percent of respondents believing the government should provide a decent standard of living to the poor. In the United States, there was markedly less support for these generous provisions with a modest majority (57 percent) supporting government efforts to provide generous provisions. In France, the opinion of the French people roughly corresponds to the average of all respondents; 87 percent of the French responded in favor of generous provisions to the unemployed.

Key Independent Variables: Liberal Beliefs in Meritocracy

The key independent variables measure one's beliefs in meritocracy, reflected by the importance one placed on ambition and hard work for getting ahead in life. The questions were worded: How important is (hard work/having ambition) for getting ahead in life? The respondents could answer: Essential, Very Important, Fairly Important, Not Very Important, Not Important at All or Can't Choose. These responses were then converted into ordinal variables (1-5) with higher values representing a greater degree of importance placed on these traits. A value of 5 corresponds with the belief that these traits are 'essential' while a value of 1 corresponds to an assessment that these traits are 'not important at all.' Individuals who responded, 'Can't Choose' were dropped from the data set.[39]

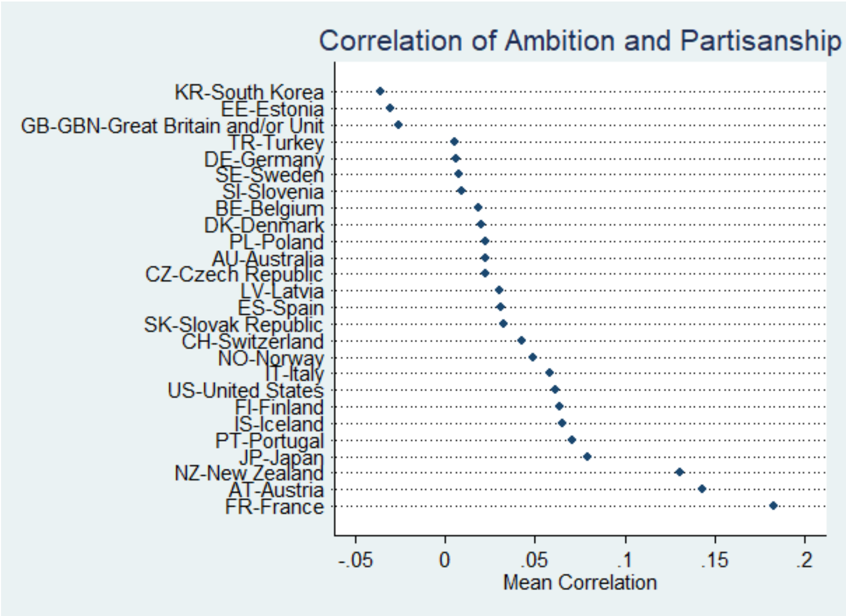

Figure 11: Country Level Correlation: Ambition and Party

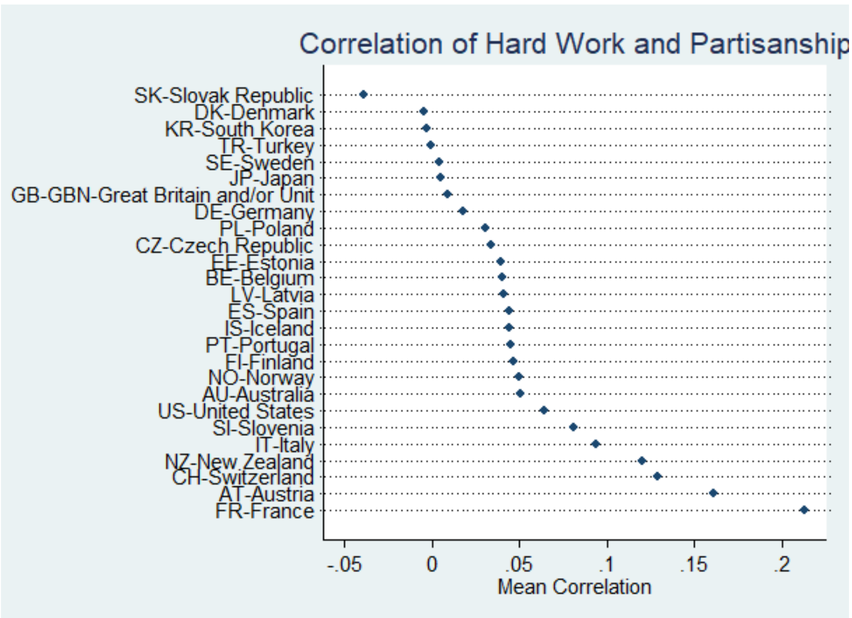

Figure 12: Country Level Correlation: Hard Work and Party

One major advantage of foundational assessments as key independent variables is that they measure sentiment that is not strongly associated with partisanship. The benefit of these two independent variables is that they are not politically controversial; responses to these questions

[39]Can't Choose responses accounted for less than 1.5 percent of all respondents.

cross-cut traditional political divisions and provide some insight for differences of opinion within political parties. In most liberal societies, hard work and ambition are normative goods; thus, the assessment of one's ability to get ahead in life based on them is an adequate measure of belief in meritocracy. As illustrated by Figures 11 and 12, the correlation between partisanship and a foundational assessment about the value of individual efforts is weak, even in more philosophically individualistic countries, such as, the United States and United Kingdom. The highest reported correlation for both measures was reported in France at roughly 0.2, which is small enough to assuage multicollinearity fears.

Control Variables

Included in the logistic regression models are numerous controls for both individual-level traits and country-level traits. All individual-level controls were collected by the ISSP Social Inequality IV (2009) Survey. In order to control for country-level effects from institutions, I compiled country-level statistics about existing social programs from the OECD Social Expenditures Data Set (2010). Whenever possible, I tried to compile data from 2010; however, in cases where that was not possible I deemed data from 2008-2010 acceptable for the purposes of this project (more details about data in Appendix B).

Public opinion on the role of government in promoting social welfare, redistribution, and the proper role of the market in determining individual level economic outcomes has been extensively studied (Dion and Birchfield 2010; Alesina and Giuliano 2009; Finseraas 2009; Borck 2007; Iversen and Soskice 2006; Ross 2006; Alesina and Angeletos 2005; Borge and Rattsø 2004; Meltzer and Richard 1981). These studies point to both individual level characteristics and country level characteristics that can affect support for social welfare spending, redistribution and the role of government in promoting economic equality. Scholars have pointed to partisanship (Iversen and Stephens 2008; Kemmerling and Bodenstein 2006) and institutions (Edlund 2007; Iversen and Soskice 2006) as key macro-level determinants of individuals' social policy preferences.

Individual-Level Control Variables

First, I consider the need to control for individuals' socioeconomic and political characteristics. Research has shown demographic characteristics of respondents influence their level of support for inequality, levels of government redistribution, and levels of government social expenditures (Alesina and Giuliano 2009). Hence, I include several variables including respondents' age, years of education, income, employment status and partisanship. Employment status is also controlled for with a series of dummy variables, measuring unemployed, part-time employment, and those who are out of the labor market, which leaves those who are employed full-time as the baseline category. Income in the ISSP 2009 is measured as deciles corresponding to respondent's annual income decile within their native country. Finally, the partisanship variable is measured as 1-5 Likert scale, with lower values referring to identification with far left-leaning parties while higher values referring identification with right-leaning parties.

Individual level attitudes also influence their policy preferences. To capture the impact of these attitudes I created a factor measure demographic factors that respondents considered to be important for getting ahead. These questions asked about race, gender, and religion. The questions used in the ISSP Data Set was: How important is a person's (race/gender/religion) for getting ahead in life? The respondents could answer: Essential, Very Important, Fairly Important, Not Very Important, Not Important at All or Can't Choose. The respondent's answers were then compiled to generate a factor measure, which captured the level of importance that respondents associated with these demographic factors for getting ahead in their society.

Individual attitudes about the role of social connections for getting ahead in their society were included by generating a factor measure. Respondents were asked to what degree knowing the right people, having political connections and giving bribes played in getting ahead within their society. The question was worded: How important is (knowing the right people/having political connections/giving bribes) for getting ahead in life? The respondents could answer: Essential, Very Important, Fairly Important, Not Very Important, Not Important at All or Can't Choose. Together the two generated factor measures capture foundational attitudes that individuals have about what it takes to thrive in their society on the dimensions of social connections and individual level demographic traits.[40]

Country-Level Control Variables

Political scientists believe that a variety of country-level characteristics and institutional features shape the levels of support for government redistribution and social spending (Edlund 2007; Iversen and Soskice 2006). The country-level economic conditions are captured with two variables: GINI coefficients to control for inequality and the unemployment rate in each country. Both have been shown to influence the redistribution preferences of individuals within the country (Kenworthy 2004). There are also pre-existing institutional structures, which have been shown to influence welfare policy preferences (Edlund 2007; Iversen and Soskice 2006). To control for existing social welfare institutions and levels of spending, I include the total level of social spending in each country and privatization of social services using a ratio of public and private spending.[41] To capture institutional effects from contributions to the government, the percentage of contributions to the government from income taxes and social contributions was included in the model. Finally, to capture the effects of fiscal centralization, I used a measure for fiscal centralization based on proportion of spending done by the federal/central government. By controlling for so many institutional and country-level factors, this project captures the institutional variables often associated with different degrees of support for government redistribution efforts (Larsen 2008; Iversen and Soskice 2006).

I use three logistic regressions with clustered standard errors by country. Survey respondents evaluated their approval or disapproval in three redistributive policy statements; thus, logistic regression was the most appropriate way to evaluate binary responses. This methodology was chosen because individual foundational assessments were being compared to individual level policy preferences. In future iterations, multi-level models will be included in the analysis as a robustness check. I evaluate the impact of two key independent variables on preferences for redistribution. The average number of observations for each logit model is around 13,700 in 23 countries. The results reported in this paper have standard errors adjusted for the 23 clusters by country and are

[40] A more detailed account of creation and justification of the generated factor variable can be found in Appendix B.

[41] The privatization ratio was generated by dividing the total amount of private social service spending (both voluntary and mandatory) by the total amount of public social service spending.

reported in odds ratios and logit coefficients.

Shaping Preferences for Redistribution and Social Welfare Policy

The results from the logistic models provide strong evidence in support of my hypotheses. In all three different models, the ambition variable, which captures the degree to which individuals believe ambition to be important for success is statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level. The variable operationalizing the assessment of hard work is statistically significant in two of the three logistic models. Some traditional explanations of institutional effects were not consistently significant in the models; although, the role of income and partisanship (both emphasized in extant literature) were statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level in most models.

Income Redistribution	Logit Coefficients	Odds ratio	**Country-Level Variables**	Logit Coefficients	Odds Ratio
Ambition	-0.241***	0.786***	Inequality	0.00677	1.007
	(0.0485)	(0.0381)		(0.0238)	(0.0240)
Hard Work	-0.140**	0.869**	Unemployment	0.138**	1.148**
	(0.0629)	(0.0546)		(0.0698)	(0.0801)
Social Connections	0.308***	1.361***	Privatization	-4.897***	0.00747***
	(0.0452)	(0.0615)		(0.986)	(0.00736)
Demographics	0.0374	1.038	Govt Revenue	-0.0521	0.949
	(0.0525)	(0.0545)		(0.0458)	(0.0435)
Unemployed	-0.153	0.858	Spending	-0.0369	0.964
	(0.166)	(0.143)		(0.0409)	(0.0394)
Out of Labor Force	-0.154*	0.857*	Fiscal Central	-1.185	0.306
	(0.0849)	(0.0728)		(0.857)	(0.262)
Underemployed	0.0900	1.094	Constant	6.127***	458.0***
	(0.0906)	(0.0992)	Observations	14,135	14,135
Income	-0.142***	0.868***			
	(0.0221)	(0.0192)			
Age	-0.00142	0.999			
	(0.00269)	(0.00269)			
Sex	0.260***	1.297***			
	(0.0555)	(0.0719)			
Education (Years)	-0.00390***	0.996***			
	(0.00147)	(0.00147)			
Partisanship	-0.129**	0.879**			
	(0.0578)	(0.0508)			

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 3: Liberal Belief and Preference for Government Income Redistribution: Evidence from ISSP 2009

When asked whether the government should take part in efforts to reduce income inequality, foundational assessments of hard work and ambition were important in shaping policy preference.

Table 3 reports the raw logit coefficients and the odds ratios of the statistical models. Assessments of ambition for success were a strong shaper of policy preference. A one unit increase in the assessment of the importance of ambition corresponded to a decrease of 21 percent in the log odds of supporting redistribution efforts. Figure 13 illustrates the marginal effect of ambition, holding all other variables at their mean. Of the respondents who believe ambition is not important at all in determining success nearly 90 percent were estimated to support income redistribution policies, but when respondents reported ambition to be essential the probability of support reduced to 76 percent. A one unit increase in the respondent's assessment of hard work caused a decrease of 23 percent in the log odds that they would support government efforts to reduce income inequality. Figure 14 shows the marginal effect of assessments of hard work in relation to support for government. Holding all other variables equal, respondents who believed hard work was essential for success were about 10 percent less likely to support income redistribution policies than those who believed it was not important at all.

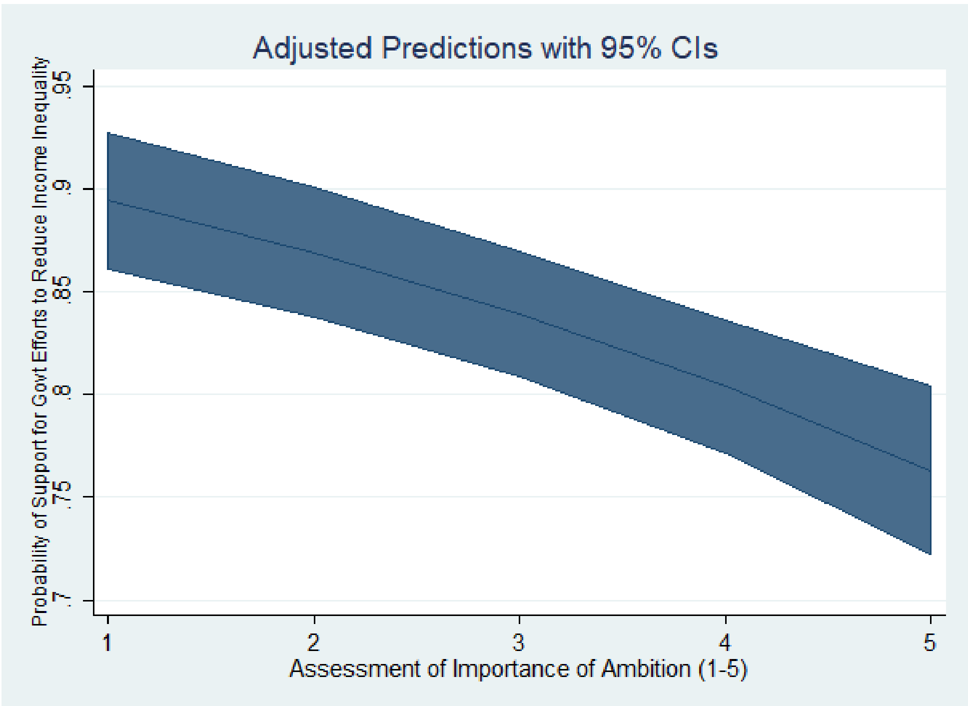

Figure 13: Marginal Effect of Ambition on Preference for Government Income Redistribution

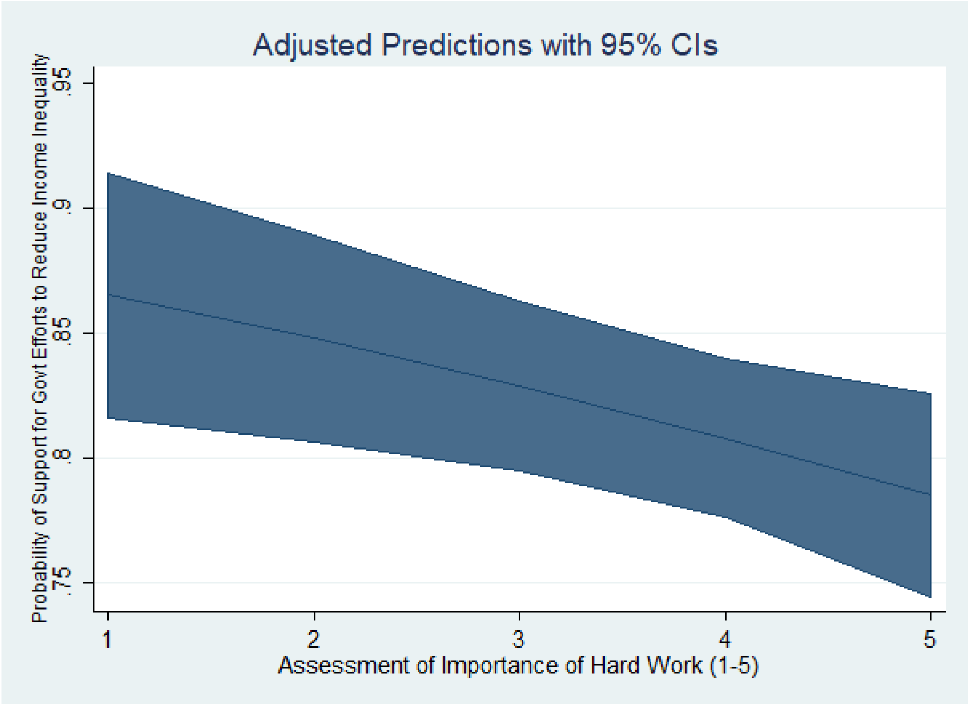

Figure 14: Marginal Effect of Hard Work on Preference for Government Income Redistribution

Other important findings in the individual level variables show the power of assessments of social connections. Individuals who believed knowing the right people to be very important for success in their society were much more likely to support redistribution of income; meanwhile, those with higher incomes were less likely to support income redistribution efforts, as were the more educated and more right-leaning partisans. Female respondents were more likely to support government efforts to redistribute income than men. Being a woman corresponds with an increase of nearly 30 percent in the log odds of supporting this policy. Country-level explanations did not produce as many statistically significant findings. In fact, only the level of unemployment in the country and the degree of privatization of social protections were strong indicators.

Reduce Aid to the Poor	Logit Coefficients	Odds ratio	**Country-Level Variables**	Logit Coefficients	Odds Ratio
Ambition	0.137***	1.147***	Inequality	0.0144	1.014
	(0.0478)	(0.0548)		(0.0219)	(0.0223)
Hard Work	-0.000182	1.000	Unemployment	0.153***	1.165***
	(0.0522)	(0.0522)		(0.0509)	(0.0593)
Social Connections	0.0852	1.089	Privatization	1.223*	3.396*
	(0.0678)	(0.0738)		(0.650)	(2.207)
Demographics	0.138	1.148	Govt Revenue	-0.0871**	0.917**
	(0.0857)	(0.0984)		(0.0420)	(0.0385)
Unemployed	-0.314	0.731	Spending	0.127**	1.135**
	(0.218)	(0.160)		(0.0622)	(0.0706)
Out of Labor Force	0.00505	1.005	Fiscal Central	0.567	1.763
	(0.141)	(0.142)		(0.753)	(1.328)
Underemployed	-0.204**	0.816**	Constant	-5.079***	0.00623***
	(0.0856)	(0.0698)	Observations	13,629	13,629
Income	-0.000359	1.000			
	(0.0299)	(0.0299)			
Age	-0.00446	0.996			
	(0.00296)	(0.00295)			
Sex	-0.0792	0.924			
	(0.0588)	(0.0543)			
Education (Years)	-0.00322	0.997			
	(0.00230)	(0.00229)			
Partisanship	0.121***	1.128***			
	(0.0358)	(0.0404)			

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 4: Liberal Belief and Preference for Government Aid to the Poor: Evidence from ISSP 2009

The model reporting results from the preference of reducing aid to the poor was the only one with mixed findings for the key independent variables. In this model, reported in Table 4, ambition was statistically significant and hard work assessments were not.[42] For each one unit increase in the assessed importance of ambition for success, there was a corresponding increase in the log odds of supporting a reduction in benefits to the poor of roughly 15 percent. Figure 15 shows the marginal effects of assessments of ambition. Holding all other variables at their means, the assessment of ambition has an estimated impact of roughly 7 percent on the overall probability of supporting reduced benefits to the poor when respondents move from the lowest assessment of ambition to the highest. This model also produced mixed findings for other individual level variables. Only partisanship and part-time employment status had statistically significant results. In the case of partisanship, for every move rightward in support for political party there was a 13

[42]Since the assessment of hard work did not result in statistically significant results, I have not reported the margins plot for this model.

percent increase in the log odds of support for reducing aid to the poor.

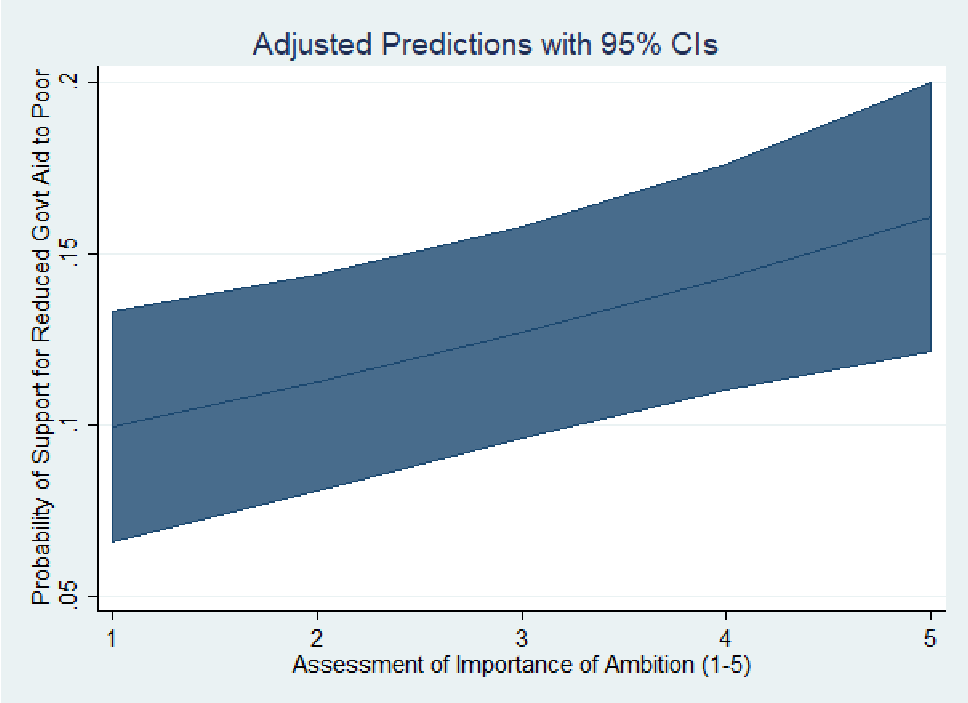

Figure 15: Marginal Effect of Ambition on Preference to Reduce Government Aid to the Poor

In this model, country-level explanations appear to be more impactful. The higher the rate of unemployment in their country, the more likely a respondent was to support aid reduction. Existing amounts of social spending had the expected impact with respondents in countries with higher levels of existing expenditures of social benefits being more likely to support reducing benefits; meanwhile, countries with higher revenue from taxation were less likely to want a reduction in aid to the poor.

Generous Aid to the Unemployed	Logit Coefficients	Odds ratio	Country-Level Variables	Logit Coefficients	Odds Ratio
Ambition	-0.228***	0.796***	Inequality	0.00935	1.009
	(0.0527)	(0.0420)		(0.0299)	(0.0302)
Hard Work	-0.160**	0.852**	Unemployment	-0.0908	0.913
	(0.0631)	(0.0538)		(0.0769)	(0.0702)
Social Connections	-0.00467	0.995	Privatization	-3.642***	0.0262***
	(0.0782)	(0.0778)		(1.164)	(0.0305)
Demographics	0.144**	1.154**	Govt Revenue	0.00552	1.006
	(0.0638)	(0.0737)		(0.0620)	(0.0623)
Unemployed	0.613***	1.846***	Spending	-0.0768	0.926
	(0.195)	(0.360)		(0.0467)	(0.0433)
Out of Labor Force	-0.0215	0.979	Fiscal Central	-0.689	0.502
	(0.0940)	(0.0920)		(0.733)	(0.368)
Underemployed	0.100	1.105	Constant	6.536***	689.4***
	(0.129)	(0.143)	Observations	13,501	13,501
Income	-0.0755***	0.927***			
	(0.0145)	(0.0135)			
Age	0.00496	1.005			
	(0.00480)	(0.00482)			
Sex	0.0318	1.032			
	(0.0527)	(0.0544)			
Education (Years)	0.00319	1.003			
	(0.00221)	(0.00222)			
Partisanship	-0.168***	0.845***			
	(0.0538)	(0.0454)			

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 5: Liberal Belief and Preference for Government Aid to the Unemployed: Evidence from ISSP 2009

Finally, the model testing foundational assessments on support for generous provision for the unemployed produced strong findings in support of my hypotheses. Table 5 details the findings, which included statistically significant results for both ambition assessments and hard work assessments. In the case of ambition, Figure 16 shows the impact of these assessments from ‘not important at all’ to ‘essential’ correspond with a 10 percent decrease in the likelihood of supporting generous provisions holding all other variables at their means. A one unit increase in the importance assessed to ambition leads to a 20 percent decrease in the log odds of support generous assistance to the unemployed. For hard work assessments, Figure 17 illustrates the approximate 7 percent decrease in the probability of support for generous unemployment aid from the lowest assessed value of hard work to the highest while holding all other variables at their means. Each increase in the assessment of hard work is associated with a 15 percent decrease in the log odds of supporting generous unemployment benefits.

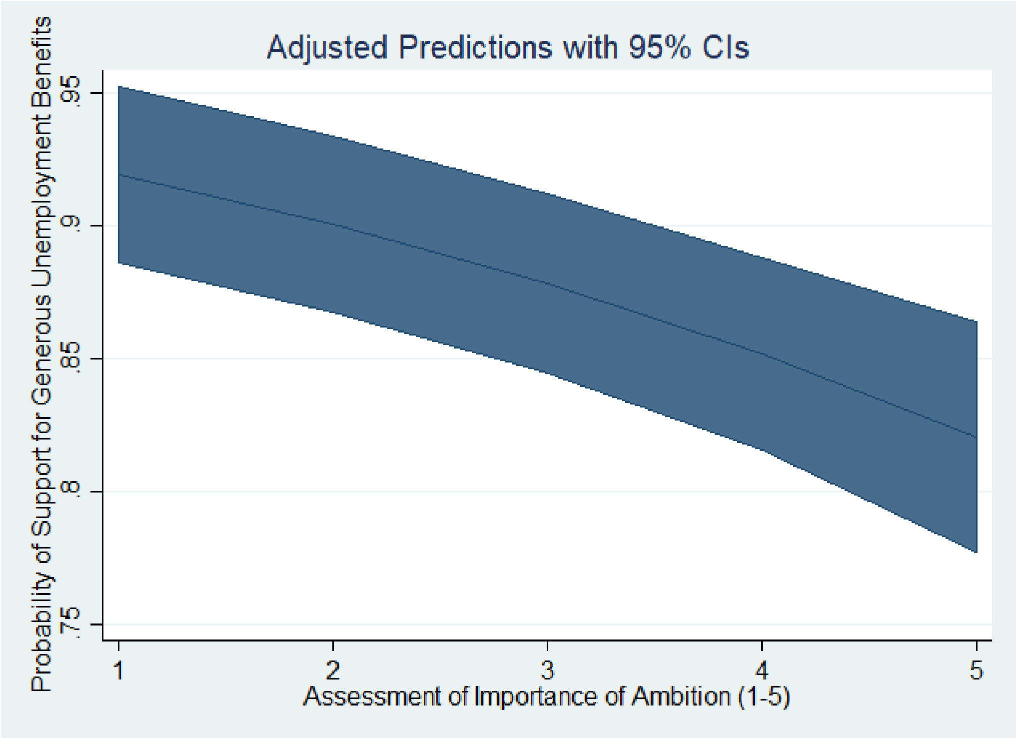

Figure 16: Marginal Effect of Ambition on Preference to Provide Generous Benefits to the Unemployed

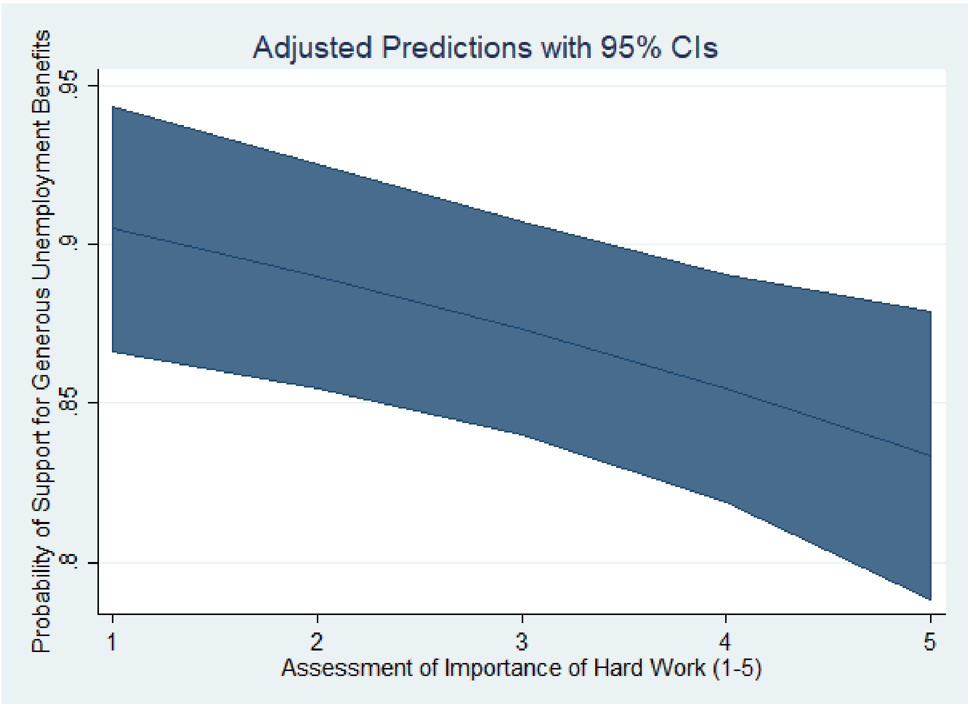

Figure 17: Marginal Effect of Hard Work on Preference to Provide Generous Benefits to the Unemployed

Other key findings from this model show the rationality of those who are currently unemployed;

individuals without employment have an associated 86 percent increase in the log odds of supporting generous benefits for individual in the same status. Respondents who believe demographic factors of race, religion, and gender to be more important for success also report an increased likelihood of supporting generous unemployment benefits while those with higher incomes did not. Partisanship was an important explanation of preference formation as well, with each move toward a more right-leaning party leading to a decrease of 15 percent in the log odds of supporting generous unemployment provisions. The only statistically significant country-level variable in this model was the degree of privatization with higher levels of privatization being associated with reduced support for generous unemployment aid.

Discussion

Much of the literature on preferences for redistribution has emphasized partisanship, economic self-interest, and institutional factors that shape individual preferences. In my models, I add to the current accounts by incorporating foundational assessments of the importance of traits associated with meritocracy. Developed liberal countries tend to promote market economies as the major source of distribution of societal resources. The promotion of markets is seen as an efficient way to reward individual initiative (ambition) and effort (hard work). Inherent in this view of just distribution through the market is the notion of meritocracy. The idea that those who become wealthy through the market will have done so based on skills/efforts they possess as individuals; especially, the two I have focused on in this chapter.

When considering the formation of policy preferences, these foundational assessments of meritocracy explain how the individual perceives the recipients of redistributive policies. If all that is needed for success in a society is a little ambition and hard work, almost every effort to redistribute the gains made by those who are perceived to work hard and take initiative given to those who have shown a lack of initiative and effort are met with skepticism. This foundational assessment of what it takes to succeed within a society is an important indicator of the perception of deservingness of policy recipients. Once deservingness is factored into the citizen's political preferences for redistribution, it is also shaped by existing institutions, partisanship, and economic self-interest; however, the assessment of deservingness may explain why even a wealthy conservative citizen sees some forms of redistribution to be justified. In my analysis, I have added to existing explanations by accounting for the assessment of meritocracy and the obvious implications this has for the perception of recipients of redistributive policies.

The assessment of ambition had a truly substantial impact on the policy preferences; the effect considering ambition 'not important' to considering it 'essential' is a 73 percent difference in the log odds of supporting benefits to the poor. Those who believe ambition is essential for success have a dramatically different perspective on the necessity of providing generous benefits to the poor. For benefits to the unemployed, an individual who believes ambition is 'essential' for success has a 20 percent decrease in log odds of supporting generous unemployment benefits compared to a respondent who believes ambition was 'very important.' This dramatic difference in odds based on only a relatively small change in the foundational assessment of what it takes to succeed warrants further research. Even controlling for the theoretically important factors of existing explanation (i.e. institutions, self-interest, partisanship) there is an effect.

Conclusion

In 5 of 6 cases, I find support for my redistribution and social welfare hypotheses. The more that citizens believe in the power of individual efforts through hard work and ambition, the more likely they are to view recipients of redistribution and welfare policies as unworthy of generous benefits. Testing the assessment of traits closely linked with meritocracy, I have accounted for a significant portion of the variation in policy preferences not currently explained by existing scholarship. By demonstrating a rational calculation based on foundational assessments, I give credence to the idea that the mass public does operate based on rational considerations; even though, those considerations are based on principles of justice rather than merely economic self-interest. The results point to a broader importance of meritocracy in framing considerations of justice and ultimately shaping policy preferences.

Conclusion

In the preceding pages, I have laid out a liberal theory of justified inequality rooted in a new reading of the philosophic archetype of classical liberalism, John Locke. Then, I have traced this specific view of inequality to perceptions of justice in inequality in liberal societies. Finally, I address the relationship between these normative assessments of justice in inequality and the demand for government efforts to redistribute. In this effort, I have attempted to expose the importance of philosophical foundations of liberal societies in relation to inequality. While there are many reasons that an individual may accept or even condone inequality in their society, classical liberalism at its very core is justified based on the idea of individuals, through their freely chosen actions, being rewarded unequally for their choices.

During this process, I have identified a teleological rationality of labor as prioritized in Lockean liberalism along with the exclusionary implications of this view. Locke's account of labor prioritized industry and profit-generating labor while frequently undervaluing other forms of labor, including subsistence labor. From a broader perspective, Locke's emphasis on labor as a source of justified inequality and property established a dignity of labor that has become ubiquitous in political rhetoric today. Although his account of the good life ultimately favored some forms of labor over others, this tendency to justify inequality based on the efforts of the individual appears to grant a moral authority to inequality among those who believe individual efforts impact their chances for prosperity. I then followed this view of labor in Locke and found strong support for inequality which is perceived to be generated based on different amounts of labor and ambition on the part of the individual.

Following this normative assessment, I found that within liberal societies, policy demands regarding redistribution and social welfare are shaped by conceptions of individual efforts as the cause of prosperity. Building on the nascent literature on meritocracy, I add a philosophical connection of this view to classical liberalism and broaden the scope of this research by examining meritocratic beliefs in 23 liberal countries. This is an advancement of our scholarly understanding which looks beyond the current paradigm of meritocracy as a distinctly American ideal. My cross-national approach allows greater leverage in determining the causal factors influencing individual perceptions of justice and individual policy preferences based on meritocracy. This approach allowed me to test the most compelling explanations for redistributive policy preferences alongside my own theory. The final results show that social equity values supersede the impacts of income and partisanship in social preferences regarding tolerance of inequality. Or to put it another way, assessments of meritocracy may be more important in determining redistributive policy preferences than our existing explanations.

While this account of labor and ambition within classical liberalism may appear to be abstraction, there are real electoral outcomes and assessments of justice being determined on this liberal metric. The ability to shape your own future through individual efforts is one of the strongest selling points for classical liberalism. At a time when many liberal societies are in turmoil, returning to a basic understanding of the appeal of liberalism may be more important now than in previous generations. The goal of identifying a philosophic rationality for inequality and then assessing its appeal within liberal societies is only a first step toward increasing our understanding, but one which will hopefully be adopted by more scholars in years to come. Future research on this topic is limited primarily by a lack of surveys necessary to create a time-series data set. Although the nascent work on meritocracy will continue to push this topic forward, inequality requires an in-depth and interdisciplinary approach. Since inequality is inherently relative, it is a difficult topic to study and will require extensive data collection efforts.

This dissertation project will be extended in the future to include additional methodological analyses and additional discussion of inequality in classical liberalism. The next step is to add newer survey data, especially the ISSP Social Inequality VII (2019) Module to this analysis and additional discussion of Locke's justification of inequality based on private property. These two additions will help to address two of the biggest issues with the dissertation in its current form. First, the addition of new survey responses will provide additional assurances of robust results and make analysis of the temporal trends possible. Second, the addition of more philosophical discussion of inequality in the works of John Locke, will cement the connection between liberalism, natural law, natural rights, and justifications for inequality found in classical liberalism. This addition will further bridge the divide between political theory and public policy on the subject.

Scholars interested in the topic of inequality in political science, political theory, and public policy need to recognize how the complexity of perceptions of justified inequality may drive citizens toward preferences that do not appear rational on the surface. The extant literature in political science tends to have a fairly negative view of individual voter rationality; however, incorporating perceptions of meritocracy may illustrate a more complex rationality of individual voters. Classical liberalism and most forms of liberalism, generally promote individual freedom and a view of inequality justified based on individual actions. If accepted by the public, this philosophy promotes a view of justice that may lead them to vote against their economic interests. Rather than denigrating the citizen as irrational or giving up on a true understanding of the drivers of redistributive policy preferences, the responsibility is on scholars to re-examine our work. By incorporating justifications based on meritocracy and the philosophic origins of these views, it is my hope that I have taken a first step in a more nuanced understanding of inequality in liberal societies.

Appendix A

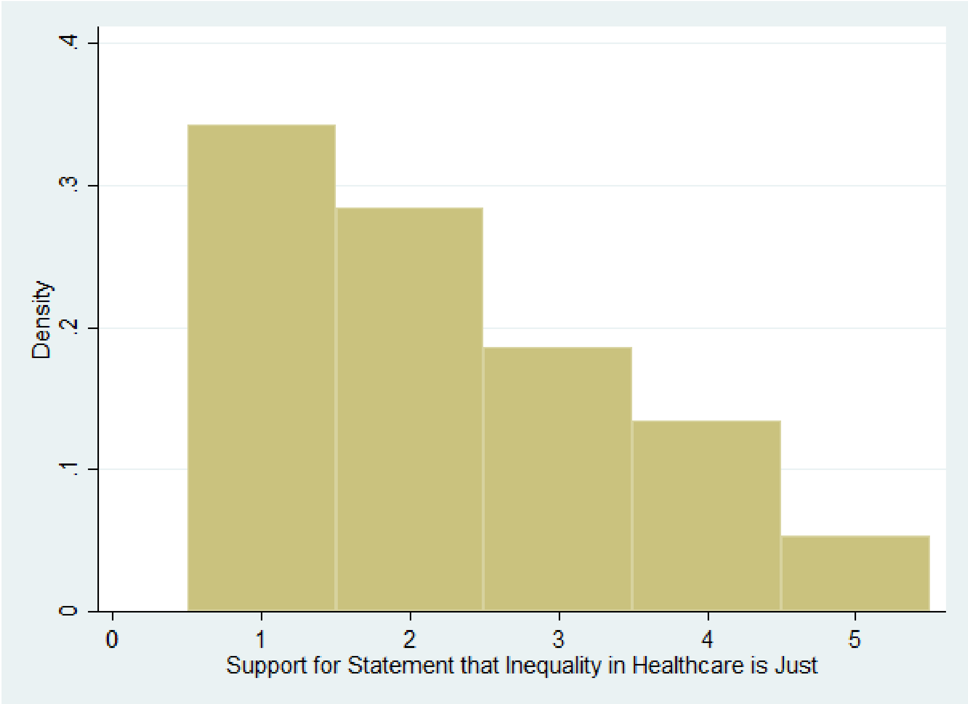

Figure 18: Distribution Histogram Support for Healthcare Inequality as Just

Table 6: Ordered Logit Regression: Support for Inequality in Healthcare as Just

VARIABLES	1	2	3	4
Assessment of Ambition	0.04	0.08***	0.11***	0.1
	-0.038	-0.03	-0.04	-0.064
Assessment of Hard Work	0.03	0.05	0.08	0.14*
	-0.037	-0.049	-0.056	-0.074
Assessment of Social Connections	-0.13***	-0.06	-0.02	0.12
	-0.045	-0.049	-0.063	-0.083
Assessment of Demographics	0.11**	0.06	0.04	-0.11
	-0.051	-0.047	-0.044	-0.08
Work Status: Unemployed	0.1	-0.28**	-0.09	-0.08
	-0.162	-0.136	-0.124	-0.187
Work Status: Out of Labor Market	0.02	-0.27**	-0.16**	-0.43**
	-0.135	-0.122	-0.079	-0.191
Work Status: Employed Part Time	-0.1	-0.38***	-0.32***	-0.60***
	-0.113	-0.127	-0.107	-0.223
Income Decile	0.08***	0.08***	0.06***	0.05**
	-0.011	-0.012	-0.012	-0.023
Age	-0.00*	-0.00**	0	0
	-0.002	-0.002	-0.002	-0.003
Sex	-0.15***	-0.23***	-0.25***	-0.23***
	-0.045	-0.038	-0.049	-0.06
Years of Education	0.00*	0.00**	0	0
	-0.001	-0.001	-0.002	-0.003
Partisanship (from left to right)	0.14***	0.13***	0.12***	0.12***
	-0.036	-0.037	-0.033	-0.035
Country Level: GINI Coefficient	-0.02	-0.01	0	0.01
	-0.016	-0.023	-0.025	-0.031
Country Level: Unemployment Rate	0.04	-0.01	-0.04	-0.05
	-0.041	-0.061	-0.076	-0.093
Country Level: Level of Privatization	1.84***	1.65**	1.27	2.03*
	-0.635	-0.739	-0.852	-1.042
Country Level: Govt Revenue from Social Spending, Income Tax	-0.04	0	0.03	0.06
	-0.026	-0.03	-0.038	-0.054
Country Level: Percentage of GDP spent on Social Services	0	-0.02	-0.04	-0.03
	-0.029	-0.032	-0.04	-0.051
Country Level: Degree of Fiscal Centralization	0.93*	1.79***	1.72**	2.27**
	-0.514	-0.622	-0.771	-1.029
Constant	0.37	-1.74***	-3.04***	-5.87***
	-0.617	-0.468	-0.569	-0.706
Observations	16,641	16,641	16,641	16,641

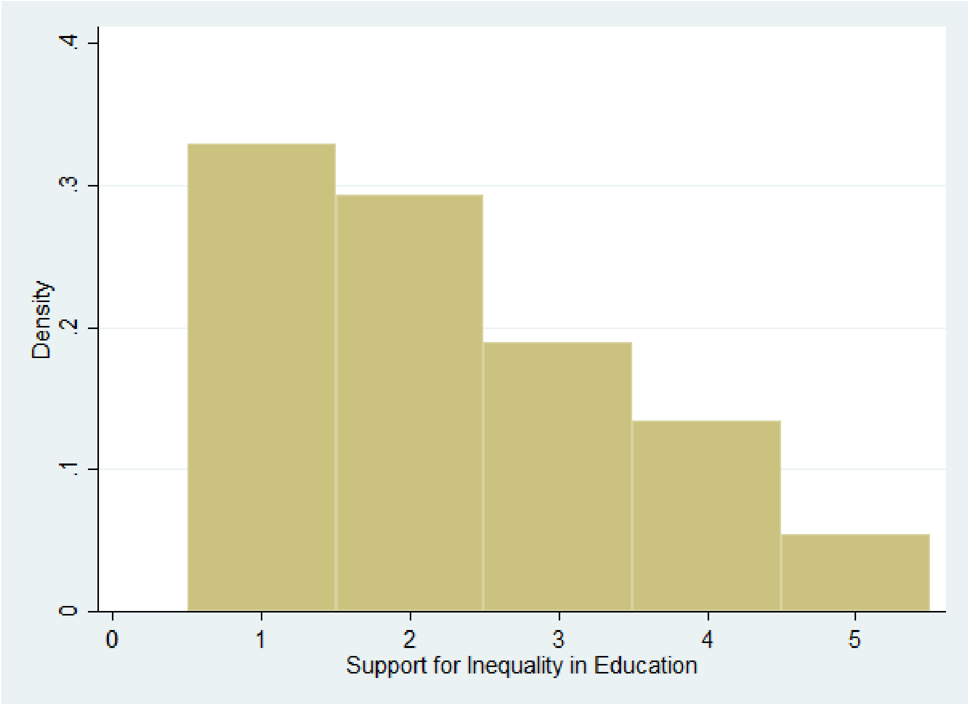

Figure 19: Distribution Histogram Support for Education Inequality as Just

Table 7: Ordered Logit Regression: Support for Inequality in Education as Just

VARIABLES	1	2	3	4
Assessment of Ambition	0.02	0.08***	0.10***	0.07
	-0.042	-0.027	-0.037	-0.074
Assessment of Hard Work	0.05	0.09**	0.15***	0.19***
	-0.033	-0.041	-0.048	-0.073
Assessment of Social Connections	-0.16***	-0.12***	-0.02	0.09
	-0.045	-0.043	-0.049	-0.066
Assessment of Demographics	0.08	0.05	0.02	-0.12
	-0.049	-0.04	-0.052	-0.077
Work Status: Unemployed	0.16	-0.09	0.02	-0.02
	-0.191	-0.106	-0.127	-0.17
Work Status: Out of Labor Market	0.14	-0.04	-0.04	-0.31*
	-0.179	-0.119	-0.106	-0.165
Work Status: Employed Part Time	0.03	-0.17	-0.19	-0.50**
	-0.204	-0.146	-0.115	-0.225
Income Decile	0.07***	0.05***	0.05***	0.03
	-0.011	-0.009	-0.011	-0.021
Age	0	0	0	0
	-0.002	-0.002	-0.002	-0.003
Sex	-0.23***	-0.27***	-0.27***	-0.26***
	-0.043	-0.039	-0.049	-0.087
Years of Education	0.00**	0	0	0
	-0.001	-0.001	-0.002	-0.003
Partisanship (from left to right)	0.13***	0.13***	0.10**	0.11**
	-0.039	-0.037	-0.039	-0.045
Country Level: GINI Coefficient	0	0.01	0.03	0.03
	-0.014	-0.023	-0.029	-0.037
Country Level: Unemployment Rate	0.03	0	-0.05	-0.05
	-0.033	-0.056	-0.081	-0.103
Country Level: Level of Privatization	1.49***	1.32*	0.77	1.32
	-0.546	-0.738	-0.961	-1.229
Country Level: Govt Revenue from Social Spending, Income Tax	-0.06***	-0.03	-0.01	0.02
	-0.023	-0.027	-0.039	-0.058
Country Level: Percentage of GDP spent on Social Services	0.01	-0.01	-0.02	-0.01
	-0.028	-0.032	-0.041	-0.056
Country Level: Degree of Fiscal Centralization	0.48	1.24*	1.41*	1.98
	-0.376	-0.64	-0.85	-1.277
Constant	0.34	-1.82**	-3.61***	-5.86***
	-0.788	-0.881	-0.929	-1.069
Observations	16,610	16,610	16,610	16,610

Data Collection

In the process of data collection, a couple of exceptions were allowed regarding the timing of data collection. For all individual level responses, the ISSP Social Inequality IV (2009) Survey was collected between 2008-2010. The majority was collected in the early parts of 2009 in most locations, but as is common with such a large cross-national survey, the survey was not collected everywhere simultaneously. The fact that some respondents were asked to complete the survey within a few months of others probably poses little problems for analysis as the assessments of social inequality, foundational beliefs, considerations of justness and policy preferences are probably not volatile enough for this discrepancy to dramatically shape any empirical analysis.

The country-level indicators were mostly collected between 2008-2010. The fact that the country level indicators are sometimes a year prior or year following the 2009 survey should not prove problematic for two major reasons. First, there is very little variance year to year in these larger country-level results. For example, the GINI coefficient for Germany between 2008 and 2010 changed only slightly from 31.29 to 31.14. This is the case with most country-level statistics; while there is change from year to year, the difference between one year and the next are relatively small. The larger forces behind inequality, institutions and large-scale government policies typically remain consistent. Second, since the ISSP conducted the survey from 2008-2010, it is difficult to determine what year each respondent was surveyed and then match that year to the country-level indicator for that year. While it is not ideal to have any time discrepancy with data collection, the fact that the discrepancy is best measured in months rather than years combined with the slow changing nature of the country level indicators means these results should be considered valid.

There was one exception to the 2008-2010 data collection timeframe. This was the indicator for fiscal centralization in Switzerland. Due to incomplete data on the spending levels at the central and local levels during 2010, the value for Switzerland reports the level of fiscal centralization for the year 2012. Again, this is not ideal, but considering the stability in this indicator should not pose any major problem for empirical analysis. In the case of Switzerland, the fiscal centralization indicator has been remarkably stable over other timeframes and there is little reason to suspect a dramatic change from 2010 to 2012. World Bank data supports the idea of minimal significant change. In the year 1976, Switzerland's level of fiscal centralization was 74.9 percent. In the year

1996, the level of fiscal centralization in Switzerland had increased slightly to 75.5 percent. Over the course of 20 years the change in fiscal centralization was less than 1 percent different.

Control Variables

The control variables included in the logit regression models stem from indicators that are considered important in the political science literature. Below is a table with a basic overview of the subfield most associated with each control variable (see Table 6A). The control variables that are used most often across subfields in political science (at least in regard to policy preferences) seem to be individual level income and individual level partisanship. In my analysis, both of these control variables are an important factor in shaping individual preferences concerning policy and considerations of justice. The political economy literature tends to point to larger institutional factors as the cause for different levels of support for government efforts to redistribute in different countries; meanwhile, political psychology is primarily concerned with individual factors. One of the benefits of this project is that it takes into account a variety of explanations across subfields and bring larger trends in institutions into the fold.

Table 8: Control Variable Justifications: Theoretical Important in Subfield

Control Variable	Political Economy	Public Opinion	Political Psychology
Work Status Dummy Variables	X	X	X
Income Decile	X	X	X
Age		X	X
Sex		X	X
Years of Education	X	X	X
Partisanship		X	X
Country Level: GINI Coefficient	X		
Country Level: Unemployment Rate	X	X	
Country Level: Level of Privatization	X		
Country Level: Govt Revenue from Social Spending, Income Tax	X	X	
Country Level: Percentage of GDP spent on Social Services	X	X	
Country Level: Degree of Fiscal Centralization	X		

The Inclusion of Multiple Factor Measures

Using factor analysis, I tested factors to see if they were suitable for inclusion as a factor measure. The most important justification to make is theoretical and then it is important to test theories empirically before including a factor measure in my regressions. The theoretical importance behind factor variables are crucial because a factor measure gets at a latent concept that is expressed through its relationship with measured variables. It is a way to measure a broader idea using specific parts to estimate. Below are detailed descriptions of my rationale for inclusion of two factor measures and the statistical results that show they are acceptable in this situation.

Demographics

The idea that success in a society depends on unchangeable individual characteristics of a person's very identity is what is attempted to be measured with this measure. People have many explanations for why some succeed and others fail within society. A very common one in the social sciences is that individuals are frequently judged by their identity. These factors have been so prevalent in American society for instance, that there are laws forbidding discrimination based on certain unchangeable identity traits. I include respondents' assessments of the importance of race, sex and religion for success in their society. Respondents were asked if they believe these factors were important to success within their society. I have included them all in one measure of 'demographic' factors for success in society. The latent idea behind all three of these specific items is an idea that individuals in the society are rewarded for unchangeable or semi-permanent identity characteristics.

Table 9: Factor Loadings (Pattern Matrix) and Unique Variances: Demographics

Variable	Factor1	Uniqueness
Sex	0.6305	0.6024
Religion	0.6441	0.5852
Race	0.6925	0.5205

These factors work in the factor analysis measure, because they all seem to capture the same concept and move together. Individuals who believe one specific aspect to be important believe them all to be important; therefore, I have combined them together in one factor measure capturing the extent to which people believe demographic identities are important for success in society.

Table 10: Factor Analysis Statistics: Demographics

Factor Analysis/Correlation			Number of Observations=33561	
Method: Principal Factors			Retained Factors=1	
Rotation: (Unrotated)			Number of Parameters=3	
Factor	**Eigenvalue**	**Difference**	**Proportion**	**Cumulative**
Factor1	1.29189	1.42872	1.3436	1.3436
Factor2	-0.13682	0.05672	-0.1423	1.2013
Factor3	-0.19355	.	-0.2013	1
LR Test: Independent vs. Saturated: Chi2(3)=2.2e+04 Prob>chi2=0.000				

Connections

The other factor measure included in the regression models is meant to capture the idea that one's social connections are what are important for success in society. This idea is very commonly phrased as 'it's not what you know, it's who you know.' The basic premise is simple; relationships formed through social contact and social proximity are the causes for success in a society. The relationships a person inherits from their family or as a result of their social standing frequently do play an important role in the life of the individual. This measure captures three survey measures with different aspects of this idea of social connections as an indicator of potential success. The ISSP survey asked respondents to assess the importance of 'knowing the right people,' having political connections and bribery of the right officials as getting ahead. Fundamental to responses in these three categories is the idea that a social connection can be the determinant of success for an individual.

Table 11: Factor Loadings (Pattern Matrix) and Unique Variances: Connections

Variable	Factor1	Uniqueness
Knowing the Right People	0.5815	0.6619
Having Political Connections	0.7372	0.4565
Bribery of the Right Officials	0.6102	0.6277

Table 12: Factor Analysis Statistics: Connections

Factor Analysis/Correlation			Number of Observations=32070	
Method: Principal Factors			Retained Factors=1	
Rotation: (Unrotated)			Number of Parameters=3	
Factor	**Eigenvalue**	**Difference**	**Proportion**	**Cumulative**
Factor1	1.25388	1.30762	1.3003	1.3003
Factor2	-0.05373	0.18215	-0.0557	1.2446
Factor3	-0.2358	.	-0.2446	1
LR Test: Independent vs. Saturated: Chi2(3)=2.1e+04 Prob>chi2=0.000				

These factors work in the factor analysis measure, because they all seem to capture the same concept and move together. Individuals who believe one specific aspect to be important believe them all to be important; therefore, I have combined them together in one factor measure capturing the extent to which people believe social connections are important for success in society.

Exact Question Wording

Social Inequality IV

[[TN: The word RACE in Q1i should be translated referring to 'ethnicity' in a broader sense.]]

To begin we have some questions about opportunities for getting ahead …

Q1. Please tick one box for each of these to show how important you think it is for getting ahead in life… *(please tick one box on each line)*

		Essen-tial	Very Impor-tant	Fairly impor-tant	Not very impor-tant	Not impor-tant at all	Can't choose
a.	[[AHEAD1: ABCD]] … how important is coming from a wealthy family?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8
b.	[[AHEAD2: ABD]] … how important is having well-educated parents?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8
c.	[[AHEAD3: ABD]] … how important is having a good education yourself?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8
d.	[[AHEAD4: ABD]] … how important is having ambition?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8
e.	[[AHEAD6: ABD]] … how important is hard work?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8
f.	[[AHEAD7: ABCD]] … how important is knowing the right people?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8
g.	[[AHEAD8: ABD]] … how important is having political connections?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8
h.	[[NEW: AHEAD17: D]] …how important is giving bribes?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8
i.	[[AHEAD9: ABD]] … how important is a person's race?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8
j.	[[AHEAD10: ABD]] … how important is a person's religion?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8
k.	[[AHEAD12: ABD]] … how important is being born a man or a woman?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8

Figure 20: ISSP Survey: Questions Used for Key Independent Variables and Factor Measures

Q8a. [[BUY1: CD]] Is it just or unjust – right or wrong – that people with higher incomes can buy better health care than people with lower incomes? *(please tick one box)*

Very just, definitely right	☐ 1
Somewhat just, right	☐ 2
Neither just nor unjust, mixed feelings	☐ 3
Somewhat unjust, wrong	☐ 4
Very unjust, definitely wrong	☐ 5
Can't choose	☐ 8

Figure 21: ISSP Survey: Questions Used for Health Care Models

Q8b. [[BUY2: CD]] **Is it just or unjust – right or wrong – that people with higher incomes can buy better education for their children than people with lower incomes?**
(please tick one box)

Very just, definitely right	☐ 1
Somewhat just, right	☐ 2
Neither just nor unjust, mixed feelings	☐ 3
Somewhat unjust, wrong	☐ 4
Very unjust, definitely wrong	☐ 5
Can't choose	☐ 8

Figure 22: ISSP Survey: Questions Used for Education Models

Appendix B

Table 13: Ordered Logit Regression: Support for Government Efforts to Reduce Income Inequality

VARIABLES	1	2	3	4
Assessment of Ambition	-0.32***	-0.23***	-0.17***	-0.03
	-0.046	-0.042	-0.043	-0.036
Assessment of Hard Work	-0.17**	-0.12*	-0.09**	-0.01
	-0.074	-0.065	-0.042	-0.052
Assessment of Social Connections	0.32***	0.26***	0.30***	0.33***
	-0.079	-0.046	-0.045	-0.051
Assessment of Demographics	0.16**	0.02	0.01	-0.05
	-0.068	-0.047	-0.039	-0.051
Work Status: Unemployed	-0.32	-0.17	0.03	0.03
	-0.304	-0.184	-0.149	-0.157
Work Status: Out of Labor Market	-0.26	-0.21	-0.09	-0.06
	-0.227	-0.174	-0.155	-0.147
Work Status: Employed Part Time	0.16	-0.02	0.16	0.24
	-0.195	-0.145	-0.125	-0.15
Income Decile	-0.13***	-0.13***	-0.11***	-0.11***
	-0.021	-0.019	-0.016	-0.014
Age	0	0	0.00*	0.01***
	-0.004	-0.003	-0.002	-0.002
Sex	0.39***	0.24***	0.16***	0.02
	-0.065	-0.046	-0.046	-0.05
Years of Education	0	-0.00***	-0.00*	-0.00***
	-0.004	-0.001	-0.001	-0.001
Partisanship (from left to right)	-0.19***	-0.11**	-0.10**	-0.09**
	-0.067	-0.052	-0.046	-0.042
Country Level: GINI Coefficient	0.01	0.01	0	0.05**
	-0.042	-0.019	-0.024	-0.022
Country Level: Unemployment Rate	0.18*	0.12**	0.11**	-0.01
	-0.103	-0.054	-0.052	-0.06
Country Level: Level of Privatization	-5.06***	-4.53***	-3.58***	-4.42***
	-1.366	-0.845	-0.866	-0.836
Country Level: Govt Revenue from Social Spending, Income Tax	-0.13**	-0.06	-0.02	0.01
	-0.051	-0.04	-0.038	-0.046
Country Level: Percentage of GDP spent on Social Services	0	-0.02	-0.04	-0.01
	-0.047	-0.035	-0.033	-0.041
Country Level: Degree of Fiscal Centralization	-0.91	-0.88	-0.84	-1.32**
	-1.051	-0.722	-0.679	-0.633
Constant	8.87***	5.63***	3.87***	-0.32
	-1.117	-0.868	-0.983	-0.897
Observations	16,615	16,615	16,615	16,615

Table 14: Ordered Logit Regression: Support for Reducing Government Spending on the Poor

VARIABLES	1	2	3	4
Assessment of Ambition	0.09**	0.06	0.11***	0.12*
	-0.043	-0.039	-0.041	-0.072
Assessment of Hard Work	0.05	0.04	0	0
	-0.055	-0.034	-0.056	-0.069
Assessment of Social Connections	-0.02	0.04	0.09	0.23***
	-0.054	-0.056	-0.06	-0.075
Assessment of Demographics	0.11**	0.11*	0.13	0.04
	-0.052	-0.059	-0.084	-0.111
Work Status: Unemployed	-0.19	-0.2	0.13	0.26
	-0.13	-0.177	-0.247	-0.382
Work Status: Out of Labor Market	0.39***	0.31***	0.35**	0.29
	-0.119	-0.116	-0.151	-0.306
Work Status: Employed Part Time	0.25**	0.1	0.16	0.36
	-0.121	-0.107	-0.18	-0.266
Income Decile	0.05***	0.02	-0.01	-0.03
	-0.015	-0.018	-0.029	-0.03
Age	-0.01***	-0.01***	0	0
	-0.002	-0.002	-0.003	-0.005
Sex	-0.06	-0.12**	-0.06	0.07
	-0.053	-0.053	-0.046	-0.077
Years of Education	0	0	-0.00*	-0.01***
	-0.002	-0.002	-0.002	-0.003
Partisanship (from left to right)	0.14***	0.15***	0.07**	-0.02
	-0.035	-0.034	-0.035	-0.079
Country Level: GINI Coefficient	-0.02	-0.01	0.02	0.06**
	-0.023	-0.022	-0.018	-0.03
Country Level: Unemployment Rate	0.13***	0.11*	0.14***	0.06
	-0.044	-0.057	-0.043	-0.065
Country Level: Level of Privatization	2.41**	1.14	0.74	-0.91
	-1.033	-0.719	-0.593	-0.817
Country Level: Govt Revenue from Social Spending, Income Tax	-0.04	-0.05	-0.08**	-0.07
	-0.048	-0.038	-0.039	-0.052
Country Level: Percentage of GDP spent on Social Services	0.06*	0.08*	0.11**	0.14**
	-0.031	-0.044	-0.05	-0.065
Country Level: Degree of Fiscal Centralization	0.42	0.59	0.37	-1.04
	-0.823	-0.641	-0.628	-0.994
Constant	-1.42*	-3.12***	-5.28***	-7.07***
	-0.846	-1	-1.121	-1.838
Observations	16,595	16,595	16,595	16,595

Table 15: Ordered Logit Regression: Support for Government Aid to the Unemployed

VARIABLES	1	2	3	4
Assessment of Ambition	0.02	0.08***	0.10***	0.07
	-0.042	-0.027	-0.037	-0.074
Assessment of Hard Work	0.05	0.09**	0.15***	0.19***
	-0.033	-0.041	-0.048	-0.073
Assessment of Social Connections	-0.16***	-0.12***	-0.02	0.09
	-0.045	-0.043	-0.049	-0.066
Assessment of Demographics	0.08	0.05	0.02	-0.12
	-0.049	-0.04	-0.052	-0.077
Work Status: Unemployed	0.16	-0.09	0.02	-0.02
	-0.191	-0.106	-0.127	-0.17
Work Status: Out of Labor Market	0.14	-0.04	-0.04	-0.31*
	-0.179	-0.119	-0.106	-0.165
Work Status: Employed Part Time	0.03	-0.17	-0.19	-0.50**
	-0.204	-0.146	-0.115	-0.225
Income Decile	0.07***	0.05***	0.05***	0.03
	-0.011	-0.009	-0.011	-0.021
Age	0	0	0	0
	-0.002	-0.002	-0.002	-0.003
Sex	-0.23***	-0.27***	-0.27***	-0.26***
	-0.043	-0.039	-0.049	-0.087
Years of Education	0.00**	0	0	0
	-0.001	-0.001	-0.002	-0.003
Partisanship (from left to right)	0.13***	0.13***	0.10**	0.11**
	-0.039	-0.037	-0.039	-0.045
Country Level: GINI Coefficient	0	0.01	0.03	0.03
	-0.014	-0.023	-0.029	-0.037
Country Level: Unemployment Rate	0.03	0	-0.05	-0.05
	-0.033	-0.056	-0.081	-0.103
Country Level: Level of Privatization	1.49***	1.32*	0.77	1.32
	-0.546	-0.738	-0.961	-1.229
Country Level: Govt Revenue from Social Spending, Income Tax	-0.06***	-0.03	-0.01	0.02
	-0.023	-0.027	-0.039	-0.058
Country Level: Percentage of GDP spent on Social Services	0.01	-0.01	-0.02	-0.01
	-0.028	-0.032	-0.041	-0.056
Country Level: Degree of Fiscal Centralization	0.48	1.24*	1.41*	1.98
	-0.376	-0.64	-0.85	-1.277
Constant	0.34	-1.82**	-3.61***	-5.86***
	-0.788	-0.881	-0.929	-1.069
Observations	16,610	16,610	16,610	16,610

Table 16: Control Variable Justifications: Theoretical Important in Subfield

Control Variable	Political Economy	Public Opinion	Political Psychology
Work Status Dummy Variables	X	X	X
Income Decile	X	X	X
Age		X	X
Sex		X	X
Years of Education	X	X	X
Partisanship		X	X
Country Level: GINI Coefficient	X		
Country Level: Unemployment Rate	X	X	
Country Level: Level of Privatization	X		
Country Level: Govt Revenue from Social Spending, Income Tax	X	X	
Country Level: Percentage of GDP spent on Social Services	X	X	
Country Level: Degree of Fiscal Centralization	X		

The Inclusion of Multiple Factor Measures

Using factor analysis, I tested factors to see if they were suitable for inclusion as a factor measure. The most important justification to make is theoretical and then it is important to test theories empirically before including a factor measure in my regressions. The theoretical importance behind factor variables are crucial because a factor measure gets at a latent concept that is expressed through its relationship with measured variables. It is a way to measure a broader idea using specific parts to estimate. Below are detailed descriptions of my rationale for inclusion of two factor measures and the statistical results that show they are acceptable in this situation.

Demographics

The idea that success in a society depends on unchangeable individual characteristics of a person's very identity is what is attempted to be measured with this measure. People have many explanations for why some succeed and others fail within society. A very common one in the social sciences is that individuals are frequently judged by their identity. These factors have been so prevalent in American society for instance, that there are laws forbidding discrimination based on certain unchangeable identity traits. I include respondents' assessments of the importance of race, sex and religion for success in their society. Respondents were asked if they believe these factors were important to success within their society. I have included them all in one measure of 'demographic' factors for success in society. The latent idea behind all three of these specific items is an idea that individuals in the society are rewarded for unchangeable or semi-permanent identity characteristics.

Table 17: Factor Loadings (Pattern Matrix) and Unique Variances: Demographics

Variable	Factor1	Uniqueness
Sex	0.6305	0.6024
Religion	0.6441	0.5852
Race	0.6925	0.5205

Table 18: Factor Analysis Statistics: Demographics

Factor Analysis/Correlation			Number of Observations=33561	
Method: Principal Factors			Retained Factors=1	
Rotation: (Unrotated)			Number of Parameters=3	
Factor	**Eigenvalue**	**Difference**	**Proportion**	**Cumulative**
Factor1	1.29189	1.42872	1.3436	1.3436
Factor2	-0.13682	0.05672	-0.1423	1.2013
Factor3	-0.19355	.	-0.2013	1
LR Test: Independent vs. Saturated: Chi2(3)=2.2e+04 Prob>chi2=0.000				

These factors work in the factor analysis measure, because they all seem to capture the same concept and move together. Individuals who believe one specific aspect to be important believe them all to be important; therefore, I have combined them together in one factor measure capturing the extent to which people believe demographic identities are important for success in society.

Connections

The other factor measure included in the regression models is meant to capture the idea that one's social connections are what are important for success in society. This idea is very commonly phrased as 'it's not what you know, it's who you know.' The basic premise is simple; relationships formed through social contact and social proximity are the causes for success in a society. The relationships a person inherits from their family or as a result of their social standing frequently do play an important role in the life of the individual. This measure captures three survey measures with different aspects of this idea of social connections as an indicator of potential success. The ISSP survey asked respondents to assess the importance of 'knowing the right people,' having political connections and bribery of the right officials as getting ahead. Fundamental to responses in these three categories is the idea that a social connection can be the determinant of success for an individual.

Table 19: Factor Loadings (Pattern Matrix) and Unique Variances: Connections

Variable	Factor1	Uniqueness
Knowing the Right People	0.5815	0.6619
Having Political Connections	0.7372	0.4565
Bribery of the Right Officials	0.6102	0.6277

Table 20: Factor Analysis Statistics: Connections

Factor Analysis/Correlation			Number of Observations=32070	
Method: Principal Factors			Retained Factors=1	
Rotation: (Unrotated)			Number of Parameters=3	
Factor	**Eigenvalue**	**Difference**	**Proportion**	**Cumulative**
Factor1	1.25388	1.30762	1.3003	1.3003
Factor2	-0.05373	0.18215	-0.0557	1.2446
Factor3	-0.2358	.	-0.2446	1
LR Test: Independent vs. Saturated: Chi2(3)=2.1e+04 Prob>chi2=0.000				

These factors work in the factor analysis measure, because they all seem to capture the same concept and move together. Individuals who believe one specific aspect to be important believe them all to be important; therefore, I have combined them together in one factor measure capturing the extent to which people believe social connections are important for success in society.

Exact Question Wording

Figure 23: ISSP Survey: Questions Used for Key Independent Variables and Factor Measures

Social Inequality IV

[[TN: The word RACE in Q1i should be translated referring to 'ethnicity' in a broader sense.]]

To begin we have some questions about opportunities for getting ahead …

Q1. Please tick one box for each of these to show how important you think it is for getting ahead in life… *(please tick one box on each line)*

		Essen-tial	Very Impor-tant	Fairly impor-tant	Not very impor-tant	Not impor-tant at all	Can't choose
a.	[[AHEAD1: ABCD]] … how important is coming from a wealthy family?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8
b.	[[AHEAD2: ABD]] … how important is having well-educated parents?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8
c.	[[AHEAD3: ABD]] … how important is having a good education yourself?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8
d.	[[AHEAD4: ABD]] … how important is having ambition?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8
e.	[[AHEAD6: ABD]] … how important is hard work?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8
f.	[[AHEAD7: ABCD]] … how important is knowing the right people?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8
g.	[[AHEAD8: ABD]] … how important is having political connections?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8
h.	[[NEW: AHEAD17: D]] …how important is giving bribes?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8
i.	[[AHEAD9: ABD]] … how important is a person's race?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8
j.	[[AHEAD10: ABD]] … how important is a person's religion?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8
k.	[[AHEAD12: ABD]] … how important is being born a man or a woman?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8

Figure 24: ISSP Survey: Questions Used for Dependent Variables

Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
(Please tick one box on each line)

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Dis-Agree	Strongly disagree	Can't choose
a.	[[TOLARGE: ABCD]] Differences in income in <country> are too large.	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8
b.	[[GOV1: ABCD]] It is the responsibility of the government to reduce the differences in income between people with high incomes and those with low incomes.	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8
c.	[[GOV6: ABD]] The government should provide a decent standard of living for the unemployed.	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8
d.	[[GOV4: ABD]] The government should spend less on benefits for the poor.	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐8

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