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Priming past experiences and preferences for redistribution

Jeffrey Cross
Hamilton College

Stephen Wu
Hamilton College

Wei Zhan
Hamilton College

Abstract

This paper analyzes the effects of priming people to think about negative past experiences such as job loss or illness on attitudes towards redistribution. Using a randomly assigned survey design, we find that the effects of being primed to think about past misfortunes on support for redistribution vary by gender. Being cued to think about negative past experiences increases sympathy for governmental redistribution for male respondents, but not for non-males. For non-male respondents, past misfortunes increase support for redistribution even when not primed. Psychological research suggests that this could be due to gender-based differences in how events are remembered or processed.

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Contact: Jeffrey Cross - jcross@hamilton.edu, Stephen Wu - swu@hamilton.edu, Wei Zhan - wzhan@hamilton.edu.
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1 Introduction

Significant research has been dedicated to understanding determinants of attitudes toward redistribution. Much of the literature focuses on how economic standing impacts preferences for redistribution. In Durante et al. (2014), experimental subjects favor redistribution rules that maximize their own post-tax earnings, though social preferences also matter, as many are willing to pay to reduce inequality among others. Conventional models predict that poorer individuals are more likely to favor redistribution because they stand to gain the most from such policies (Alesina and Giuliano, 2011; Piketty, 1995), but empirical evidence does not generally support this. Hoy and Mager (2021) find that in seven out of ten countries surveyed, informing people that they are poorer than they initially thought significantly *decreases* their concern about wealth inequality. And in laboratory experiments, Kuziemko et al. (2014) find that an aversion to being in "last-place" leads many low-income individuals to oppose redistribution in fear that such policies could benefit people just below them on the economic ladder.

Another important predictor of tax and redistribution preferences is one's belief about opportunities for, and determinants of success. People who believe that societies offer equal opportunities to all are less supportive of redistribution (Benabou and Tirole, 2006). In a similar vein, those who believe economic outcomes are largely determined by circumstances outside of one's control are more sympathetic to redistribution than those who believe that success is a function of one's own efforts (Fong, 2001). There is also experimental evidence that the way monetary rewards are determined impacts subjects' willingness to make transfer payments from high earners to low earners. For example, Krawczyk (2010) demonstrates that average transfers are lower when outcomes are determined by performance on a task rather than by pure luck, and Tepe et al. (2020) obtain similar results, where desired tax rates are lower under merit rules than under luck rules. Buser et al. (2020) find that gender

differences in attitudes towards redistribution vary based on the role of luck versus ability in determining outcomes.

Past experiences also can affect willingness to redistribute resources to those in need. Giuliano and Spilimbergo (2014) find evidence that growing up in a recession increases support for redistribution and makes people more likely to vote for progressive political parties. Cassar and Klein (2019) use a laboratory setting to show that experiencing failure increases willingness to redistribute money to others. Experiencing income inequality can also affect future views toward inequality and redistribution. Interestingly, those who have experienced higher inequality in their lives are *less* likely to favor redistribution and to vote for left-wing parties (Roth and Wohlfart, 2018). One possible explanation for this is that inequality becomes normalized when people have more experience with it.

But the impacts of past experiences may not be the same for everyone. Previous economic work highlights that failure impacts men and women differently. For example, Buser and Yuan (2019) show that girls who fail to advance past the initial round of the Dutch Math Olympiad are less likely to compete again one year later, relative to boys who also fail to make it past the first round, and Wasserman (2018) finds that losing an election causes over 50 percent more attrition for female candidates than for male candidates. Psychological research also documents gender differences in memory and recall. Pillemer et al. (2003) and Herlitz et al. (1997) demonstrate that women's memory styles are markedly more specific and episodic than men's styles, and Grysman and Hudson (2013) find that women report more vivid memory experiences and include more details about emotions than men. Buckner and Fivush (1998) documents gender differences even among young children, as girl's autobiographical narratives were longer and more detailed than boys' narratives. Moreover, differences in narratives are reflected in differences in responses, as women generally have more negative and longer-lasting reactions to traumatic experiences than men (Holbrook et al., 2002; Solomon et al., 2005). Given the longer recall of past traumatic events for

women, priming may be more impactful for men, who more easily forget past events, than for women.

This paper extends the literature by studying the impact of priming people to think about negative past experiences on preferences for redistribution. The hypothesis is that prompting people to think about past misfortunes may make people more sympathetic to redistribution, especially when these events can be characterized as being out of one's control. Much of the literature on preferences for redistribution depends on whether one views life outcomes as being the result of hard work or luck, so prompting people to think about negative experiences that are largely the result of random chance could conceivably lead to one being more sympathetic towards the idea that poverty is largely due to past misfortunes. To test this hypothesis, we conduct an experiment where survey respondents are asked questions about various past misfortunes as well as their attitudes toward redistribution, but the ordering of questions is randomly assigned. We find that priming effects vary by gender: males who are primed to think about negative past experiences have a greater preference for governmental redistribution than those in the control group, but this treatment effect is insignificant for non-male respondents. For non-males, having past misfortunes increases support for redistribution regardless of whether or not they are primed to think about them. These results are consistent with the psychology literature on gender differences in recall of prior negative experiences.

2 Data and Empirical Methodology

Survey participants were recruited using a nationally representative sample of 474 subjects provided by *Prolific* for the United States.[1] *Prolific* is an online recruitment tool drawn from the general population for surveys and experiments. Research has shown that compared

[1]The full survey is provided in the appendix.

to subjects in a lab experiment or other online platforms such as MTurk, Prolific has an advantage of both low noise in data and low cost per observation (Palan and Schitter, 2018; Gupta et al., 2021). To draw a representative sample, Prolific stratifies across age, sex, and ethnicity and, for a given sample size, they ensure that subgroups (e.g., 28-37 year old White male) contain the same proportions as the national population.[2] All subjects are presented with the same set of questions, but the order is varied between treatment and control groups. Individuals in the treatment group are asked about negative events experienced in the last 10 years (e.g., unemployment, divorce, death of a loved one, illness) before being asked about their attitudes towards redistribution, while the ordering is reversed for those in the control group. Specifically, our survey asks individuals to respond to the statements "The government should reduce income differences" versus "The government should not concern itself with reducing income differences".[3] All subjects were paid a flat amount of $2.50 for completing a survey that took, on average, less than 3 minutes.[4]

In Table 1, we present summary statistics for the control and treatment groups separated by gender, with males in Panel A and non-males in Panel B. We find no statistically significant differences between the treatment and control groups for any of the demographic characteristics. The only significant difference is that for non-males, individuals in the control group have experienced 0.45 more past negative events than those in the treatment group. Comparing across gender, the primary demographic difference is that males have

[2]Given potential concerns about data quality for these types of platforms, we analyze the survey duration for participants to make sure that outliers are not driving our results. When we trim the sample at the 1st percentile, 99th percentile, or both 1st and 99th percentiles, the conclusions from our analysis do not change and the point estimates are quite stable.

[3]This question has been used in other research and is similar to a question in the World Values Survey, that asks about the importance that governments tax the rich and subsidize the poor (Alesina and Giuliano, 2011; Hoy and Mager, 2021).

[4]One potential concern is that a survey used to elicit preferences for redistribution may not produce valid estimates given the low stakes and estimates may be different in a more costly setting, but research in contingent valuation shows that ratios of willingness to pay to willingness to accept do not differ significantly between real experiments and hypothetical ones (Horowitz and McConnell, 2002; Venkatachalam, 2004).

somewhat higher incomes. Given the importance that income plays in attitudes towards redistribution (e.g., Durante et al. 2014), we control for income directly with income fixed effects in our empirical strategy.

The primary effect we are interested in is how making a subject think of their past experiences impacts their attitudes toward redistribution. By randomly assigning the order of questions, we are able to identify this effect by comparing those that are asked about the events before the redistribution question with those that are asked the same questions in reverse order. Given previous findings on gender differences for how experiences are internalized and remembered, we estimate treatment effects separately by gender.

Figure 1 shows a histogram of attitudes towards redistribution broken down by treatment and gender. Comparing attitudes towards redistribution by gender for the control groups with a Pearson's chi-squared test, we can reject the null at the 10 percent level (p-value= 0.066), which highlights baseline differences in attitudes towards redistribution on gender lines.[5] Absent any priming effects, males are less in favor of redistribution than non-males, which aligns with previous work that has generally shown women are more in favor of redistribution compared to men (Buser et al., 2020).[6] When performing the same analysis across gender lines for the treated group, we find much weaker evidence of differences in attitudes towards redistribution, which is evident in a p-value of 0.294 for the Pearson's chi-squared test. The original gender gap diminishes for the treatment group as males become more sympathetic towards redistribution as a result of priming.

To empirically identify the size of the treatment effect on attitudes towards redistribution,

[5]The Pearson's chi-squared test fails to account for the ordinal nature of the redistribution variable, but previous work (Goodman, 1954) has documented that the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (Smirnov, 1948) can be under-powered for discrete random variables.

[6]Our survey respondents include two individuals who identify as non-binary, in addition to 234 males and 236 females.

we use Ordinary Least Squares to estimate the following specification separately by gender:[7]

$$Y_i = \alpha + \beta T_i + \theta_i + \epsilon_i \tag{1}$$

Our first outcome of interest is Y_i, which is measured on a scale from 1-5 with 5 representing strong agreement with the statement "The government should reduce income differences" and 1 representing strong agreement with the statement "The government should not concern itself with reducing income differences." We also estimate a linear probability model, where the dependent variable is equal to 1 if the individual strongly agrees with "The government should reduce income differences" and 0 otherwise. Our coefficient of interest, β, represents the effect of treatment on attitudes toward redistribution. We also control for other factors that could impact attitudes towards redistribution including age group, self-identified race, income group, and education group fixed effects (θ_i). We cluster our standard errors at the state level since, despite individual randomization, there are likely unobserved stochastic shocks at the state level (Deeb and de Chaisemartin, 2019).[8] To account for multiple hypothesis testing, we also report sharpened False Discovery Rate (FDR) q-values using the procedure from Anderson (2008).[9]

We also explore the interaction between events that a subject has experienced and the

[7]Results are similar for ordered probit or probit regressions.

[8]Deeb and de Chaisemartin (2019) show that if there is randomization at the individual level but stochastic shocks at a more aggregate level, then one can draw inference on two estimands. The first is the average treatment effect (ATE) conditional on the cluster-level shocks using heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors. The second is ATE netted out of the shocks using cluster-robust standard errors. In our context, one potential concern is that stochastic shocks at the state-level impact attitudes towards redistribution, potentially through differences in the probability of negative events. Given this concern, we cluster at the state-level because this tests if the treatment would have had an effect under alternative stochastic shocks. It is worth noting, however, that the conclusions remain unchanged if we instead use state fixed effects and heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors.

[9]The False Discovery Rate is the expected proportion of type 1 error rejections of the null.

treatment effect by estimating a slightly different specification:

$$Y_i = \alpha + \beta_0 E_i + \beta_1 T_i + \beta_2 T_i \cdot E_i + \theta_i + \epsilon_i \tag{2}$$

This specification allows us to estimate the effect of the number of events one has experienced on their preference for redistribution, reflected in β_0, the treatment effect (absent any events), given by β_1, and an interaction between the two, represented by β_2. If treatment magnifies a subjects' memory of prior events, we would expect β_2 to be positive.

3 Results

Table 2 shows results from estimating equation (1) for the full sample and separately by gender. In the first column, we obtain a statistically insignificant treatment effect of 0.088 for the full sample, but the next two columns highlight the gender differences that were evident in Figure 1. The effect for males is statistically significant with an estimated increase of approximately 0.3 on a five-point scale, while for non-males we find a negative and insignificant effect.[10] We find a similar pattern when the outcome is instead an indicator representing strong agreement with government redistribution. Treatment increases the probability that males strongly agree with reducing income differences by 11 percentage points, relative to a baseline mean of 21 percent, while for non-males we estimate no effect of treatment.

To better understand the mechanism behind this result, we interact the treatment with the total number of events that subjects have experienced. Table 3 shows the results from estimating equation (2) separately for the full sample, males, and non-males. For the full sample in column one, we estimate null effects for both the treatment effect and the treatment interacted with events. We do find a statistically significant positive relationship between

[10] We also find a statistically significant difference in the treatment effect for males and non-males if we estimate the same specification, but allow for heterogeneous treatment effects by gender.

the number of events one has experienced and sympathy towards redistribution. This makes sense intuitively, as people who have experienced misfortune will be able to relate to others who have had experiences that negatively impacted their financial well-being.

Splitting the sample by gender reveals the different ways that priming interacts with events to shape attitudes toward redistribution. For non-males, shown in column three, we see a pattern similar to the full sample where the effect of events on redistribution do not depend on priming. However, for males, we find that events, absent treatment, have a smaller, statistically insignificant effect on attitudes towards redistribution. Once treated, though, male attitudes towards redistribution are significantly more responsive to the number of events. Specifically, we find that there is a positive, statistically significant treatment effect for those with at least three or more events in the past 10 years, which represents almost 40 percent of all males. But priming has an insignificant effect for non-males even if the subject has had eight negative events, the maximum number in our sample. The last three columns of Table 3 shows a similar pattern when the dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if the individual strongly agrees that the government should reduce income differences. We find a positive, statistically significant effect of treatment for males with at least 3 events and an insignificant effect for non-males, even if the subject has experienced eight negative events.[11]

[11]In additional results not shown here, we also test to see whether the effects of priming vary according to the type of event experienced in the past. Although the survey does not ask specific details about prior events, some might be conceived as more random than others. When we analyze a subset of individuals who suffered a death of a family member or close friend, experienced a natural disaster, or had been the victim of a crime, priming these individuals to think about their negative experiences increases their sympathy for redistribution more strongly than for those who had not experienced these types of events, though a test of the equivalence of these coefficients is only significant at the 10 percent level. When looking at each of the specific events separately, the results paint a fairly consistent picture: males that are primed to think about past events increase their preferences for redistribution relative to the control group for each type of event, while these marginal effects are uniformly small and insignificant for non-males, regardless of the type of event experienced.

4 Discussion

This paper analyzes the impact of priming people to think about prior negative experiences on attitudes toward redistribution. Using a randomly assigned survey design, we identify the effect of differences in how experiences are internalized on attitudes towards redistribution. For male respondents, priming them about past experiences increases their support for governmental distribution, but there are no such effects for non-males. Instead, for non-males, experiencing misfortune increases sympathy for redistribution regardless of whether they are reminded of these events or not. Although we are not directly able to test for mechanisms, the results are in line with psychological research which shows that women have much more vivid and detailed recall of past experiences and their memories of traumatic events are longer lasting than that for men. For women, simply having negative past experiences is enough to impact preferences for redistribution, and no reminders are necessary. Traumatic events and misfortunes remain salient for them, even long past the times in which they experience them. For men, on the other hand, the impacts of these events quickly fade over time, which may explain why priming is necessary to change their attitudes toward redistribution.

Our experimental results contribute to the growing literature on the formation of preferences toward redistribution, yet a number of questions remain open for future research. We are not able to test whether priming effects depend on how severe or recent events are, as we do not have this information in the survey. It is also possible that the manner in which people are prompted to think about past events can determine how strongly this affects their preferences for redistribution. Our survey only asks whether people have experienced any of the listed negative events, but having them answer more detailed follow-up questions may elicit stronger emotions, leading to stronger effects on preferences. Future research could test to see if gender differences in priming persist when stakes are higher by using experimental games of redistribution involving actual monetary incentives.

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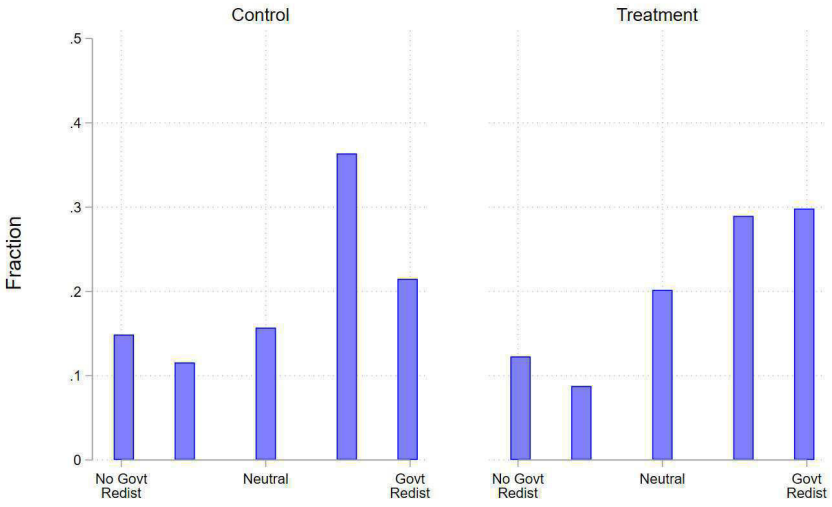
Table 1: Summary Statistics by Treatment

Panel A: Male	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Control	Treatment	Difference
Caucasian	0.78	0.73	0.05
	(0.42)	(0.45)	(0.06)
Married	0.50	0.55	-0.04
	(0.50)	(0.50)	(0.07)
Age Scale (1 to 8)	3.42	3.58	-0.16
	(1.75)	(1.62)	(0.22)
Income Scale (1 to 12)	7.33	7.48	-0.15
	(3.73)	(3.60)	(0.48)
Education Scale (1 to 10)	6.80	7.08	-0.28
	(1.90)	(1.73)	(0.24)
Events (max 10)	2.22	2.22	0.00
	(1.67)	(1.63)	(0.22)
Observations	121	114	235
Panel B: Non-male			
Caucasian	0.78	0.76	0.03
	(0.41)	(0.43)	(0.05)
Married	0.47	0.49	-0.02
	(0.50)	(0.50)	(0.07)
Age Scale (1 to 8)	3.59	3.41	0.18
	(1.54)	(1.67)	(0.21)
Income Scale (1 to 12)	6.55	6.16	0.39
	(3.39)	(3.43)	(0.44)
Education Scale (1 to 10)	6.84	7.02	-0.19
	(1.80)	(1.67)	(0.23)
Events (max 10)	2.52	2.07	0.45*
	(1.60)	(1.59)	(0.21)
Observations	116	123	239

Notes: This table compares the control and treatment groups for a variety of observables. The age scale goes from 1 to 8 where 1 represents age $18-24$ and the bins that follow are increments of 10 except for 8, which is anyone older than 85. The income scale goes from 1 to 12 where 1 through 10 are in increments of $10,000$, 11 is $100,000$ to $149,999$, and 12 is more than $150,000$. The education scale is based on survey responses to the highest grade completed where 1 to 10 represent (in order): Never attended school, Grades 1-8, Grades 9-11, Grade 12 or GED, Some College but no degree, Trade/technical/vocational degree/training, Associate degree, Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, or Doctoral degree.

Figure 1: Priming and Redistribution

(a) Males



(b) Non-Males

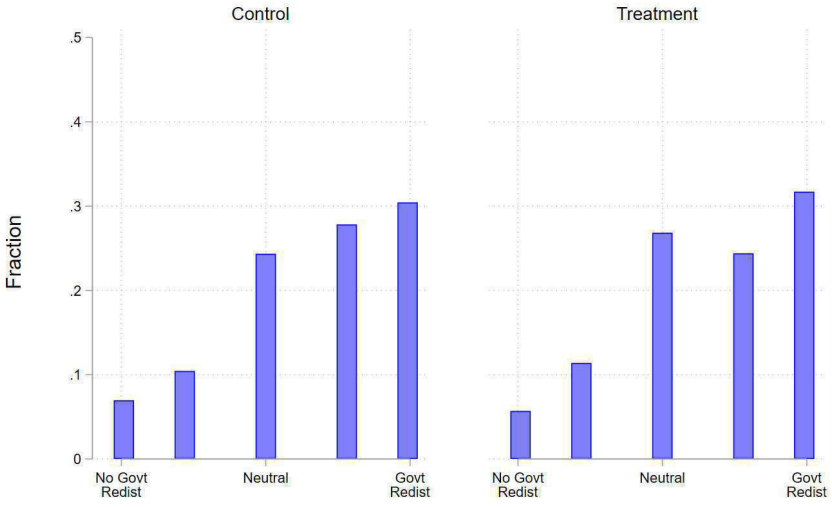


Table 2: Priming Past Events and Attitudes Towards Redistribution

	(1) Redist.(1-5)	(2) Redist.(1-5)	(3) Redist.(1-5)	(4) $\mathbb{1}$(Redist=5)	(5) $\mathbb{1}$(Redist=5)	(6) $\mathbb{1}$(Redist=5)
Treatment	0.088	0.298**	-0.085	0.053*	0.114**	-0.015
	[0.096]	[0.116]	[0.153]	[0.031]	[0.044]	[0.056]
Sharpened q-value	.38	.044	.537	.144	.044	.66
Sample	Full	Male Only	Non-Male Only	Full	Male Only	Non-Male Only
Outcome Mean	3.51	3.38	3.64	.26	.21	.3
Observations	470	232	236	470	232	236
Clusters	44	42	42	44	42	42

Notes: Dependent variable in the first three columns is a 1-5 scale, where 5 represents strong agreement with the statement "The government should reduce income differences" and 1 represents strong agreement with "The government should not concern itself with reducing income differences". The dependent variable in the last three columns is an indicator equal to 1 if the individual selected 5. All specifications include age, race, education, and income fixed effects. The age scale goes from 1 to 8 where 1 represents age $18-24$ and the bins that follow are increments of 10 except for 8, which is anyone older than 85. The income scale goes from 1 to 12 where 1 through 10 are in increments of $10,000$, 11 is $100,000$ to $149,999$, and 12 is more than $150,000$. The education scale is based on survey responses to the highest grade completed where 1 to 10 represent (in order): Never attended school, Grades 1-8, Grades 9-11, Grade 12 or GED, Some College but no degree, Trade/technical/vocational degree/training, Associate degree, Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, or Doctoral degree. Race fixed effects account for baseline average differences in redistribution for each of the following groups: Asian or Pacific Islander, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Native American or Alaskan Native, White or Caucasian, Prefer not to answer, or self-described. Standard errors are clustered at the state level.

Table 3: Number of Events, Priming Past Events, and Attitudes Toward Redistribution

	(1) Redist.(1-5)	(2) Redist.(1-5)	(3) Redist.(1-5)	(4) 𝟙(Redist=5)	(5) 𝟙(Redist=5)	(6) 𝟙(Redist=5)
Treatment	0.161	-0.096	0.321	0.060	-0.046	0.156
	[0.210]	[0.350]	[0.412]	[0.095]	[0.103]	[0.186]
Treatment*Events	-0.013	0.123	-0.106	0.001	0.050*	-0.047
	[0.057]	[0.096]	[0.098]	[0.027]	[0.028]	[0.051]
Events (#)	0.126***	0.069	0.155**	0.036**	0.026	0.049
	[0.043]	[0.061]	[0.061]	[0.016]	[0.022]	[0.032]
Sample	Full	Male Only	Non-Male Only	Full	Male Only	Non-Male Only
Outcome Mean	3.51	3.38	3.64	.26	.21	.3
Observations	470	232	236	470	232	236
Clusters	44	42	42	44	42	42

Notes: Dependent variable in the first three columns is a 1-5 scale, where 5 represents strong agreement with the statement "The government should reduce income differences" and 1 represents strong agreement with "The government should not concern itself with reducing income differences". The dependent variable in the last three columns is an indicator equal to 1 if the individual selected 5. All specifications include age, race, education, and income fixed effects. The age scale goes from 1 to 8 where 1 represents age $18-24$ and the bins that follow are increments of 10 except for 8, which is anyone older than 85. The income scale goes from 1 to 12 where 1 through 10 are in increments of $10,000$, 11 is $100,000$ to $149,999$, and 12 is more than $150,000$. The education scale is based on survey responses to the highest grade completed where 1 to 10 represent (in order): Never attended school, Grades 1-8, Grades 9-11, Grade 12 or GED, Some College but no degree, Trade/technical/vocational degree/training, Associate degree, Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, or Doctoral degree. Race fixed effects account for baseline average differences in redistribution for each of the following groups: Asian or Pacific Islander, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Native American or Alaskan Native, White or Caucasian, Prefer not to answer, or self-described. Standard errors are clustered at the state level.

Appendix: Survey on the role of luck and hard work in determining success

Group 1 (treatment): Primed to think about negative past events

1. Age: What is your current age?
   - 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65-74, 75-84, 85+

2. Gender: How do you identify?
   - Male, Female, Non-binary, Self-describe (open ended), Prefer not to answer

3. Race/Ethnicity: How do you identify? (Check all that apply)
   - Asian or Pacific Islander, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Native American or Alaskan Native, White or Caucasian, Prefer not to answer

4. State: What is your current state of residence?

5. Events: Thinking back over the last 10 years, have you had any of the following events occur? Check any and all that apply.
   - Divorce/separation
   - Lost a job
   - Been unemployed for longer than 3 months
   - Death of partner/spouse/child/parent/close relative or close friend
   - New onset of major physical illness
   - New onset of mental health difficulties
   - Major auto accident
   - Natural disaster, fire, major flooding impacting your home
   - Crime against you or immediate family member
   - Being sued

6. Which of the events that you checked above was, broadly speaking, the most challenging for you?

7. Getting ahead (same as GSS question): Some people say that people get ahead by their own hard work; others say that lucky breaks or help from other people are more important. Which do you think is most important?

   - (1-5 scale, where 1 represents hard work being most important, 3 represents hard work and luck being equally important, and 5 represents luck being most important)

8. Redistribution (same as WVS question): Respond to the following statements: “The government should reduce income differences” versus “The government should not concern itself with reducing income differences”

- (1-5 scale, where 1 represents strong agreement with “The government should reduce income differences”, 3 represents a neutral perspective towards these statements, and 5 represents strong agreement with “The government should not concern itself with reducing income differences”)

9. Employment: What is your current employment status?
   - Employed for wages, self-employed, not employed but looking for work, a homemaker, a student, retired, unable to work

10. Grade: What is the highest grade or year of school you have completed?
    - Never attended school or only kindergarten, Grades 1 through 8 (Elementary), Grades 9 through 11 (Some high school), Grade 12 or GED (High school graduate), Some College but no degree, Trade/technical/vocational degree/training, Associate degree, Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, or Doctoral degree.

11. Marital: What is your marital status?
    - Married or Domestic Partner, Divorced, Separated, Widowed, Single and Never Married/Partnered

12. Political: Generally speaking, how do you characterize your political viewpoints?

    - (1-7 scale representing very liberal, liberal, somewhat liberal, moderate, somewhat conservative, conservative, very conservative)

13. Do you consider yourself a spiritual person?

    - (1-4 scale representing not spiritual, somewhat spiritual, moderately spiritual, very spiritual)

14. Do you consider yourself a religious person?

    - (1-4 scale representing not religious, somewhat religious, moderately religious, very religious)

15. What is your household’s approximate yearly income?

    - (<10K, 10K-20K, 20K-30K, 30K-40K, 40-50K, 50-60K, 60K-70K, 70-80K, 80-90K, 90-100K, 100-150K, >=150K)

Group 2 (control): Not primed to think about negative past events

1. Age: What is your current age?
   - 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65-74, 75-84, 85+

2. Gender: How do you identify?
   - Male, Female, Non-binary, Self-describe (open ended), Prefer not to answer

3. Race/Ethnicity: How do you identify? (Check all that apply)
   - Asian or Pacific Islander, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Native American or Alaskan Native, White or Caucasian, Prefer not to answer

4. State: What is your current state of residence?

5. Getting ahead (same as GSS question): Some people say that people get ahead by their own hard work; others say that lucky breaks or help from other people are more important. Which do you think is most important?

   - (1-5 scale, where 1 represents hard work being most important, 3 represents hard work and luck being equally important, and 5 represents luck being most important)

6. Redistribution (same as WVS question): Respond to the following statements: "The government should reduce income differences" versus "The government should not concern itself with reducing income differences"

   - (1-5 scale, where 1 represents strong agreement with "The government should reduce income differences", 3 represents neutral perspective towards these statements, and 5 represents strong agreement with "The government should not concern itself with reducing income differences")

7. Events: Thinking back over the last X years, have you had any of the following events occur? Check any and all that apply.
   - Divorce/separation
   - Lost a job
   - Been unemployed for longer than 3 months
   - Death of partner/spouse/child/parent/close relative or close friend
   - New onset of major physical illness
   - New onset of mental health difficulties
   - Major auto accident
   - Natural disaster, fire, major flooding impacting your home
   - Crime against you or immediate family member
   - Being sued

8. Which of the events that you checked above was, broadly speaking, the most challenging for you?

9. Employment: What is your current employment status?
   - Employed for wages, self-employed, not employed but looking for work, a homemaker, a student, retired, unable to work

10. Grade: What is the highest grade or year of school you have completed?
    - Never attended school or only kindergarten, Grades 1 through 8 (Elementary), Grades 9 through 11 (Some high school), Grade 12 or GED (High school graduate), Some College but no degree, Trade/technical/vocational degree/training, Associate degree, Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, or Doctoral degree.

11. Marital: What is your marital status?
    - Married or Domestic Partner, Divorced, Separated, Widowed, Single and Never Married/Partnered

12. Political: Generally speaking, how do you characterize your political viewpoints?

    - (1-7 scale representing very liberal, liberal, somewhat liberal, moderate, somewhat conservative, conservative, very conservative)

13. Do you consider yourself a spiritual person?

    - (1-4 scale representing not spiritual, somewhat spiritual, moderately spiritual, very spiritual)

14. Do you consider yourself a religious person?

    - (1-4 scale representing not religious, somewhat religious, moderately religious, very religious)

15. What is your household's approximate yearly income?

    - (<10K, 10K-20K, 20K-30K, 30K-40K, 40-50K, 50-60K, 60K-70K, 70-80K, 80-90K, 90-100K, 100-150K, >=150K)