

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: PREDICTING POLICY: EXAMINING PERCEPTIONS OF ECONOMIC INEQUALITY, COLOR-EVASIVE RACIAL ATTITUDES, AND BELIEFS ABOUT CAPITALISM

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This study examines how beliefs about capitalism, color-evasive racial attitudes, and perceptions about wealth distribution predict redistributive economic policy preferences. I hypothesized that beliefs about capitalism, perceptions of wealth distribution, and color-evasiveness predict policy preferences when controlling for Satisfaction With Life (SWLS) and that critical consciousness action (CA) will moderate this relationship. Approximately 510 individuals completed the Costs of United States Corporate Capitalism (CCC) scale, Colorblind Racial Attitudes Scale (COBRAS), the Critical Action subscale of the Critical Consciousness Scale, ratings of wealth distribution, and questions about their policy preferences through an online survey distributed through MTurk. Results indicated that the CCC and COBRAS subscales predicted policy preferences, over and above demographic variables. Findings from this project may inform how individuals make decisions about policy preferences and on a broader scale, inform solutions for decreasing inequity in the U.S. Implications for research and clinical practice are discussed.

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INEQUALITY, COLOR-EVASIVE RACIAL ATTITUDES, AND BELIEFS ABOUT
CAPITALISM

by

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List of Abbreviations

APA: American Psychological Association

BIPOC: Black, Indigenous, People of Color

CA: Critical Action

CCC: Costs of United States Corporate Capitalism Scale

CC: Critical Consciousness

CCS: Critical Consciousness Scale

COBRAS: Colorblind Racial Attitudes Scale

IWD: Ideal wealth distribution

ISSP: International Society Survey Programme

LGBTQIA+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex, Asexual

PWD: Perceptions of wealth distribution

PS: Policy Support

SWLS: Satisfaction with Life Scale

USCC: United States Corporate Capitalism

Introduction

Inequality may be the defining societal issue of the 21st century, underlying policy debates regarding health care, wages, taxation, immigration, and gaining increasing attention from lawmakers, academics, and the general public (Hauser & Norton, 2017; Piketty, 2014; Stiglitz, 2012). Scholars agree that economic inequality, or the inequitable distribution of wealth, is the highest that it has been since the Great Depression (Davies, Sandström, Shorrocks, & Wolff, 2009; Saez & Zucman, 2016). Although there is no current scientific standard regarding the ideal level of inequality, economists agree that if the rising inequality is not properly monitored and addressed, it “can lead to various sorts of political, economic, and social catastrophes” (Alvaredo, Chancel, Piketty, Saez, & Zucman, 2018a, p. 4). Given the impact of inequality, it is important to understand how inequality can be addressed. One approach to mitigate these effects is to implement policies that attempt to reduce inequality. Economists have found that policy preferences do matter and influence the level of inequality endured by a country, and subsequently, mental and physical health outcomes (Alvaredo, Chancel, Piketty, Saez, & Zucman, 2018a). The current study examines perceptions of inequality, as well as psychological variables that may impact redistributive economic policy preferences.

The relationship between economic inequality and the well-being of individuals embedded in those societies has been well documented in research. Social inequality has been linked to poor health outcomes, increased crime, unwanted pregnancy (Kawachi, Kennedy, Lochner, & Prothrow-Stith, 1997), lower levels of happiness (Oishi, Kesebir, & Diener, 2011), and lower trust in others (Fiske, Moya, Russell, & Bearn, 2012; Fritsche et al., 2017). It has also been found to be associated with higher rates of mental

illness, especially depression and anxiety (Ribeiro et al., 2017). Generally speaking, macroeconomic conditions have significant effects on well-being (Di Tella et al., 2001) and life-satisfaction (Ahn, Roll, Zeng, Frey, Reiman, Ko, 2015). In the U.S. and in other countries, research shows that correlations between the rate of inequality and mental illness, substance use, infant mortality, child well-being, teen pregnancy, and early mortality (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009). Poverty alone – outside of stress – has been found to impair cognitive functioning (Mani, Mullainathan, Shafir & Zhou, 2013) and impair the ability to attend to long-term goals like receiving an education and engaging in healthy behaviors (Haushofer & Fehr, 2014). As social and economic inequality has risen in the last 30 years, the rate of mental illness has also risen amongst the prison system from 5% in the 1970s to 20-40% currently, with the prison system becoming the largest caretaker of individuals with a mental illness in the U.S. (Dean, 2017; Rubinow, 2014). Researchers have begun to make calls within the field of psychology and psychiatry to recognize the impact of social inequality and socioeconomic status on the widespread genesis and maintenance of mental disorders (Dean, 2017; West, Blacksher, and Burke, 2017).

Burns (2015) recently drew attention to the important relationship between mental health and inequality, stating that poor mental health is more pronounced in settings with higher inequality. Furthermore, he discusses the highly politicized nature of mental health and inequality. The interrogation of the impact of inequality on mental health also necessitates an examination of the political and economic order that maintains the dysregulated distribution of wealth (Burns, 2015; Lund, 2015). As Lund (2015) aptly put it, “The call to policy makers to include mental health in development agendas is

simultaneously a call for a more inclusive and just society that pays attention to uneven resource distribution and its impact on the wellbeing of its most vulnerable populations” (p. 98). Addressing the mental well-being of individuals therefore requires a focus on the limitations imposed by the organization of a society, where mental health is not just of concern for the individual or family, but “embedded in a society and wider political and economic forces of inclusion or exclusion, tolerance or intolerance, and empowerment or disempowerment” (Sen, 1999 as cited in Lund, 2015, p. 98). As psychologists, if we are serious about reducing these poor mental health outcomes, we must be simultaneously intentional about interrogating the structures that create and maintain inequality.

Structurally, the U.S. follows a capitalistic economic system. More specifically, *U.S. corporate capitalism* (USCC) is defined as an economic system that is characterized by the dominance of hierarchical, bureaucratic corporations that impact economic policy. Laws allowing corporate decisions to be based solely on profit with little repercussion have allowed the wealth of large corporations to grow, the world’s economies to become vastly stratified, and the wealth gap between the rich and the poor within the U.S. to become dramatically pronounced (Kasser, Cohn, Kahner & Ryan, 2007). If USCC and its policies create inequality, efforts that seek to mitigate the effects of inequality may inadvertently sustain inequality and capitalism itself, because efforts are misdirected (Arfken, 2013). One method of shifting the deleterious effects of inequality and of capitalism may be the revision and creation of economic policies that may regulate the distribution of wealth (Alvaredo, Chancel, Piketty, Saez, & Zucman, 2018a).

Counseling Psychology and Redistributive Justice

To our knowledge, no psychologist has developed a systematic critical understanding of the social and psychological effects of neoliberal

globalized capitalism on individuals, communities, and society at large... which evokes potential conflicts of interest between “our talk” and “our walk”...when psychologists inflate contributions to social change with a veneer of radicalism, brushed over otherwise reformist work, it likely does little good politically and even might do harm by producing a discourse of illusory political relevance. (Walsh-Bowers & Gokani, 2014, p. 42)

Social justice has been deemed the “fifth force” in counseling psychology (Ratts, 2009; Ratts, D’Andrea, & Arrendondo, 2004) and the American Counseling Association recently released the Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies (Ratts, Singh, Nassar-McMillan, Butler, & McCullough, 2015) as a guide to social justice advocacy for counseling psychologists. The path to incorporating social justice advocacy into the work of counseling psychologists has been long debated (Walsh-Bowers & Gokani, 2014; Parker, 2014). Some scholars argue that the term “social justice” refers to different types of social reform that maintain the status quo of neoliberal capitalism, now globalized (Walsh-Bowers & Gokani, 2014). Eradicating social hierarchies related to racism, sexism, heterosexism, cissexism, classism, and ableism can be forms of social justice, though social reforms related to these oppressions are often coopted by U.S. capitalism, maintaining economic inequality between privileged and oppressed groups (Zinn, 2005).

The field of psychology has a history of being knowingly and unknowingly complicit with the maintenance of oppressive social practices (Arfken & Yen, 2014), playing a vital role in forcing the adjustment of individuals to oppressive dominant social structures (e.g., psychological assessment and selection of military personnel, scientific legitimization of racism and White supremacy, conversion therapy, etc.). For instance, the American Psychological Association (APA) most recently published an analysis of the field’s contribution to the belief in racial hierarchy and perpetuation of inequality for

people of color since the 1850's (Cummings Center for the History of Psychology, 2022). Unsurprisingly, the discourse regarding the impact of socioeconomic conditions on psychological functioning has been relatively absent (Fine & Burns, 2003; Lott & Bullock, 2001). As a result, research regarding social class privilege has been taboo until the 21st century (Walsh-Bowers & Gokani, 2014).

Within counseling psychology, the *recognition of diversity* is viewed as a necessary and *sufficient* condition for achieving social justice, as evidenced by APA's focus on *multicultural competence, improving interclass relations*, or providing *greater access to care* (Arfken, 2013). *Redistribution* as a path to social justice would require a focus on the economic basis of social relations, seeking a more equitable distribution of resources, wealth, and rights, and directly calling into question the capitalist mode of production that *forms* society (Arfken, 2012; Fraser, 2003). This is not to say that recognition is not a worthy effort, but the focus on improving the *experience* of oppressive structures over the *conditions that create* such experiences has the potential of being instrumental to maintaining capitalism and the social problems associated with it (Arfken, 2012 & 2013). For instance, Fine and Burns (2003) explained this further by stating:

Without a detailed fine grained look at the intersections of economic, social, and psychological conditions across class positions, we may skew our understandings of class to the psychological alone, misrepresenting class as if it were largely carried around in...[individuals'] heads...and therefore transformed simply by a change in attitude. (Fine & Burns, 2003, p. 845, as cited in Walsh-Bowers & Gokani, 2014)

Focusing on the impacts of oppression runs the risk of ignoring the capitalistic structure that protect privilege and more specifically, the resources, opportunities, social connections, support, and social rewards that maintain privilege and appear natural and

deserved (Stoudt, Fox, & Fine, 2012). For instance, Walsh and Gokani (2014) highlight how the *Journal of Social Issues*, which seeks to confront a range of social issues such as social class (2003), collective political action (2009), and globalization (2011), has often supported “upward mobility” within a capitalistic imperialist patriarchal system as the solution to oppression faced by African Americans (Cole & Omari, 2003), women (Jones, 2003), and minority groups in general (Mahlingham, 2003), implying that the problem with social class is being of a lower class, not the existence of class itself. Moreover, articles on globalization have focused on its economic benefits rather than its association with colonialism, the slave trade, and imperialism, discounting cultural differences and suggesting a deracialized and depoliticized world (Walsh-Bowers & Gokani, 2014).

Psychologists have not confronted our own collusion in legitimizing class formation (Fine & Burns, 2003), benefiting from the “(mal)distribution and accumulation of power, resources, legitimacy, dignity and recognition” within our current capitalistic neoliberal globalized economic system (Stoudt et al., 2012, p. 179). As Walsh-Bowers and Gokani (2014) stated, “If psychologists are serious about contributing to the labor of putting people and planet before profit, then as citizens we have to replace capitalism with a liberatory alternative” (p. 43). Although there have been many advances in research and clinical practice related to multicultural competencies, there is still a need for understanding how to confront systemic economic inequities. The current study examines psychological predictors of redistributive economic policy preferences, namely beliefs about capitalism and color-evasive racist attitudes.

Redistributive Policies Reduce Inequality

Given the current data on the impact of economic and social inequality, the attitudes and attributions that people have about social inequality and of USCC are critical to assess, especially with regards to economic policy preferences (Hauser & Norton, 2017) as economists have found that policy preferences do matter and influence the level of inequality endured by a country (Alvaredo, Chancel, Piketty, Saez, & Zucman, 2018a). For instance, when analyzing global inequality, Alvaredo and colleagues (2018b) found that the magnitude of the rise of inequality directly correlates with policy changes in the U.S. (i.e., Reagan-Thatcher revolution), China (i.e., transition away from communism and towards deregulation), and in India (i.e., shift towards a deregulated economy). Additionally, tax progressivity has been shown to be a proven strategy to combat rising income and wealth inequality amongst top earners, not only decreasing post-tax inequality but also pre-tax incentives for pay rises and wealth accumulation (Alvaredo, Chancel, Piketty, Saez, and Zucman, 2018a). Moreover, equal access to education and access to wealth (i.e., through jobs or basic income) would address static and declining income growth amongst poorer populations (Alvaredo, Chancel, Piketty, Saez, and Zucman, 2018a).

However, do economic factors influence policy preferences amongst the general public and do those policy preferences amongst the public matter? It is well documented that economic factors impact electoral preferences (e.g., Healy & Lenz, 2014; Hicks, Jacobs, & Matthews, 2016; Kinder & Kiewiet, 1981; Larsen et al., 2019; Lewis-Beck & Stegmaier, 2013; Margalit, 2019; Nannestad & Paldam, 1994; Tavitz & Potter, 2015;

Tilley et al., 2018), policy preferences (e.g., Ballard-Rosa, Martin, & Scheve, 2017; Fernández-Albertos, Kuo, & Balcells, 2018), and that incumbents running for office use economic insecurity to sway public opinion (e.g., Wright & Esses, 2018). For instance, right-wing incumbents often use economic nationalism (i.e., multiculturalism and immigration as economic threat) as part of their platform (e.g., Ausserladcheider, 2018). Furthermore, economic nationalism was studied as the biggest predictor of Donald Trump's 2016 election win, *especially amongst Democrats* that crossed party lines to vote for him (Wright and Esses, 2018). Whether voter preferences are motivated by egoistic (i.e., self-interest) or sociotropic (i.e., societal) economic concerns is less clear (Bechtel & Liesch, 2020). In other words, voters are studied to make choices based on how much a political candidate would personally benefit them economically (e.g., Curtis, Jupille, & Leblang, 2014), benefit society economically (e.g., Huddy, 2013) or both (e.g., Lewis-Beck & Stagmaier, 2013). Nonetheless, economic factors do influence policy preferences amongst the general public and matter with regards to voting for candidates who support redistributive economic policy reform.

Extended Literature Review

In order to create and revise economic policy, it is important to assess laypeople's perceptions, attitudes, and decision-making regarding inequality and policies (Frey, 2008; Hauser & Norton, 2017; Kuznets, 1955; Persson & Tabellini, 1994; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009). The following sections will examine perceptions and psychological variables that may predict support for redistributive policies. These predictors include 1) beliefs about USCC and inequality, 2) perceptions/estimates of inequality, 3) color-evasive racial attitudes and 4) the extent to which critical consciousness impacts beliefs about USCC,

perceptions of inequality, and color-evasive racial attitudes. In the next sections, I will present a multidisciplinary, foundational, broad-view of USCC (i.e., laws, ideologies, link to inequality) to a narrower view of individuals' attitudes and attributions regarding USCC (i.e., attributions of wealth and poverty (Feagin, 1972, 1975), system-justification theory (Jost & Banaji, 1994), and critical consciousness theory (Friere, 1970, 1973)). Additionally, given the inextricable link between inequality and race in the U.S., I will also examine colorblind racial attitudes and whether they predict support for redistributive economic policies.

Characteristics of USCC

USCC Laws. Similar to many broad socio-cultural organizations that contextualize individual's lives, USCC has a set of *institutions* (e.g. laws, policies, organizations, companies, etc.) that impact people's willingness to believe *ideologies* that support it. The underlying premises of capitalism are a) self-interest, b) competition, and c) belief in equal opportunity (Kasser, Cohn, Kahner, & Ryan, 2007). In theory, capitalism is most successful when the capitalists, laborers, and consumers are able to pursue their self-interest in a competitive marketplace to the maximum extent possible. Theoretically, competition and equal opportunity, coupled with economic policies that govern a capitalist society, should work to regulate capitalism. However, under USCC, legal systems evolved to protect corporations to help increase their power in creating profit in a competitive marketplace. For instance, in the U.S., large corporations are treated as "legal persons" and have the same protections as "natural persons" under the Bill of Rights, despite the difference of potential immortality creating opportunity for profit boundless (Bakan 2004; Hartman, 2002; Korten, 1995). Moreover, in the 19th and

20th century, laws that required corporations to make decisions based on the “public good” were overturned, allowing corporations to make business decisions solely in the interest in increasing profit (Kelly, 2001). A key feature of USCC is that it provides “limited liability” to shareholders for a corporation’s actions; therefore, if a corporation makes unethical decisions, shareholders avoid the risk of facing legal repercussions or being sued (Kasser, Cohn, Kanner, & Ryan, 2007). Laws allowing corporate decisions to be based solely in profit with little repercussion, has allowed the wealth of large corporations to grow, and the wealth of individuals wane, allowing both the world’s economies to become socially stratified and therefore creating wealth inequity.

Capitalism and Inequality. The data on the impact of USCC and magnitude of inequality is staggering. In 2000, 52 of the 100 largest economies in the world were corporations (Mander, Barker, and Korten, 2001). However, in 2015, the number of corporations grew to 69 out of 100 of the world’s largest economies. When looking at the top 200 economies in the world, this number becomes more extreme with 153 being large corporations versus countries. The top 10 corporations - which include Walmart, Shell, and Apple – have a combined revenue of more than 180 countries combined, and are also richer than Russia, Belgium, and Sweden (Global Justice Now, 2016). Although the U.S. tops the list in largest revenue in the world, social stratification and inequity does not end with the disparities between large corporations and countries. Similar to the globalized economy of the world, within the U.S., capitalism stratifies the economy, placing wealth in the hands of few.

To illustrate this disparity further, economists Saez and Zucman (2016) found that *wealth inequality* has increased continuously since 1978, with the wealth share for the top

0.1% rising from 7% to 22% in 2012—a level almost as high as 1929. The wealth share for the bottom 90% has been on a steady decline since the mid-1980s. The increase in wealth inequality for individuals is attributed to a tax system that became less progressive despite surges in top earner compensation since the 1980s, and the rise of private wealth and decrease of public wealth (Alvaredo, Chancel, Piketty, Saez and Zucman, 2018a). Along with wealth inequality, there has also been an increase in saving rate inequality (i.e., top earners have the ability to save more annually than the bottom 90%), leading to a snowballing effect that has been powerful enough to dramatically shape the distribution of wealth in the U.S. The annual saving rate of the bottom 90% was 5-10% in the mid-1970s and early 1980s, then fell to 5% in the 2000s, fell to -4% during the Great Recession, bouncing back to 0% after the Great Recession. The bottom 90% suffered massive increases in debt and record breaking rises in housing prices (Mian & Sufi, 2014; Saez & Zucman, 2016). However, top earners' wealth has been largely unaffected by the 2008 financial crisis (Alvaredo, Chancel, Piketty, Saez, and Zucman, 2018a). Currently, the top one percent has approximately 40 percent of the U.S. wealth (Levitz, 2019).

Recently, the U.S. Federal Reserve released data that illustrates how wealth has been distributed in the U.S. under capitalism over the last 30 years. This data showed how much the U.S.'s top one percent and the bottom 50 percent have changed since 1989. Bruenig (2019) found that the net worth of the one percent has grown \$21 trillion richer and the bottom half of the distribution grew \$900 billion poorer. This data does include liabilities, like student debt, but does not include consumer goods, like computers and refrigerators since economists do not view these products as wealth assets. However, if these goods were included, the wealth gap between the rich and the poor would be even

larger (Bruenig, 2019; Levitz, 2019). To study perceptions regarding how wealth should be distributed in the U.S., Norton and Ariely (2011) conducted a study that found that the average U.S. citizen believed that the richest 20 percent should own 32 percent of national wealth. However, the top 20 percent actually owned 84 percent of the wealth in the U.S. in 2011 (Levitz, 2019; Norton & Ariely, 2011).

On an individual level, this disparity is clearer when considering the difference between productivity and pay over time. For instance, cumulative growth in productivity per hour worked of the total U.S. economy (i.e., productivity) and the cumulative growth in inflation-adjusted hourly compensation of non-supervisory typical workers (i.e., pay) grew at a similar rate between 1948 and 1973. However, after 1973, especially after 1995, the typical worker's compensation remained stagnant while cumulative productivity grew 80.4% (Mishel, 2012). If productivity gains were shared across U.S. workers, it would be enough to generate advances in national living standards and wages. However, average hourly compensation, which includes the pay of CEOs and typical workers alike, grew just 39.2%, *meaning that the share going to workers actually decreased as productivity increased* (Mishel, 2012). Mishel's (2012) economic analysis is integral to understanding that current USCC laws favor the profit of corporations over and above the opportunity to improve living and wage conditions for people, allowing inequality to be the worst it has been in U.S. history since the Great Depression (Saez & Zucman, 2016). Kaufman's (2018) economic paper examined how capitalism has caused a convergence of errors that have amplified inequality: a dualistic and dysregulated market of both competition and monopoly, economic-political tendency towards elite control by corporations and financiers, skewed intergenerational wealth coupled with

social/political privilege, and a tendency for large-scale profit-led investment spending continuously outpacing wage-led consumption spending (Kaufman, 2018). Given that the aforementioned findings illustrate that the original premises of capitalism (i.e., self-interest, competition, and equal opportunity) are inaccurate, it is critical to examine how beliefs about USCC contextualizes perceptions of wealth distribution and redistributive policy preferences.

Ideologies of USCC. Within the fabric of the “American Dream,” are fundamental beliefs that anyone can become successful as long as they work hard, and success is possible because society is a fair and just place, where good things happen to good people and bad things happen to bad ones. These ideologies translate into values that underlie USCC, namely: a) meritocracy (i.e., rewarding ability and economic advantages indicate deservingness); b) Protestant work ethic (i.e., hard work is a virtue), c) belief in a just world (Lerner, 1980) (i.e., the world is fair and just where people receive what they deserve), and d) right-wing authoritarianism (i.e., established authorities and tradition should be followed and rebellion must be prevented) (Altemeyer, 1981). Several studies have found that individuals view meritocracy as unambiguously good, fair, and desirable (Allen, 2011; Breen, 2001), especially in the U.S. (Kunovich & Slomczynski, 2007). Furthermore, individuals have been taught to believe that inequality is fair (Osberg & Smeeding, 2006). A collaboration between 30 researchers in 12 countries also found that transitions from communism to capitalism influence individuals’ beliefs legitimizing inequality (Kleugel, Mason, & Wegener, 1995) and increased the extent to which people think rewards should be based on merit (Kunovich & Slomczynski, 2007; Smith & Metějů, 2012). Furthermore, beliefs about the U.S. being

a meritocratic society has been shown to influence the behavior of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision-making (DeSario, 2003). However, several studies have found that individuals prefer less income inequality (e.g., Norton & Ariely, 2011; Kiatpongsan & Norton, 2014). These contradictory findings require further investigation of what is informing individuals' beliefs about capitalism and inequality.

Beliefs about Capitalism

Two longstanding and persistent myths are that 1) the general public is “innocent” and “mystified” by ideological ways of thinking and therefore cannot and do not make judgments about capitalism (Bishop, 2005; Kinder & Kalmoe, 2017) and 2) social and economic ideologies are structurally and functionally independent (Azevedo, Jost, Rothmund, & Sterling, 2019; Fiorina, Abrams, & Pope, 2011; Kinder & Kalmoe, 2017). The logical fallacy of these myths is that they equate ideology to political knowledge and sophistication (Jost, 2006). False ideologies have played a role in legitimizing global capitalism regardless of its high levels of social and economic inequality (e.g., Bartels, 2008; Monbiot, 2016; Trump, 2018). With regards to the link between social and economic ideologies, results of the General Social Survey (GSS) from 1980 to 2014 have found an overall correlation between economic conservatism and racial conservatism (.41) (Weeden & Kurzban, 2016). Moreover, it is hypothesized that the same social and psychological processes that would lead individuals to justify economic inequality under capitalism may also lead them to justify disparities regarding race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, and immigration status (Jost, 2019).

Although there are limited findings on beliefs about USCC and perceptions of inequality predicting policy, two theories may tangentially explain individuals'

perceptions of inequality and support/opposition of redistributive economic policies. According to the dominant ideology thesis (Huber & Form, 1973), inequality is legitimized because of the a) belief that social mobility is available and possible for all and that b) an individual's position is due solely to individual factors (e.g., effort, ability, work ethic, etc.) rather than structural factors (e.g., USCC) (Reynolds & Xian, 2014). This theory has since been expanded into theories of how individuals conceptualize inequality more broadly, with research application to social inequality and USCC. In the next section, I will discuss these theories, namely, attributions for wealth and poverty (Feagin, 1975; Bullock, Williams, & Limbert, 2003) and system justification theory (Jost & Banaji, 1994), as well as the application of these theories in research.

Attributions for wealth and poverty. Feagin's (1975) theory examines the judgments that individuals make in assigning responsibility or blame for wealth and poverty. Research has illustrated three distinct categories of attributions for wealth and poverty: a) individual factors such as lack of effort, ability, and responsibility; b) structural factors such as low wages, lack of access to basic needs, discrimination, and poor education; and c) fatalistic explanations such as bad luck, illness, unfortunate series of events (Feagin, 1975; Feather, 1974; Furnham, 1982; Smith, 1985). Studies have been able to confirm individual and structural explanations for wealth and poverty, but with less support for fatalistic explanations (e.g. Bullock, Williams, & Limbert, 2003; Cozzarelli, Wilkinson, & Tagler, 2001; Zucker & Weiner, 1993). Although there have been studies on attributions for wealth and poverty (e.g. Bullock, Williams, & Limbert, 2003; Bullock & Waugh, 2005; Cozzarelli, Wilkinson, & Tagler, 2001; Feagin, 1975; Furnam, 1984; Godfrey & Wolf, 2016; Reynolds & Xian, 2014; Smith, 1985), few

studies have specifically examined individuals' attributions regarding USCC and how this impacts decision-making regarding economic policy reform.

Bullock and colleagues (2003) measured individual, structural, and fatalistic attributions for wealth and poverty and the degree to which respondents supported progressive or restrictive welfare policies. Support for progressive policies was predicted by endorsement of structural attributions for poverty, dissatisfaction with income inequality, and attributing wealth to privilege. Support for restrictive policies were predicted by endorsement of individualistic attributions for wealth and poverty (i.e., lack of hard work, ability, laziness) (Bullock, Williams, & Lambert, 2003). Further research is needed to examine whether respondents would endorse structural attributions (i.e., USCC) and whether this would be related to endorsement of progressive government policies or restrictive policies. Bullock and colleagues' (2003) offered both a method for measuring attributions for wealth and poverty and examined their relationship to welfare policies. Although the measure briefly mentioned capitalism and incorporated its premises, the article did not specifically measure beliefs about capitalism nor did it measure support for an array of policies that would improve U.S. inequality (i.e., free education, universal healthcare, higher taxes on rich, etc.). Therefore, the author will use a measure that captures structural and individual beliefs about capitalism, the Costs of United States Corporate Capitalism Scale, and measure respondents' support for policies that would improve inequality.

Research using Bullock and colleague's (2003) measures found that national samples largely endorsed individual factors in attributions for wealth and poverty (Bullock, 1999; Bullock & Limbert, 2003; Bullock et al., 2003; Bullock & Waugh,

2005; Cozzarelli et al., 2001; Hunt, 1996; Smith, 1985; Smith & Stone, 1989; Zucker & Weiner, 1993). Moreover, in the U.S., individualistic explanations for poverty are favored by individuals in relatively privileged groups (Bullock et al., 2003) and oppressed groups alike, though oppressed groups endorse structural attributions at a higher rate than privileged groups (Godfrey & Wolf, 2016). Attributions for poverty are correlated with political orientation (Zucker & Weiner, 1993), belief in a just world (Harper, Wagstaff, Newton, & Harrison, 1990), and Protestant work ethic (Furnham, 1984; Wagstaff, 1983). These findings are not surprising, as scholars have found that people base attributions in relation to the dominant discourse of society (i.e., meritocracy, belief in a just world, etc.) (Foucault, 1972; Marx & Engels, 1846) that underlie major premises of USCC (Kasser, Cohn, Kahner, & Ryan, 2007).

Moreover, even those oppressed make individual attributions. Godfrey and Wolf (2016) conducted a qualitative study on attributions for wealth and poverty with immigrant women with minoritized racial and class identities. These researchers found that more than half of respondents made individual attributions for poverty, blaming the poor through system-justifying beliefs (i.e., poor do not have motivation to succeed, do not work hard enough, do not choose to pursue education, etc.). Conversely, participants who attributed poverty to structural factors made statements aligned with critical consciousness development (i.e., system prevents social mobility, the rich have intergenerational wealth and are given more opportunities, etc.), but sometimes coupled these statements with individual attributions (e.g., not thinking system is fair, but rich give to charities, so the poor need to seek out those charities) (Godfrey & Wolf, 2016). The authors made one mention of USCC, making the argument that Western capitalist

societies correlate strongly with system-justifying beliefs (Jost et al., 2003), blaming hierarchies on the individuals rather than the structures that create and sustain such hierarchies (Godfrey & Wolf, 2016). It will be critical to assess individuals' system-justifying beliefs of capitalism through the use of the Costs of U.S. Corporate Capitalism Scale (CCC).

System-justifying beliefs. System justification theory focuses on the legitimization of systems of governance and the maintenance of the status quo (Jost & Banaji, 1994). The use of the term “system” relates to social, economic, and political spheres of society, including the self and identity, family, and the capitalist economy (e.g., Jost et al., 2003; Wakslak, Jost, & Bauer, 2011). It posits that individuals are motivated to maintain favorable views about themselves and social groups to which they belong, as well as the social, economic, and political systems which they inhabit (Jost et al., 2004; Jost & van der Toorn, 2012). These systems are often organized hierarchically with some groups dominating and exerting control over other groups (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Therefore, individuals are motivated to defend and maintain social and economic forms of inequality (e.g., Jost & Hunyady, 2005; Jost, Pelham, Sheldon, & Ni Sullivan, 2003; Olson, Dweck, Spelke, & Banaji, 2011). This mental process is rooted in the idea of “false consciousness” by which individuals uphold and internalize the dominant group's discourse (i.e., denial of injustice and exploitation, rationalization of hierarchies and social inequality, and false attributions of responsibility) (Gramsci, 1971; Lukacs, 1971). System justification can manifest as stereotyping (Haines & Jost, 2000; Jost & Kay, 2005; Kay & Jost, 2003), the denial or rationalization of inequality (Napier & Jost, 2008), and supporting and upholding political and religious affiliation (Jost, Glaser,

Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003). Moreover, system justification increases satisfaction with the status quo and diminishes support for system-challenging protest behavior (Jost, Becker, Osborne, & Badaan, 2017; Jost et al., 2012) and the will for disadvantaged groups to mobilize (Hässler, Shnabel, Ullrich, Arditti-Vogel, & Siman Tov-Nachlieli, 2018).

System justification is a motivational process that is activated or enhanced when individuals perceive a threat to the system, when they feel overly dependent on the system, when the system feels inescapable, inevitable, or when individuals feel that they have low personal control (Jost, Kivetz, Rubini, Germandi, & Mosso, 2005; Kay & Friesen, 2011; Laurin, Shepherd, & Kay, 2010; van der Toorn, Tyler, & Jost, 2011). For instance, when individuals have a lack of knowledge regarding economic issues, individuals feel more dependent on the system and are more likely to justify government (Laurin, Shepherd & Kay, 2010). Moreover, Laurin (2018) found that both Democrats and Republicans evaluated Donald Trump more favorably one week after he was inaugurated versus one week before, lending evidence to justifying inevitable change. Blanchar and Eidelman (2013) found that individuals are more supportive of the capitalist system in the U.S. and in the United Kingdom when they were prompted to believe that this system is traditional and longstanding, versus being a fairly recent development in history. When the system seems inevitable and inescapable, or when individuals feel dependent or that they have low personal control, disadvantageous conditions become more accepted (Jost, 2019).

People actively defend social arrangements through rationalizing and defending social injustices, even when this comes at the cost of their own individual and group

interest (Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004). For instance, studies have found that disadvantaged individuals often hold conflicted attitudes about their own group and favorable attitudes towards individuals in advantaged groups (Jost & Burgess, 2000; Jost, Pelham, & Carvalho, 2002). In regards to economic policy decision-making, low-income groups have been found to be less likely than high-income groups to support redistributive policies, even if they would benefit from such policies (Fong, 2001; Gilens, 1999; Jost, Pelham, Sheldon, & Ni Sullivan, 2003; Kluegel & Smith, 1986). Jost and colleagues (2004) assert that this is related to the rationalization of the status quo, over and above identity-based or interest-based theories.

However, a major critique of system-justification is the lack of explanation regarding individuals who participate in social movements such as Occupy Wall Street or Black Lives Matter (Johnson & Fujita, 2012; McCall, Burk, Lapperrière, & Richeson, 2017), given that the theory posits that disadvantaged groups will justify the system even at their own detriment (Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004). In a recent article, Jost (2019) asserted that this claim is not necessarily counter to system justification theory since individuals may be motivated to join the “revolutionary bandwagon,” or a new status quo (Jost, 2019; originally cited in Kuran, 1991). Additionally, if a change in the status quo is “system-sanctioned,” or congruent with the preservation of the system, then support for large initiatives that seek to change the system may occur, such as the case of pro-environmental initiatives (Jost, 2019). Furthermore, general system justification may not fully explain rationalization of the status quo. Rather, economic system justification has been found to be predictive of rationalization over and above general system justification. For instance, Azevedo and colleagues (2017) found that support for Donald Trump was

predicted by economic system justification and gender-specific system justification by participants at every income level. However, general system justification did not predict support for Donald Trump (Azevedo et al., 2017). In the current study, examining beliefs about capitalism may provide greater specificity in predicting support for redistributive economic policies.

System-justifying beliefs that underlie USCC and social inequality include: a) meritocratic ideology (i.e. USCC rewards ability and economic advantages indicate deservingness); b) Protestant work ethic (i.e. hard work is a virtue), c) belief in a just world (Lerner, 1980) (i.e. the world is fair and just where people receive what they deserve), and d) right-wing authoritarianism (Altemeyer, 1981) (i.e. established authorities and tradition should be followed and rebellion must be prevented). For instance, Cichocka & Jost (2014) recently analyzed data from over 20 countries and found that there are lower levels of system justifying beliefs in post-communist countries when compared to capitalist countries. The aforementioned beliefs have previously been studied and incorporated into the Costs of U.S. Corporate Capitalism Scale (CCC), which will be used in the current study to predict support for economic policy reform.

Perceptions of Inequality

This section will cover 1) perceptions of wealth distribution, 2) predictors of perceptions of wealth distribution, and the 3) relationship between perceptions and support for redistributive economic policies. Perceptions of wealth distribution vary across perceptions of a) wealth inequality, b) income inequality, and c) ease of mobility across social classes. In the U.S., misperceptions and underestimation of wealth inequality are prevalent amongst adults (Norton & Arielly, 2011; Niehues, 2014; Osberg

& Smeeding, 2006) and even more pronounced amongst adolescents (Arsenio & Willems, 2017). In the U.S. and the United Kingdom, underestimation of wealth inequality is relatively common (Kiatpongsan & Norton, 2014). Additionally, even in countries where wealth inequality is smaller, like Australia, respondents also underestimate the level of wealth inequality (Norton et al., 2014). Conversely, in countries like France and Germany, individuals overestimate levels of wealth inequality, while respondents in Norway accurately estimate their country's income inequality (Niehues, 2014). It is not surprising that France, Germany, and Norway have more redistributive policies and corporate regulations when compared to other countries (Niehues, 2014).

These misperceptions extend to estimates of income inequality. When Kiatpongsan and Norton (2014) surveyed participants in 16 countries about the estimated and ideal ratio of pay between CEOs and unskilled workers, individuals dramatically underestimated actual pay inequality. In the U.S. specifically, respondents gave the ideal ratio of CEO pay to the average unskilled worker as 7:1 and estimated the actual ratio to be 30:1. This was still drastically below the actual ratio of pay between CEOs and the average unskilled worker – 354:1 (Kiatpongsan & Norton, 2014). Furthermore, studies have found that respondents also believe that upwards mobility is more likely than downward mobility over time – “a logical impossibility” (Davidai & Gilovich, 2015; Kraus & Tan, 2015; as cited in Hauser & Norton, 2017, p. 23). Given the variability of perceptions of inequality, it is important to consider what influences these perceptions.

Researchers have posited that perceptions of inequality are predicted by a) individuals' immediate environments (Cruces, Perez-Truglia, & Tetaz, 2013; Xu &

Garand, 2010), b) media coverage regarding social inequality (Diermeier, Goecke, Niehues, & Thomas, 2017); and c) acceptance of hierarchies and belief in the impact of personal choice on people's lives (Kteily, Sheehy-Skeffington, & Ho, 2017). Individuals tend to use local perceptions in their estimates of national inequality (Xu & Garand, 2010). Furthermore, sustained and intense coverage of inequality heightens perceptions of social injustice with increasing time. However, short-term coverage only leads to transient effects on economic concern (Hauser & Norton, 2017). For instance, in Germany, there's greater coverage of stories related to inequality, which leads to heightened concerns about economic conditions and unfairness in society (Diermeier, Goecke, Niehues, & Thomas, 2017).

Individuals who endorse hierarchies are also less likely to perceive inequality between groups (Kteily et al., 2017), but perceived inequality predicts individuals' beliefs that income differences are too large in their country (Niehues, 2014). Moreover, in a study on individuals' choice to redistribute wealth to a group, researchers offered participants different colored balls and distributed wealth according to the lottery. Another participant – the spectator – had the option to redistribute earnings or let the winners take the earnings. In conditions where participants were given the colored balls by chance, most spectators redistributed the earnings. However, in conditions where the participants chose which colored balls they wanted to receive, spectators decided not to redistribute, believing that the act of choosing justified maintaining inequality (Cappelen, Fest, Sørensen, & Tungodden, 2020). Several studies have shown that beliefs about choice and merit affected participants approval of inequality (e.g., Mollerstrom & Seim, 2014; Savani, 2012).

Research has shown that people's ideal level of inequality is more equal than their perceptions (Erikson & Simpson, 2012; Kiatpongsan & Norton, 2014; Norton & Ariely, 2011), suggesting that correcting people's assumptions about inequality has the potential to impact their beliefs (Hauser & Norton, 2017). However, data on changing perceptions is mixed and at times contradictory. Studies have shown that individuals are more likely to support redistribution when they learn that their income position is lower than they thought but may demand less distribution and support a conservative party if they find out they are richer than they thought (Karadja et al., 2017). Conversely, individuals may act more harshly towards those near or below them in income distribution for fear of being in "last place" (Kuziemko, Buell, Reich, & Norton, 2014) but desire restricting access to public goods for the rich when they believe they are not contributing as much income to the public good as those with lower incomes (Hauser et al., 2021). These studies highlight the importance of examining individuals' perceptions of wealth distribution, where they place themselves in the distribution, their income, as well as the beliefs that predict their support for or against redistributive economic policies. Studies have not aggregated support for or against varying policies that would reduce inequality. In the current study, I will examine these perceptions and demographic variables, as well as beliefs about capitalism that may predict support for or against redistributive policies that have been known to reduce overall inequality (i.e., estate tax, free education, universal healthcare, etc.).

Racism and Inequality

Social inequality, or the distribution of resources, is associated with the uneven distribution of rights, privileges, social power, education, housing, transportation, health

insurance, credit, food, and other goods and services (Sernau, 2013). Social inequality is similar to wealth inequity in that it is a byproduct of capitalist social stratification, but differs from wealth inequity in that it not only describes the distribution of wealth, but also the distribution of resources across groups. Although U.S. society maintains the idea that economic resources are distributed based on merit, studies have shown that resources are often delineated by social categories with the most salient variables being sex/gender, race, and ethnicity (Collins, 1998; Rugaber & Boak, 2014). For instance, ciswomens' participation in the labor market has been a counteracting force to the rise in inequality but "glass ceiling" restrictions remain firmly intact with cismen making up 85% of the top 1% of income distribution (Alvaredo, Chancel, Piketty, Saez, and Zucman, 2018a).

Moreover, according to the U.S. Census Bureau (2016), the poverty rate for non-Hispanic White Americans was 9.1% in 2015, yet was 24.1% for Black Americans, 21.4% for Latinx Americans, and 11.4% for Asian Americans. For American Indians and Alaska Natives the poverty rate was a staggering 28.3% in 2014 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). Collins and Yeskel (2005) found that Black Americans earned 55 cents per every dollar that White Americans earned in 1968. To date, Black Americans earned 57 cents for every dollar that White Americans earned. At this rate, Black Americans may not achieve income parity for another 581 years. According to the Pew Research Center analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics data, this gap between the wages of Black and Latinx American workers and those of White Americans has not significantly changed in the past 35 years (Patten, 2016).

Researchers have attributed wage gaps to lower shares of Black Americans and Latinx Americans being college educated, as U.S. workers earn more when they are

college educated. Among adults ages 25 and older, 15% of Hispanic Americans and 23% of Black Americans have a college education or more compared to 36% of White Americans (Patten, 2016). However, solely focusing on education as accounting for all of the variance in unequal wages is incomplete, as discrimination accounts for some of the variance in receiving lower wages, less education, and unfair treatment in the workplace (Patten, 2016). A Pew Research Center report (2016) found that approximately 64% of Black Americans say that Black Americans are treated less fairly than their White counterparts in the workplace, with just 22% of White individuals agreeing (Patten, 2016). Unfortunately, justification of inequality correlates with negative attitudes towards low-income individuals and opposition for the redistribution of wealth (Cozzarelli, Wilkinson, & Tagler, 2001; Dion, 2010). Thus, oppressed groups across race and gender who are most impacted by poverty may be more likely to experience the negative impacts of social inequality. However, individuals may also be convinced that a meritocratic society does exist in the U.S., and that racial and gender inequality are not as prevalent due to greater representation in the media of successful ciswomen and BIPOC individuals (e.g., presidency of Barack Obama, presidential campaign of Hillary Clinton, Oprah Winfrey, etc.) (Reynolds & Xian, 2014). Therefore, color-evasive racial attitudes may be a better predictor of support/opposition to redistributive economic policies given that research has shown individuals are more likely to believe the U.S. is a post-racial society.

Color-evasive racial attitudes. “Colorblind” racial attitudes is the “belief that race should not and does not matter” (Neville et al., 2000). “Colorblind” racial attitudes first surfaced in law and education, mainly being applied to interpretation of the U.S.

Constitution (Neville et al., 2000). In the *Plessy vs. Ferguson* (1896) dissent, Justice Harlan used the term “colorblind” to refer to all men (specifically) having civil rights *regardless* of race, rather than *ignoring* race (Murray, 2012), even though these statements have historically been used to justify the idea that “race is irrelevant” and should be disregarded (Gotanda, 1991 as cited in Annamma, Jackson, & Morrison, 2016). Legal interpretations of Harlan’s statements thereafter mandated that any government acknowledgement of race, both those who oppress and those who wish to aid the oppressed, are equally problematic and discriminatory, becoming the basis of U.S. antidiscrimination laws (Haney-Lopez, 2007 as cited in Annamma, Jackson, & Morrison, 2016). These laws further impacted the U.S. education system, as evidenced by education policies and practices that use “colorblind” approaches to research, policy, and teacher education (Annamma, Jackson, & Morrison, 2016; Milner, 2007), conflating an acknowledgment of race as being racist (Rogers & Christian, 2007). In 1991, Critical Race Theory and U.S. legal scholar Neil Gotanda developed a seminal law review that critiqued colorblindness as a method of maintaining white supremacy by sustaining “the social, economic, and political advantages that whites hold over other Americans” (Gotanda, 1991). It is not surprising that in 1998, President Clinton’s Initiative on Race, an advisory board, found that racism continues in the U.S. and impedes individuals’ ability to succeed educationally and economically; with color-evasiveness and the absence of research on racism playing an essential role in maintaining division and inequity (Neville, 2000) (For the current study, I will refer to “colorblind” racial attitudes as “color-evasive” racial attitudes in an effort to decrease use of ableist language (see Annamma, 2016). I will refer to “colorblindness” when referencing the Color-blind

Racial Attitudes Scale (COBRAS) but use “color-evasive racial attitudes” interchangeably).

One of the largest disparities between Black Americans and White Americans is wealth, where the median wealth of Black families is one tenth of the median wealth of White families (Bricker et al., 2017). For instance, in Boston, among families that have lived in the U.S. for three or more generations, Black families have a median household wealth of \$8 while White families have a median household wealth of \$247, 500 (Muñoz et al., 2015). Despite this stark disparity, Americans are still unaware of the size of this racial gap (Kraus, Rucker, & Richeson, 2017, Kraus et al., 2019) and White Americans in particular tend to overestimate the degree to which progress has been made towards racial equality (Brodish, Brazy, & Devine, 2008; Eibach & Keegan, 2006) and racial economic equality (Kraus, Rucker, & Richeson, 2017). This is not surprising as the common racial discourse creates a linear path of racial justice from slavery, to Emancipation Proclamation, to Civil Rights, to the presidency of Barack Obama (Bonilla-Silva, 2017; Kraus et al., 2019), undermining continued effort to eradicate racial and economic disparities (Seamster & Ray, 2018) and the extent to which racism persists in America (Kraus et al., 2019). White Americans in particular may overestimate progress towards racial economic inequality because they perceive American society as fair and more equal than Black Americans (DeBell, 2017; Kraus et al., 2017). Conversely, White Americans who attribute racism to historical and structural factors are more likely to acknowledge current racial disparities (Rucker, Duker, & Richeson, 2019). In the current study, it will be important to examine the extent to which color-evasiveness influences support for redistributive economic policies, as participants may or may not be aware of

structural factors (i.e., USCC, White privilege) that contribute to economic disparities and economic policy preferences.

Critical Consciousness Influences Perceptions and Behavior

Critical consciousness (CC) (Freire, 1970, 1973) is broadly defined as an “in-depth understanding of the ways in which social, political, and economic oppressions and history of these oppressions operate to affect individuals and society” (Godfrey & Wolf, 2016, p. 94). Theories of critical consciousness focus on how individuals develop an awareness of systemic inequality and oppression. Individuals learn to attribute social problems, discrimination, and inequality to structural or systemic factors versus individual factors or personal failings (Watts, Diemer, & Voight, 2011). Freire observed that as marginalized people developed a deeper understanding for oppressive forces in the world, their understanding of themselves also shifted, developing agency and the desire to change the social conditions which oppressed them. He viewed CC as “reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it” (Freire, 1993, p. 51).

Critical consciousness development is conceptualized as a process whereby individuals move through stages. For instance, early in critical consciousness development, individuals are unable to recognize systemic or structural forces that contextualize oppression (i.e., *semi-intransitive consciousness*). Prior to developing critical consciousness, individuals reflect on problems occurring in society and have an oversimplified understanding of individual and social problems (i.e., *naïve consciousness*). *Critical consciousness* is when individuals reach a deeper understanding of social, political, and economic oppression, taking action against oppressive elements of society (Freire 1970, 1973). Although these stages have been described as overly

simplistic (Guishard, 2009; Watts et al., 2003), they do provide a way of describing varying levels of critical consciousness (Godfrey & Wolf, 2016).

In order to develop higher levels of CC, Freire (1993) outlines several necessary phases including, *critical reflection*, *political efficacy*, and *critical action*. *Critical reflection* requires an individual to understand *perceived socioeconomic inequalities* and how they constrain educational and occupational opportunities (Diemer et al., 2017; Godfrey & Grayman, 2014). *Critical reflection* also requires an individual to endorse *egalitarianism* or equality between groups in society (Diemer & Blustein, 2006; Freire, 1993). Political efficacy requires both *internal political efficacy* (i.e., perceived capability to impact social change through both on an individual and collective action (Watts et al., 2011) and *external political efficacy* (i.e., that the government can be responsive to one's interests (Kahne & Westheimer, 2006)). Theoretically, critical reflection predicts political efficacy, which predicts critical action.

However, research has found that this relationship is more complex. Diemer and Rapa (2016) found that critical reflection of perceived inequalities predicted critical action while critical reflection of egalitarianism did not. The researchers explained this finding such that individuals who believe in egalitarianism may believe in the mainstream ideology that all individuals are equal and have equal opportunity. Conversely, individuals who critically reflect on perceived inequalities critique equal opportunity and meritocracy, acknowledging differential treatment of minority groups in the U.S. (Diemer & Rapa, 2016). A recent national survey found that a majority of Americans believe that the U.S. economic system unfairly favors the wealthy (60%) and favor government action to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor (Pew Research Center, 2014). The extent

to which they would support redistributive economic policies is an important extension of this work. The current study could be instrumental to understanding individuals' current perceptions regarding social inequalities and of USCC and how these perceptions may predict support for progressive economic policies amongst the general population.

The development of CC has been shown to impact several outcomes. For instance, youth with higher levels of CC have more optimal mental health (Zimmerman, Ramírez-Valles, & Maton, 1999), greater academic engagement and achievement (Cabrera, Milem, Jaquette, & Marx, 2014; McWhirter & McWhirter, 2016; Ramos-Zayas, 2003), higher likelihood of enrolling in higher education (Rogers & Terriquez, 2013), are more likely to attain higher status occupations in adulthood (Diemer, 2009), and engage in healthier sexual behaviors (Campbell & MacPhail, 2002). Youth with higher CC are also more likely to take action to improve school facilities and advocate for better resources (Shah & Mediratta, 2008), work to implement school programs to prevent violence (Voight, 2015), and institute policies to address racial achievement gaps (Christens & Kirshner, 2011). Moreover, both female survivors of domestic violence and recently incarcerated men who learn CC, progress further in their occupational goals versus those who participated in traditional career interventions (Chronister & McWhirter, 2006). Furthermore, CC development with people from wealthy, privileged social class positions has been related to a significant increase in wealth giving to grassroots social justice groups (Wernick, 2016). Attributions of poverty and wealth (Feagin, 1975) and system justification theory (Jost and Banaji, 1994) may aid in providing a nuanced understanding of how individuals may conceptualize social

inequality and USCC, while critical consciousness provides an understanding on how individuals may take action or make decisions regarding economic policies.

The Present Study

The social justice movement within the field of psychology, as well as the current political climate within the U.S., makes this study timely and necessary as researchers have called for the field to examine the impact of capitalism as a system that contextualizes mental health (Arfken, 2013; Walsh-Bowers & Gokani, 2014). Given the data on the relationship between economic inequality and poor mental health outcomes, it is critical to assess the underlying beliefs about capitalism, color-evasive racial attitudes, and perceptions of wealth distribution that influence economic policy preferences, as economists have found that policy preferences do matter and influence the level of inequality endured by a country (Alvaredo, Chancel, Piketty, Saez, & Zucman, 2018a). More specifically, tax progressivity, equal access to education, and access to wealth would address static and declining growth amongst poorer populations (Alvaredo, Chancel, Piketty, Saez, and Zucman, 2018a).

It is well documented that individuals take economic factors into account in their electoral preferences (e.g., Healy & Lenz, 2014; Hicks et al., 2016; Kinder & Kiewiet, 1981; Larsen et al., 2019; Lewis-Beck & Stegmaier, 2013; Margalit, 2019; Nannestad & Paldam, 1994; Tavitz & Potter, 2015; Tilley et al., 2018) and policy preferences related to income and wealth inequality (e.g., Ballard-Rosa et al., 2017; Bullock, Williams, & Limbert, 2003; Fernández-Albertos & Kuo, 2018). Incumbents running for office have also used economic insecurity and economic nationalism (i.e., multiculturalism and immigration as economic threat) to sway public opinions in their favor (Wright & Esses,

2018). Nonetheless, research has shown that people's ideal level of inequality is more equal than their perceptions (Erikson & Simpson, 2012; Kiatpongsan & Norton, 2014; Norton & Ariely, 2011), suggesting that correcting people's assumptions about inequality has the potential to impact their beliefs (Hauser & Norton, 2017), as beliefs about the U.S.'s economic system influence judgments about the fairness of inequality (Hadler, 2005; Ledgerwood et al., 2011, McCoy & Major, 2007; McNamee & Miller, 2009; Reynolds & Xian, 2014).

However, individuals may still believe in meritocracy and that racial and gender inequality is not as prevalent due to the presidential campaign of Hillary Clinton and the presidency of Barack Obama (Reynolds & Xian, 2014). It is not surprising that Americans are still unaware of the size of racial economic inequality (Kraus, Rucker, & Richeson, 2017, Kraus et al., 2019) and White Americans in particular tend to overestimate the degree to which progress has been made towards racial equality (Brodish, Brazy, & Devine, 2008; Eibach & Keegan, 2006) and racial economic equality (Kraus et al., 2017). Conversely, White Americans who engage in critical consciousness, attributing racism to historical and structural factors, are more likely to acknowledge current racial disparities (Rucker, Duker, & Richeson, 2019). Therefore, it is vital to examine individuals' perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors in predicting support for redistributive economic policies in order to address and shift poor outcomes associated with economic inequality. The purpose of this project is to examine the extent to which perceptions of wealth distribution, color-evasive racial attitudes, and beliefs about capitalism predict redistributive economic policy preferences, and whether critical action moderates this relationship.

It is important to note that studies have found mixed data regarding the relationship between income and subjective well-being (Diener, 1984; Easterlin, 1974; Veenhoven, 1991). Modest but significant correlations between income and subjective well-being have been found in the U.S. (Diener, Sandvik, Seidlitz, & Diener, 1993). Given these findings, I will be controlling for subjective well-being and examining its potential influence on the findings. Based on previous literature, I hypothesize that psychological variables (i.e., color-evasive attitudes and beliefs about capitalism) and perceptions of wealth distribution do predict policy preferences and that critical action moderates this relationship when controlling for satisfaction with life. Specifically, I hypothesize that:

- 1) Individuals who make structural attributions of social inequality to capitalism will be more likely to support redistributive economic policies.
- 2) Individuals who make individualistic attributions (i.e., work ethic, ability, individual failure, etc.) for social inequality in the U.S. will be less likely to support redistributive economic policies in the U.S.
- 3) Individuals who hold color-evasive racial attitudes (i.e., unawareness of racial privilege, institutional discrimination, and blatant racial issues) will be less likely to support redistributive economic policies. Individuals who do not hold color-evasive racial attitudes will be more likely to support redistributive economic policies.
- 4) Perceptions of wealth distribution will predict support for redistributive economic policies. Specifically, individuals who believe the U.S. has unequal wealth distribution will be more likely to support redistributive economic policies.

Individuals who believe the U.S. has a more egalitarian wealth distribution will be less likely to support redistributive economic policies.

- 5) Additionally, it is hypothesized that critical action will moderate (strengthen) the relationship between psychological factors, perceptions of wealth, and policy preferences. Specifically, greater critical action will moderate the relationship between structural attributions to capitalism, low color-evasive racial attitudes, perceptions of inequality, and greater support for redistributive policies. Low critical action will moderate the relationship between individualistic attributions, high color-evasive racial attitudes, perceptions of an egalitarian wealth distribution, and low support for redistributive policies.

In the next section, I will describe the methods of the current study in greater detail to contextualize the aforementioned hypotheses.

Positionality Statement

As the author of this dissertation, I first describe my identities as a second-generation, South Asian American, ciswoman. Prior to my graduate training, I worked in Baltimore, Maryland on mental health policy research focused on increasing access to housing, insurance, and food resources, as well as access to mental health, substance use, and HIV care for underserved groups across the State of Maryland (i.e., racial/ethnic minoritized individuals, individuals who recently experienced incarceration, LGBTQIA+ youth, young veterans and military families, individuals living with HIV). I focused on social class as it intersects with other identities, including, but not limited to, race, gender, sexual orientation, (dis)ability, and gender identity. My earliest reflections regarding class related to my experiences in India and learning more about casteism,

colonization and British occupation, my parents' immigration stories and their meaning-making of social class, and family discussions regarding racism. In my graduate training, aside from studying social class, capitalism, and critical consciousness, I have also studied institutional forms of discrimination, multicultural competency training of clinicians, discriminatory practices of clinicians, and microaggressions experienced by Asian American women.

Method

Participants. Five hundred and ten participants completed measures online through MTurk. Ages ranged from 18 to 76 years ($M = 37.1$, $SD = 11.0$). Approximately 51.0% of the sample identify as male ($n = 260$), 47.5% female ($n = 242$), 1% as non-binary ($n = 5$), .4% as transwomen ($n = 2$), .2% transman ($n = 1$). Participants varied across sexual orientation with 83.7% ($n = 427$) identified as heterosexual, 10% identified as bisexual ($n = 51$), 2.9% identified as lesbian/gay ($n = 15$), 1.6% as pansexual ($n = 8$), .8% as questioning ($n = 4$), .8% as asexual ($n = 4$), and .2% preferred not to disclose ($n = 1$). With regards to race, 69.8% identified as White ($n = 356$), 12.7% as Black or African American ($n = 65$), 7.6% as Asian/Asian American ($n = 39$), 6.7% as Hispanic or Latino/Latina/Latinx ($n = 34$), 2.4% as multi-ethnic/multi-racial ($n = 12$), .4% as American Indian or Alaska Native ($n = 2$), .2% as Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander ($n = 1$), and .2% preferred not to disclose ($n = 1$). With regards to (dis)ability, 93.5% shared that they do not have a (dis)ability ($n = 477$), while 6.5% shared that they do have a cognitive, mental, or physical (dis)ability ($n = 33$). Religious affiliation was collected across fifteen groups but the researcher has collapsed religious affiliation into three groups, with the majority of participants identifying with an

organized religion (58.2%, n = 296), 36.6% of participants identifying as Agnostic/Atheist or no religious affiliation (n = 187), and 5.3% identifying as spiritual (n = 27).

Participants answered several questions related to citizenship, location, and SES. The majority of participants identified as U.S. Citizens (97.1%, n = 495), 2.4% as U.S. Permanent Residents (n = 12), and .6% as other (n = 3). Participants were represented from every U.S. state except for North Dakota, Vermont, and Washington D.C. and identified their geographical region as suburban (42%, n = 217), urban (36.5%, n = 186), rural (20.2%, n = 103), or other geographical region (.8%, n = 4). Education ranged from less than high school to professional/graduate degree with .2% having less than high school (n = 1), 9.0% with a high school diploma or GED (n = 46), 16.1% having some college (n = 82), 12.4% with an associate's degree (n = 63), 38.2% with a bachelor's degree (n = 195), 13.3% with a graduate degree (n = 68), 10.4% with a professional degree (n = 53), and .4% with other education (n = 2). When asked to place themselves on a ladder representing where people stand in the united States on a scale from 1-10, with 10 representing people who have the most money, most education, and best jobs and 1 representing people who have the least money, least education, and worst or no job, 6.9% rated themselves as a 1 or 2 (n = 35), 30.0% rated themselves as a 3 or 4 (n = 153), 37.3% as a 5 or 6 (n = 190), 17.7% as a 7 or 8 (n = 90), and 8.3% as a 9 or 10 (n = 42). Participants described the socioeconomic status they spent most of their life in as lower class (6.9%, n = 35), working class (30.2%, n = 154), middle class (47.1%, n = 240), upper middle class (13.9%, n = 71), upper class (1.4%, n = 7), or other (.6%, n = 3). Participants also rated their household income ranging from less than \$10,000 to

\$150,000 or more. With regards to political identity, participants identified as very conservative (11.2%, n = 57), conservative (10.8%, n = 55), moderately conservative (11.4%, n = 58), moderate (15.7%, n = 80), moderately liberal (12.2%, n = 62), liberal (22.7%, n = 116), very liberal (15.1%, n = 77), and other (1.0%, n = 4). Participants also shared their political party affiliation as republican (26.7%, n = 136), democrat (45.5%, n = 232), independent (20.2%, n = 103), libertarian (2.2%, n = 11), no affiliation (4.5%, n = 23), or other political party (1.0%, n = 5).

Procedures. Data was collected through an online survey posted through MTurk. MTurk eligibility parameters to participate in the study included a HIT approval rate (%) of greater than 95%, location in the United States, and age over 18 years of age. Participants completed an online consent form, study measures, as well as a demographics form. Study measures included the Costs of U.S. Corporate Capitalism Scale (CCC), the Colorblind Racial Attitudes Scale (COBRAS), the “Critical Action” items on the Critical Consciousness Scale (Diemer, Rapa, Park, and Perry, 2017), a measure of endorsement of certain progressive policies (i.e., basic income, universal health care, free education, taxes, minimum wage, millionaire tax, public housing, etc.), and another measure consisting of graphic representations of perception of wealth distribution in the U.S. (as developed by Evans and Kelley (2017)). Participants also completed a demographics questionnaire at the end of the survey measuring race/ethnicity, age, gender identity, socioeconomic status across lifespan, income, highest level of education, political identity, political affiliation, state of residence, citizenship, and region of the U.S. The consent and survey took approximately 20 minutes to complete. Three validity checks were included where participants were instructed to

choose an option to ensure their attentiveness to the survey (i.e., “Please choose ‘Slightly Disagree’ for this item,” “Please choose ‘Strongly Disagree’ for this item,” “In your honest opinion, should we use your data in our analysis of this study?”). If participants successfully complete the survey and passed validity check questions, they were compensated \$1.50 for their time.

Measures.

Demographics. Participants were asked questions regarding their age, race, gender, ethnic identity, level of education, socioeconomic status, political identity, and state of residence in the U.S. Political identity was assessed through the following groups: conservative, moderately conservative, moderate, moderately liberal, liberal, very liberal, and other political affiliation. Participants reported their current socio-economic status as lower class, working class, middle class, upper middle class, or upper class. Subjective perceived status within the U.S. was measured by presenting a ladder with numbered bars from 1-10, representing where people stand in the U.S. according to who has the most/least money and education, and best/worst jobs. Respondents were asked to place themselves on this ladder to signify where they feel they reside on this spectrum.

Costs of U.S. Corporate Capitalism Scale (CCC). CCC is a 24-item, self-report measure intended to assess the degree to which an individual attributes the cause of social problems in the U.S. to be structural (i.e., USCC) or individualistic (i.e., individual failure regarding work ethic, lack of motivation, effort, or ability). In the validation and development study of the scale, a three-factor emerged: a) USCC as Structural Cause of Costs, b) Individual Failure as Cause of Costs, and c) Disagreement with Temporary Solutions to Costs. The first two factors were highly negatively correlated with one

another, indicating that respondents who attributed social problems in the U.S. to USCC, endorsed the individual factor less and vice versa, $r_{structural-individual} = -.626, p < .001$. Disagreement with Temporary Solutions to Costs of USCC, was moderately correlated with USCC as Structural Cause of Costs, $r_{structural-solutions} = .389, p < .001$, indicating that respondents who attributed social inequality to USCC also held the attitude that social programs (e.g., welfare, donating part of a purchase to charity) would not solve the root cause of social inequality (i.e., capitalism). Therefore, Disagreement with Temporary Solutions to Costs of USCC showed a weak and small negative correlation to Individual Failure as Cause of Costs, $r_{individual-solutions} = -.192, p < .001$. For the purpose of the current study, data from the first two factors will be analyzed, comparing attributions for social inequality as either structural (i.e., USCC) or individualistic (i.e., individual failure like lack of work ethic and ability). A list of items is included in Appendix A and a list of factor loadings is included in Appendix B.

The CCC has previously shown acceptable validity and reliability estimates for the full scale ($\alpha = .95$). In the current study, reliability estimates were also strong across the first two subscales used (CCCF1: $\alpha = .90$; CCCF2: $\alpha = .92$) (Table 2). In the original scale development study, Social Dominance Orientation (Pratto et al., 1994; Ho et al., 2015) and General Belief in a Just World Scale (Dalbert et al., 1987) were used as validation measures. CCC was significantly negatively related with SDO on all factors, $r_{structural} = -.523, p < .001$; $r_{individual} = -.561, p < .001$; $r_{solutions} = -.253, p < .001$. The magnitude of the correlations were small to moderate, indicating that the CCC is a distinct measure but is negatively related with SDO. Respondents who score higher on CCC, indicating that they attributed social problems and inequality to USCC, scored

lower on SDO, indicating that they do not support inequality between groups or systems that maintain hierarchies. CCC was significantly negatively related with General BJW on all factors, $r_{\text{structural}} = -.548, p < .001$; $r_{\text{individual}} = -.689, p < .001$; $r_{\text{solutions}} = -.296, p < .001$. With regards to General BJW, the magnitude of the correlations were small to moderate, similar to SDO. Respondents who score higher on CCC, scored lower on General BJW, indicating that they attribute social problems in the U.S. to USCC and do not hold meritocratic beliefs or see the world as just or fair. In the current study, the CCC measured beliefs about capitalism, along with perceptions of wealth distribution, and color-evasive racial attitudes, to predict policy preferences.

Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (COBRAS). COBRAS is a 20-item questionnaire measuring cognitive aspects of color-blind racial attitudes, or the degree to which individuals deny, distort, and minimize racism (Neville, Spanierman, & Doan, 2006; Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, & Brown, 2000). Color-blindness consists of two interrelated domains: color-evasion, or the “denial of racial differences by emphasizing sameness” and power-evasion, or the “denial of racism by emphasizing equal opportunities” (Neville, Awad, Brooks, Flores, & Bluemel, 2013, p. 455). To measure these domains, the COBRAS measure consists of a three-factor structure including: 1) Unawareness of Racial Privilege (7 items, 2) Unawareness of Institutional Discrimination (7 items), and 3) Unawareness of Blatant Racial Issues (6 items) (Neville et al., 2000). Higher scores on each of the COBRAS subscales and the total score indicate greater color-blind beliefs. In the original validation study, concurrent validity was illustrated through correlations with Global Belief in a Just World Scale (Lipkis, 1991) (correlations ranging between .39 to .53 between the scale and COBRAS subscales and COBRAS total

score) and Multidimensional Belief in a Just World Scale (Furnham & Procter, 1988) (correlations ranging between .34 and .61 between the scale and COBRAS subscales and COBRAS total score) (Neville et al., 2000). Discriminant validity was illustrated with no strong association between COBRAS and Marlow-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Neville et al., 2000; Reynolds, 1982). Higher scores are also associated with greater belief in a just world, racial and gender intolerance, and racial prejudice (Neville, 2000), as well as increased antiegalitarian beliefs, internalized oppression, and victim-blaming ideology (Neville et al., 2013). With regards to multicultural counseling competencies, greater color-blind racial ideology is related to lower self-reported multicultural counseling awareness and knowledge, over and above social desirability and participant race, and lower multicultural case conceptualization (Neville, Spanierman, & Doan, 2006). Cronbach's alphas across studies have ranged from .81 (Awad et al., 2005) to .91 (Neville et al., 2000). In the current study, reliability estimates were strong across the subscales (COBRASF1: $\alpha = .90$; COBRASF2: $\alpha = .86$, COBRASF3 $\alpha = .84$) (Table 2). The COBRAS was used to see whether color-blind racist attitudes predict support for redistributive economic policies. A list of questions are included in Appendix C.

Perceptions of wealth distribution (PWD) and ideal wealth distribution (IWD).

In order to study perceptions of wealth distribution, individuals were asked to estimate wealth distribution in the U.S. using Evans and Kelley's (2017) graphical representation of wealth distribution scale. Evans and colleagues' (1992) method of presenting graphical representations of perceived actual and preferred ideal wealth distributions has since been updated to include seven bars of distribution rather than five (see Appendix B; Evans & Kelley, 2017). Evans et al. (1992, 2017) has been used as a part of the

International Society Survey Programme (ISSP), which has surveyed over 56,000 participant estimations in more than 40 countries (ISSP, 1987, 1992, 1999, 2009, 2019). The five figures represent different types of social inequality. In order to conduct multivariate analyses, Evans and Kelley (1992, 2017) designed simple, scale-in-variance measures of inequality similar to Gini coefficients. Type A represents a strongly elitist image of society with a small number of people at the top, a slight middle class and a large amount of people at the bottom. The average person's class position is 18 points out of 100 (with 0 representing the absolute most elitist type of society and 100 for the most egalitarian). Type B represents a pyramid: a small elite group at the top, a larger middle class, and the largest group at the bottom (average class position is 26). Type C is a moderately elitist society with fewer people at the bottom and what people typically think of when imagining a "strong middle class" in a capitalist society (Vanneman & Cannon, 1987) (average class position is 37). Type D is a very egalitarian society with a small top and bottom class and a large middle class (average class position is 50). Type E resembles a socialist ideal with a very large upper and middle class and a very small bottom class (average class position is 63). When scaling the structure of each diagram for data analysis, Evans and Kelley (2017) use the following numbers for each diagram: Type A = 0, Type B = 47, Type C = 80, Type D = 93, and Type E = 100. These values reflect the degree of inequality of each type with 0 being the most elitist and 100 for the most equalitarian. Intermediate types are scored in proportion with their coefficient of variation. A list of charts and questions are included in Appendix D.

Critical Consciousness Scale (CCS): Critical Action (CA). The CCS measures individuals' ability to critically reflect on their social conditions, endorsement of

egalitarianism, and their desire or perceived behaviors to change social inequity (Diemer, Rapa, Park, & Perry, 2017; Friere, 1973; Watts, Diemer, & Voight, 2011). Critical consciousness (CC) has been studied as an “antidote” to the effects of systemic oppression, aiding in unlocking individual and collective agency and autonomy that is generally constrained by sociopolitical inequity (Diemer, Rapa, Park, & Perry 2017; Freire, 1993; Ginwright & James, 2002; Prilleltensky, 2012). The CCS is comprised of three subscales, including 1) Critical Reflection: Perceived Inequality (eight items, $\alpha = .90$), 2) Critical Reflection: Egalitarianism (five items, $\alpha = .88$), and 3) Critical Action: Sociopolitical Participation (nine items, $\alpha = .85$) (Diemer, Rapa, Park, & Perry, 2017). These subscales are meant to be scored separately since each subscale is seen as distinct (Diemer, Rapa, Park, & Perry, 2017). For the purpose of the current study, only the Critical Action: Sociopolitical Participation items were used to assess how critical action may moderate the relationship between perceptions of inequality and attitudes on USCC predict redistributive policy preferences. Cronbach’s alpha showed strong reliability in the current study sample ($\alpha = .94$) (Table 2). A full list of items are included in Appendix E.

Policy Support (PS). In order to measure this, I used questions developed by Kuziemko and colleagues (2015) which ask questions on government policies meant to reduce income inequality, as well as views on income taxation. Questions regarding economic policy reform include, “The minimum wage is currently \$7.25 per hour. Do you think it should be decreased, stay the same or increased? [Decrease/Stay the same/Increased],” “Do you support or oppose the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) program? [Support/Indifferent/Oppose],” “Do you support or oppose the Food Stamps

program? [Support/Indifferent/Oppose],” “As you may know, there have been proposals recently to decrease the federal deficit by raising income taxes on millionaires. Do you think income taxes on millionaires should be increased, stay the same or decreased? [Increased/Stay the same/Decreased].” A list of items are included in Appendix F.

Furthermore, a short measure (3 additional questions) on policy preferences that participants can agree or disagree with supporting is included. These items ask participants if they support Basic Income, Universal Healthcare, and free education. Participants answered “Yes” or “No” to each of these items. These items are meant to ask questions regarding individuals’ agreement with policies that encourage redistribution of wealth. Some of these items were not asked during the Kuziemko and colleagues (2015) study and provide complimentary items on basic income, healthcare, and education. However, reliability and validity information is not available for the combined items (see Limitations section). A full list of items are included in Appendix G.

Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS). SWLS is a 5-item, self-report measure that assesses cognitive judgments about one’s life satisfaction (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985). Participants rate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the items using a 7-point scale that ranges from 7: strongly agree to 1: strongly disagree. Item examples include “If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing,” “The conditions of my life are excellent,” and “I am satisfied with my life” (Diener et al., 1985). Initial validation demonstrated convergence between SWLS and other measures of well-being: between SWLS and Fordyce Scale (Fordyce, 1977; $r_s = .59$ and $.47$), SWLS and Gurin Scale (Gurin, Veroff, & Feld, 1960; $r_s = .59$ and $.62$), and the Delighted-

Terrible Scale (Andrews & Withey, 1976; $r_s = .68$ and $.62$). The SWLS has been studied as a valid and reliable measure of life satisfaction across several age ranges and populations, and has strong evidence of being a global and stable phenomenon, rather than momentary judgment (Jovanović, 2019; Pavot, Diener, Colvin, Sandvik, 1991). It does not measure positive or negative affect and has been shown to have discriminant validity from emotional well-being measures (Pavot & Diener, 1993). The internal reliability for the 5-item total score was $.87$ and test re-test reliability was $.82$ (Diener et al., 1985). In the present sample, Cronbach's alpha coefficient showed strong reliability ($\alpha = .93$) (Table 2).

Data analysis

Data was analyzed using hierarchical multiple regression analysis to examine if beliefs about USCC, colorblind racist attitudes, and perceptions of wealth distribution explain the variance in redistributive policy preferences. Descriptive analyses and data distributions were run on all variables. The CCC includes two subscales measuring the structural attribution of social inequality to USCC and the individualistic attribution of social inequality to individual failure (i.e., lack of work ethic and ability of the poor). COBRAS includes three subscales which measure unawareness of blatant discrimination, unawareness of institutional discrimination, and unawareness of privilege. The Evans and Kelley (2017) graphical representations of wealth distribution were scored according to their implicit level of inequality as defined in Evans and colleagues (1992). This allows for use in multivariate analyses (Evans et al., 1992, Evans & Kelley 2017). Specifically, 0 was scored for the most elite type of society and 100 for the most egalitarian, with the intermediate types scored in proportion to their respective coefficient

of variation. Therefore, Type A is scored as 0, Type B as 47, Type C as 80, Type D as 93, and Type E as 100. Critical action was analyzed as a moderator. Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) and demographic variables were controlled for.

An initial factor analysis was completed on the ten questions measuring policy preferences. Factor analysis revealed that all ten questions showed a one-factor solution. These questions were then combined as a single score due to their strong correlation with one another. Data analysis included a step-wise process where step one of the model analyzed to what extent demographic variables explain the variance in predicting redistributive policy preferences (after controlling for Satisfaction With Life). In step two of the model, centered perceptions of wealth distribution and ideal wealth distribution were added. Step three psychological variables (i.e., CCC and COBRAS subscales) were entered and analyzed. Step four included interaction terms between perceptions of wealth distribution, ideal wealth distribution and critical action. Step five included interaction terms between CCC, COBRAS, and critical action. After these preliminary analyses were completed, it was found that the significant predictors and final model for predicting policy preferences were household income and political identity, and psychological variables (i.e., CCC and COBRAS subscales).

The full model predicting redistributive policy preferences is as follows:

Redistributive policy preferences = $b_0 + b_1*(\text{Household income}) + b_2*(\text{Political Identity}) + b_3*(\text{Attribution to USCC}) + b_4*(\text{Attribution to individual failure}) + b_5*(\text{Unawareness of racial privilege}) + b_6*(\text{Unawareness of blatant racial issues}) + e$ (error). Demographic variables including age, race, gender, sexual orientation, where individuals place themselves on a ladder, education, political party, unawareness of institutional

discrimination, perceptions of wealth distribution, ideal wealth distribution, and interaction terms between critical action and all study variables were examined as not significant and were excluded from the final model. Final model results and excluded variables are discussed in the following sections.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

The survey had a total of 625 online survey responses, both complete and incomplete. Participants who did not follow survey directions as outlined in the consent form (i.e., failed one or more validity checks, completed the survey one or more standard deviations below the mean with regards to completion time (under 4 minutes and 30 seconds), did not complete the survey in the 40 minutes allotted, had duplicate IP addresses, or did not provide their MTurk ID and therefore could not be compensated). Specifically, 45 participants were excluded due to failing one or more validity checks, 58 participants were excluded due to completion time, 6 participants did not provide their MTurk ID, and 6 participants had duplicate IP addresses. A total of 115 participants' data was rejected and 82% of participants' data was approved. Therefore, 510 participants' data was included in the final study sample and analyses. All responses were complete across the data set for each measure, except for the death tax question with .02% missing data. Therefore, there were no additional imputations needed to address the one missing response. All final variables were centered at the mean to reduce multicollinearity when examining interactions.

For the dependent variable of the study, a factor analysis was completed for the ten items measuring policy support. I determined whether the sample size was

appropriate for the exploratory factor analysis (Arrindell & van der Ende, 1985; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007) by conducting the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < .001$) and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (George & Mallery, 2003). Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was $\chi^2(45) = 2024.08, p < .001$, and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was .86, indicating that multivariate normality is assumed and that the data is sufficiently factorable. Cattell's scree test and the analysis of eigenvalues greater than 1.0, initially presented a two factor solution, but when examining the cross-loadings of coefficients (above .25), it was determined that a one-factor solution had the best fit with the data (Tabachnik et al., 2012). Variance accounted for by a two-factor structure was 55% while variance accounted for by a one-factor structure was 44%. Items retained were based on the following criteria: a) items with communalities above .3, and b) items with factor loadings greater than .5 (Tabachnick et al. 2012). Communalities ranged from .20 to .70 and factor loadings ranged from .46 to .84. (Table 1). One item, regarding Earned Income Tax Credit, was retained with a communality below .3 and a factor loading below .5, due to being theoretically consistent. Because the policy items had different response scales the regression approach was used to create a single score policy preference variable for the hierarchical regression. This new variables was scaled so that higher scores represented support for more progressive policies.

Means, standard deviations, and Cronbach's alpha for all study variables are listed in Table 2. Intercorrelations between all study variables are included in Table 3. Pearson product-moment correlations indicated significant correlations between CCC, COBRAS, Critical Action, and interaction terms between CA and both COBRAS and CCC. Policy

support was significantly positively associated with CCCF1 ($r = .71, p < .01$), CCCF2 ($r = .59, p < .01$), and Critical Action ($r = .09, p < .05$), and significantly negatively associated with CCCF3 ($r = -.64, p < .01$), COBRASF1 ($r = -.68, p < .01$), COBRASF2 ($r = -.55, p < .01$), COBRASF3 ($r = -.67, p < .01$), and SWLS ($r = -.20, p < .01$).

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis

Multicollinearity tests revealed that tolerance ($>.20$) and variance inflation factors ([VIF]; <10) were within the acceptable range (Hair et al., 2010; Marquardt, 1970). To test our hypotheses, I initially conducted a hierarchical regression analysis with control variables and demographic variables in Step 1 (SWLS, race, gender, sexual orientation, political party, political identity, where individuals placed themselves on a ladder measuring class, household income, and education), mean-centered perceptions of, and ideal, wealth distribution in Step 2, psychological variables (CCC and COBRAS subscales) in Step 3, mean-centered interaction terms between critical action and perceptions of, and ideal, wealth distribution in Step 4, and mean-centered interaction terms between psychological variables and critical action in Step 5 (CCCF1*CA, CCCF2*CA, COBRASF1*CA, COBRASF2*CA, COBRASF3*CA). Final model coefficients, betas, and collinearity statistics are presented in Table 5.

The overall regression model in Step 1 was significant, $F(10, 490) = 25.27, p = .000$, and accounted for 34% of the variance ($R^2 = .34$). Specifically, where people placed themselves on a ladder, $\beta = .16, t(508) = 3.06, p = .002$, political identity, $\beta = .58, t(508) = 13.69, p = .000$, household income, $\beta = -.11, t(508) = -2.61, p = .009$, gender, $\beta = .08, t(508) = 2.23, p = .026$, sexual orientation, $\beta = -.10, t(508) = -2.74, p = .006$ were significant. SWLS, $\beta = -.08, t(508) = -1.72, p = .087$, age, $\beta = -.03, t(508) = -.76, p =$

.450, political party, $\beta = -.04$, $t(508) = -.95$, $p = .341$, and education $\beta = .04$, $t(508) = .84$, $p = .402$ were not significant.

After mean-centered perceptions of, and ideal, wealth distribution were entered into Step 2, the regression model was significant, $F(12, 488) = 22.81$, $p = .000$, $R^2 = .36$, but only accounted for 2% of the variance (R^2 change = .02). Therefore, perceptions of, and ideal, wealth distribution were removed from the final model as they did not meaningfully explain the variance of predicting policy support.

Psychological variables (CCC and COBRAS subscales) were entered in Step 3, the total variance explained by the model was significant, $F(18, 482) = 49.42$, $p = .000$, $R^2 = .65$, and accounted for an additional 29% of the variance, R^2 change = .29, F change (6, 482) = 66.12, $p = .000$. Political identity, $\beta = .23$, $t(508) = 5.82$, $p = .000$, household income, $\beta = -.06$, $t(508) = -1.99$, $p = .047$, CCCF1, $\beta = .36$, $t(508) = 8.71$, $p = .000$, CCCF2, $\beta = .13$, $t(508) = 2.40$, $p = .017$, COBRASF1, $\beta = -.12$, $t(508) = -2.10$, $p = .036$, COBRASF3, $\beta = -.12$, $t(508) = -2.20$, $p = .029$, and CA, $\beta = .14$, $t(508) = 3.40$, $p = .001$, were all significant. SWLS, $\beta = .03$, $t(508) = 1.00$, $p = .318$, race, $\beta = .02$, $t(508) = .56$, $p = .573$, gender, $\beta = -.01$, $t(508) = -.24$, $p = .815$, sexual orientation, $\beta = -.10$, $t(508) = -1.73$, $p = .084$, age, $\beta = .05$, $t(508) = 1.72$, $p = .086$, political party, $\beta = .01$, $t(508) = .17$, $p = .863$, education, $\beta = -.04$, $t(508) = -1.08$, $p = .282$, ladder, $\beta = .07$, $t(508) = 1.61$, $p = .109$, PWD, $\beta = -.01$, $t(508) = -.31$, $p = .757$, IWD, $\beta = .03$, $t(508) = .94$, $p = .350$, and COBRASF2, $\beta = -.04$, $t(508) = -.83$, $p = .408$, were not significant.

After mean-centered interaction terms between perceptions of, and ideal, wealth distribution and critical action were entered into Step 4, the overall regression model was significant, $F(20, 480) = 44.47$, $p = .000$. However, the R^2 change was not significant, R^2

change = .001, F change (2, 480) = .63, p = .531. Mean-centered interaction terms between perceptions of, and ideal, wealth distribution and critical action variables were therefore removed from the final model as they did not explain the variance of predicting policy support.

At Step 5, mean-centered interaction terms between psychological variables and critical action (CCCF1*CA, CCCF2*CA, COBRASF1*CA, COBRASF2*CA, COBRASF3*CA) were entered and the total variance explained by the model was significant, $F(25, 475) = 38.64$, $p = .000$. Although the R^2 change was significant, R^2 change = .021, F change (5, 475) = 6.01, $p = .000$, it only accounted for an additional 2% of the variance. Additionally, none of the interaction terms reached statistical significance. Interaction terms between critical action and psychological variables were therefore removed from the final model as they did not meaningfully explain the variance of predicting policy support.

Discussion

I examined the extent to which demographics, psychological variables such as beliefs about capitalism and color-evasive attitudes, and perceptions of wealth distribution predict policy preferences. Additionally, I examined the degree to which critical action moderates this relationship. This is the first study to quantitatively explore how beliefs about capitalism and color-evasive racial attitudes influence policy preferences. Overall, the findings indicated that psychological factors, namely beliefs about capitalism and color-evasive racial attitudes, did predict support for redistributive economic policy preferences, over and above perceptions of wealth distribution, and added further complexity beyond demographic variables. This is consistent with findings

that suggest individual and structural attributions for economic and racial inequality is distinct from political identification and political ideology (Diemer et al., 2019).

However, perceptions of wealth distribution did not meaningfully predict support for economic policy preferences.

When specifically focusing on the degree to which demographic variables accounted for the variance in predicting policy support, household income, where individuals placed themselves on a ladder with regards to access to resources and opportunity, gender, sexual orientation, and political identity accounted for 34% of the variance. Specifically, individuals with a lower household income, who identified as more liberal, placed themselves higher on the ladder, women, and heterosexual individuals were more likely to support redistributive economic policies. However, when introducing psychological variables, the ladder, gender, and sexual orientation variables became non-significant. Therefore, political identity and household income remained significant demographic variables. Liberals and those with lower incomes had a higher support for redistributive economic policies. This is consistent with findings that indicate that higher-SES groups tend to be less supportive of redistributive policies than lower-SES groups while lower income and other less powerful groups (e.g., BIPOC) tend to have greater support for redistribution and government intervention (Anderson & Curtis, 2015; Bullock, 2017; Kluegel, 1986). Furthermore, wealthy Americans tend to hold conservative views on taxes, welfare, and economic regulation than the general public. When isolating the top one-tenth of the one percent of wealthy individuals, conservatism is even more pronounced (Page, Bartels, & Seawright, 2013). On the other hand, low-income groups are less likely than higher income groups to vote or be involved with

politics, increasing the likelihood that policy outcomes align with elite preferences (Bullock, 2017; Kraus, Anderson, & Callaghan, 2015). This effect has been attributed to restricted access to resources and that lower perceived class standing is associated with decreased political efficacy and participation. However, when class status is experimentally enhanced, political efficacy and desire to participate politically increased (Kraus, Anderson, & Callaghan, 2015).

The first hypothesis was supported; structural attributions of social inequality to capitalism significantly explained the variance in support redistributive economic policies. Participants who attribute social inequality to capitalism may believe that redistributive policies are needed to address the social problems associated with capitalism. This is consistent with findings that indicate that structural attributions for poverty, dissatisfaction with income inequality, and attributing wealth to privilege predict support for redistributive and progressive welfare policies (Bullock et al., 2003). The current study additionally linked structural attributions to capitalism to other redistributive economic policies aside from welfare (i.e., free education, basic income, universal healthcare, Estate Tax, etc.). Conversely, recent research has found that support for laissez-faire capitalism is strongly associated with system justification, authoritarianism, and social dominance orientation (Azevedo et al., 2019). Additionally, economic conservatism (support for less progressive tax systems) is positively correlated with right-wing authoritarianism among participants with high and low political sophistication (i.e., factual knowledge of political systems and issues) (Azevedo et al., 2019). This further illustrates that regardless of whether participants are knowledgeable

on the how economic and political systems function, they are still able to make attributions in line with their beliefs about capitalism (Azevedo et al., 2019).

The second hypothesis was supported; individuals who make individualistic attributions of social inequality (i.e., personal failure of work ethic, ability, skill, etc.) were less likely to support redistributive economic policies in the U.S. This is consistent with findings that indicate that dehumanizing low-SES groups decreases support for wealth distribution via blaming low-SES groups for their poverty. These participants also view social policies (e.g., welfare, income redistribution) as unnecessary efforts with little impact on poverty (Sainz et al., 2019). Furthermore, studies have found that high-SES groups are perceived as hardworking and competent, while low-SES groups are perceived as “undisciplined, animalistic, and unmotivated” (Durante, Tablante, & Fiske, 2017, Loughnan et al., 2014 as cited in Bullock, 2017, p. 143). Individualistic attributions are also associated with restrictive welfare policies, and system-justifying beliefs such as meritocracy and the belief that people get what they deserve (Hunt & Bullock, 2016; Bullock & Reppond, 2016). When participants are exposed to even subtle reminders of money, they more strongly endorse support of capitalism, belief that victims deserve their circumstances, and advantaged groups should dominate those who are disadvantaged (Caruso et al., 2013).

The third hypothesis was supported; individuals who endorse color-evasive racial attitudes were less likely to support redistributive economic policies, while individual who do not endorse color-evasive racial attitudes were more likely to support redistributive economic policies. This is consistent with findings that class-based policy attitudes are related, but not limited to, a broad network of intersecting beliefs about

social class, mobility, gender, race, and social responsibility (Bullock, 2017). Specifically, the current study found that the first and third subscales of COBRAS, unawareness of racial privilege and unawareness of blatant racial issues respectively, significantly accounted for the variance in predicting redistributive policy support. With regards to unawareness of racial privilege, Norton and Sommers (2011) found that although White and Black Americans identify a decrease in anti-Black bias over the last 50 years, Black participants report that anti-Black bias is still prevalent today while White participants report that it is at a historically low and negligible level. Furthermore, White participants reported that *anti-White bias* has increased over time, and by the 2000s, the prevalence of anti-White bias was *greater than* anti-Black bias (Norton & Sommers, 2011). White Americans in particular may overestimate progress towards racial economic inequality because they perceive American society as fair and more equal than Black Americans (DeBell, 2017; Kraus, Rucker, & Richeson 2017).

It is not surprising that unawareness of blatant racial issues also significantly predicted policy preferences where low awareness of blatant racial issues predicted less support for redistributive economic policies, whereas high awareness predicted more support for redistributive economic policies. This is consistent with findings that link racism to beliefs about social economic policies. For instance, “welfare mothers” are often stereotyped as lazy, promiscuous, and unintelligent and the word “welfare” has been shown to activate racism, sexism, and classism (Henry, Reyna, & Weiner, 2004; Katz, 2013). Moreover, when White American participants have been primed with racial cues via exposure to rap lyrics, they are less supportive of policies that would assist a pregnant Black woman living in poverty than a White woman with the same

circumstances (Johnson et al., 2009). White Americans in particular may overestimate progress towards racial economic inequality because they perceive American society as fair and more equal than Black Americans (DeBell, 2017; Kraus et al., 2017).

Conversely, White Americans who attribute racism to historical and structural factors are more likely to acknowledge current racial disparities (Rucker et al., 2019).

Our fourth hypothesis was not supported; individuals' perceptions of wealth distribution did not predict redistributive economic policy decision-making. Both perceptions and ideal wealth distribution were not significant. This is consistent with findings that suggest when participants in the U.S. are educated on the level of inequality, without knowing their position in the distribution, they are more likely to believe inequality is an important issue but only weakly effects their support for redistribution, with the exception of strongly favoring the estate tax, which affects wealthier Americans (Kuziemko et al., 2015). Additionally, some studies have found that there is a shared consensus of how wealth is, and ideally should be, divided (Ariely, 2011), possibly making perceptions of wealth distribution less predictive than other variables (e.g., meritocracy, capitalism, color-evasive racial attitudes, economic nationalism, etc.). The current study further clarified this finding, where beliefs about capitalism and color-evasive racial attitudes predicted the variance in predicting support for redistributive economic policies over and above perceptions of wealth distribution. When studies have found differences in perceptions of wealth with individuals with a variety of political views and socioeconomic backgrounds, the magnitude of these differences were not large (Evans et al., 2017; Flanagan & Kornbluh, 2017). However, other studies have found large political differences regarding other factors of U.S. economic perceptions, like

social mobility (Davidai & Gilovich, 2015). Nonetheless, further research is needed to clarify to what extent perceptions of wealth distribution affects redistributive economic policy preferences.

The fifth hypothesis was not supported; critical action did not moderate the relationship between psychological factors, perceptions of wealth, and policy preference. In theory, critical analysis of inequality would increase critical action that aims to dismantle oppressive social systems, and is distinct from general community well-being or civic engagement (e.g., cleaning up trash) (Diemer et al., 2021; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). However, there may be other factors that explain this link. For instance, Roy and colleagues (2019) recently studied low-income, racial/ethnic minority youth who are exposed to higher levels of community violence and higher neighborhood income inequality are more likely to engage in more critical action behaviors than those who are not. In the current study, household income was assessed, as well as where individuals place themselves on a ladder, but community economic conditions were not assessed (i.e., neighborhood income inequality, community violence, etc.) that may motivate individuals to engage in higher critical action behaviors.

Conversely, a major critique of the critical consciousness literature is that critical reflection does not always lead to action (Seidor & Graves, 2020) and that critical reflection may be a necessary but insufficient condition in predicting critical action (Bañales et al., 2020; Diemer & Rapa, 2016). The current study found that psychological factors (i.e., color-evasive racial attitudes, beliefs about capitalism) predicted support for redistributive economic policies, and that critical action behaviors was not necessary to moderate this relationship. However, this is not to detract from the importance of critical

consciousness development, as several studies have indicated its importance in transforming perceptions of inequality to reflect the accurate reality of structural factors that shape understanding the broader link between racism, capitalism, and economic inequality (Chronister & McWhirter, 2006; Diemer & Blustein, 2006; Diemer & Rapa, 2016; Godfrey & Wolf, 2016; Kahne & Westheimer, 2006; Watts et al., 2011; Wernick, 2016).

Additionally, it is worth noting that there were high correlations between the COBRAS subscales and the first two subscales of the CCC ($>.70$, see Table 3). This is not surprising, as research has demonstrated a clear link between stereotypical race-class attitudes. One theory that further illustrates this is intersectionality. Intersectionality provides a more nuanced approach to understanding the connection between social identities, such as race and class, within a capitalist society. Intersectionality is a framework coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw to describe how social identities are mutually constitutive (Shields, 2008), experienced simultaneously on an individual, interpersonal, and structural levels (Brah & Phoenix, 2004), and describe social identities as the product of interlocking systems of power and privilege (Lewis & Grzanka, 2016). For instance, in studies examining explicit characteristics associated with Black individuals, respondents commonly used “welfare Black,” “poor,” and “live in poor areas” but less commonly reported “Black business man” (Bonam et al., 2016, 2020; Devine & Baker, 1991; McCabe & Brannon, 2004 as cited in Moore-Berg & Karpinski, 2021). Studies have also found that individuals’ mental representations of individuals who are poor or welfare recipients tend to look more Black, while individuals’ mental representations of people not on welfare tend to look more White (Brown-Iannuzzi et al., 2017; Lei &

Bodenhausen, 2017). These findings also translate to implicit associations where low social class is implicitly associated with “Black” while high social class is associated with “White” (Brown-Iannuzzi et al., 2019; Klonis, 2005 as cited in Moore-Berg & Karpinski, 2021). Thus, the higher correlation between the COBRAS subscales and the CCC (>.70) may be explained by the link between race-class attitudes.

Implications for Research and Practice

The current study situates the importance of prioritizing beliefs about capitalism and color-evasive racial attitudes in predicting support for redistributive economic policies; a necessary step in transforming the deleterious impact of economic inequality (Alvaredo et al., 2018a) with regards to mental and physical well-being (Ahn et al., 2015; Di Tella et al., 2001; Fiske et al., 2012; Fritsche et al., 2017; Haushofer & Fehr, 2014; Kawachi et al., 1997; Mani et al., 2013; Oishi et al., 2011; Ribeiro et al., 2017). Within the field of psychology and psychiatry, researchers have begun to make calls to recognize the impact of social inequality and socioeconomic status on the widespread genesis and maintenance of mental disorders (Burns, 2015; Dean, 2017; Walsh-Bowers & Gokani, 2015; West, Blacksher, and Burke, 2017). If psychologists are intentional about prioritizing mental health in policy development, they must simultaneously be intentional about the inclusion of policy that shifts unequal resource distribution and its negative impact on mental health (Lund, 2015). This is especially true for the field of counseling psychology, which defines and distinguishes itself as engaging with social justice advocacy (Ratts et al., 2015). Improving multicultural competence, improving interclass relations, and providing greater access to care is insufficient in dismantling the conditions

that create inequality, and could even be instrumental in maintaining the status quo (Arfken, 2013).

In order to dismantle systems of oppression, APA must prioritize the study of economic inequality and methods for shifting public perceptions. The field of psychology has played a vital role in shaping public perceptions, especially with the legitimization of racism (Cummings Center for the History of Psychology, 2022), anti-LGBTQIA+ rhetoric, and overall adjustment to oppressive dominant social structures (Arfken & Yen, 2014). Researchers within the field have the opportunity to study systems that create inequality, namely USCC and White Supremacy, to further shed light on individuals' beliefs about capitalism, color-evasive racial attitudes, and economic nationalism as drivers for redistributive economic policy choices and voting. Research has shown that media coverage regarding social inequality (Diermeier et al., 2017), and acceptance of hierarchies and belief regarding personal choice (Kteily et al., 2017) shape individuals' understanding of economic inequality. For instance, in Germany, there is greater coverage of stories related to inequality, leading to heightened concerns about economic conditions and unfairness in society (Diermeier et al., 2017). Furthermore, merely exposing White participants to audio clips featuring a historian discussing the government's role in fostering racial inequality led participants to acknowledge systemic racism over a control condition who did not hear these clips (Bonam et al., 2018). Research and the dissemination of research is integral to fostering greater concern regarding economic and systemic inequality.

Moreover, APA's focus on economic inequality and capitalism would further impact training of clinicians as it relates to their own understanding of oppression and

social justice. For instance, studies have shown that social workers and social-work students attributed wealth and poverty more to structural over individual explanations for poverty when compared to middle-class professionals and non-social work students (Družić Ljubotina, & Ljubotina, 2007; Sun, 2001; Weiss & Gal, 2007). These findings were attributed to the professional socialization and training of social workers, which places more of an emphasis on societal sources of poverty, consistent with the values of social work as a field (Schwartz & Robinson, 1991; Weiss, 2005). *Recognition of diversity* is an insufficient condition for achieving social justice as it does not call into question the capitalist mode of production that forms society (Arfken, 2012; Fraser, 2003). Incorporating *redistribution* as a path to social justice requires a focus on the economic basis of society, seeking a more equitable distribution of resources and rights, and interrogating the role capitalism plays in racism, sexism, ableism, heterosexism, and cissexism (Fine & Burns, 2003; Zinn, 2005).

With regards to practice and advocacy, including capitalism and economic inequality into the multicultural competency literature provides greater conceptualization and framework in understanding interlocking systems of power and privilege. This may aid in psychologists' own reflection of social class concerns with clients living in poverty, and bring nuanced conversation into clinical practice. For instance, CC development has been studied to expose mental health providers to their own prejudices, stereotypes, and biases (Anderson, 1992; Odell et al., 1994; Pinderhighes, 1989; Ridley et al., 1994). CC regarding USCC may impact counseling psychologist's work with clients as justification of inequality is correlated with negative attitudes towards individuals with low-income and opposition to redistribution of wealth (Cozzareli et al., 2001; Dion,

2010). A future direction of the current study is to use the CCC as a training tool for clinicians to both assess clinicians' beliefs about capitalism as well as encourage critical reflection.

From a liberation framework, psychologists can learn to use CC development as a therapeutic tool, allowing clients to attribute experiences of discrimination to structural factors versus personal failure (Godfrey & Wolf, 2016; Watts, Diemer, & Voight, 2011), and possibly take action against oppressive elements of society (Friere, 1973). For instance, feminist psychotherapy has historically focused on empowering clients through acknowledging systemic factors (e.g., capitalism, racism, ableism, etc.) that may relate to clients' presenting concerns (Brown, 2018). Counselors may facilitate the client's exploration of internalized societal messages in how they evaluate their own responsibility and agency. With clients who internalize systemic issues as personal failure, counselors may provide psychoeducation on systems as they relate to their clients, asking clients to explore how these systems of oppression may influence how others perceive them, how they perceive themselves, their relationships, career self-efficacy and decision-making, family roles and values, self-worth, etc. Clients who internalize beliefs about capitalism (e.g., meritocracy, Protestant work ethic, just world beliefs, right-wing authoritarianism, etc.) as the standard for their own personal failure, may benefit from learning more about these beliefs as they relate to their own pathologizing, self-judgment and shame (i.e., "lazy," "poor work ethic," "lack ability," "get what I deserve," etc.). CC development may be a therapeutic tool that assists clients with cultivating greater self-compassion, self-awareness, and empowerment, but there is

more research needed on the impact of CC development on client's well-being and therapeutic process.

With regards to clients taking action against oppressive elements of society, CC development is correlated with youth taking action to improve school facilities and advocate for resources (Shah & Mediratta, 2008), implement school programs to prevent violence (Voight, 2015), and institute policies that address racial achievement gaps (Christens & Kirshner, 2011). Studies have also shown that even in early middle-childhood, children have the capacity to grasp concepts related to equity and social exclusion, suggesting that school curricula may foster reasoning regarding economic inequality and social justice (Mistry et al., 2017). Although it is worth noting that large scale change in schools is laden with several obstacles, rising economic inequality may elucidate public health concerns related to inequality, and increase need for instruction on economic laws and history that encourages dysregulated wealth and distribution of resources (McLoyd, 2019). Nonetheless, it is with awareness that researchers, clinicians, and the general public make informed decisions regarding redistributive economic policies and may contribute to redistributive social justice.

Limitations

The current study has limitations important to consider. First, the sample was collected through the online system MTurk. Internet recruitment allows for cost effectiveness, a more robust, diverse, and large sample, and affords the convenience for participants to complete the survey at a location of their choice. However, Internet studies also increase self-selection bias based on participants' preexisting beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge on a particular topic (Schmidt, 1997). For instance, the sample

may have consisted of people who are more interested in the impact of U.S. economic policies, have political leanings that elicit strong reactions on social class standing, or have opinions regarding the utility of social programs to offset the inequity. Moreover, online recruitment strategies can fail in capturing a random and generalizable sample of the larger population. Furthermore, participants may feel fatigue when completing online measures or lose focus over the course of completing them. However, validity checks across the measures were intended to minimize the impact of participant fatigue upon data analysis.

Additionally, the current project is subject to the limits of self-report data (Howard & Dailey, 1979). The discussion of highly politicized content may have impact individuals' responses depending on their values and political identity. For instance, respondents' political identities may be intertwined with their responses. Moreover, participants may have been subjected to answering questions in a more socially desirable way.

Furthermore, one reason studies may have contradictory findings regarding perceptions of wealth inequality and distribution, is that measuring perceptions has been an ongoing challenge in research. For instance, estimates of wealth distribution has been mixed and tends to differ based on how perceptions are measured (Arsenio, 2018). Individuals may have greater difficulty estimating wealth distribution and economic inequality when using quintiles (i.e., Norton & Ariely, 2011) versus graphical and pictorial depictions of wealth distribution, such as Evans and Kelley's (1992, 2017) graphical representation of wealth distribution. Evans and Kelley's graphical representation of wealth has been found to predict higher levels of inequality and has

been consistently related to negative views of society and higher preference for wealth distribution (Arsenio, 2018). However, this effect was not found in the current study. Additionally, although Evans and Kelley's graphical representations of wealth have been used in over 40 countries for the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), there exists little information regarding validity of this measure. Moreover, because the current study researchers developed a measure for policy preferences, there was no data on the validity of this measure. This was due to most studies adapting questionnaires regarding policy preferences, possibly due to the changing landscape of policies in varying countries.

Finally, the measuring beliefs about capitalism and color-evasive racial attitudes endure significant overlap in predicting policy preferences. Studies have recently shown the connection between support for capitalism and social ideologies such as racial prejudice, intolerance, and ethnocentrism (e.g., see Azevedo et al., 2019 for a review). The current study sought to study these dimensions separately through the use of CCC and COBRAS. However, future studies would may need to attempt to extrapolate these effects further through the use of different measures or experimental study methodology.

Conclusion

The current study makes a necessary contribution to the lack of literature on the extent to which individuals' beliefs about capitalism, color-evasive racial attitudes, and perceptions of wealth distribution predict support for redistributive economic policies. This study is particularly important, as economic inequality is the highest that it has been since the Great Depression (Davies, Sandström, Shorrocks, & Wolff, 2009; Saez & Zucman, 2016). Economic inequality has been argued as the defining societal issue of

the 21st century, underlying policy debates regarding health care, wages, taxation, immigration, and gaining increasing attention from lawmakers, academics, and the general public (Hauser & Norton, 2017; Piketty, 2014; Stiglitz, 2012). Yet, there has been little focus on the beliefs and perceptions that influence individuals' support for redistributive economic policies. The current study deepens understanding of the beliefs and attitudes that shape individuals' perceptions of inequality (Cruces et al., 2015) and may be vital in better addressing the negative impacts of social and economic inequality, especially as it relates to contextualizing mental health.

Table 1. Item Factor Loadings (component matrix coefficients) for Exploratory Factor Analysis

| Items | Factor 1 |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| Federal aid to the poor | .84 |
| Federal aid for housing | .83 |
| Food stamps | .83 |
| Universal healthcare | .67 |
| Free education | .64 |
| Estate Tax | .57 |
| Millionaire tax | .57 |
| Basic income | .55 |
| Raise minimum wage | .52 |
| Earned Income Tax Credit | .46 |

Note: Item factor loadings for policy support scale.

Table 2. Means, Standard Deviations, and Cronbach's α Reliability Estimates.

| Variables | M | SD | α |
|---|-------|-------|----------|
| 1. CCCF1: Attribution to Capitalism | 90.13 | 19.14 | .96 |
| 2. CCCF2: Attribution to Individual Failure | 20.55 | 8.81 | .92 |
| 3. CCCF3: Failure of Current Government Programs | 13.26 | 4.09 | .67 |
| 4. COBRASF1: Unawareness of Racial Privilege | 20.74 | 9.14 | .90 |
| 5. COBRASF2: Unawareness of Institutional Privilege | 23.43 | 8.69 | .86 |
| 6. COBRASF3: Unawareness to Blatant Racial Issues | 15.56 | 6.98 | .84 |
| 7. CA: Critical Action | 17.23 | 9.24 | .94 |
| 8. SWLS: Satisfaction With Life Scale | 22.95 | 8.16 | .93 |
| 9. PWD: Perception of U.S. Wealth Distribution | 51.82 | 37.24 | -- |
| 10. IWD: Ideal U.S. Wealth Distribution | 90.05 | 17.24 | -- |

Note. Items 1-3 are subscales of the Costs of U.S. Corporate Capitalism Scale (CCC). Items 4-6 are from the Colorblind Racist Attitudes Scale. Item 7, Critical Action, is a subscale of the Critical Consciousness Scale.

Table 3. Intercorrelations Between All Study Variables.

| Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
|-------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----|-------|-------|----|
| 1. CCCF1 | -- | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. CCCF2 | .54** | -- | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. COBRASF1 | -.70** | -.54** | -- | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. COBRASF2 | -.43** | -.74** | .56** | -- | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. COBRASF3 | -.59** | -.73** | .70** | .77** | -- | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6. CA | .15** | -.37** | -.27** | .26** | .19** | -- | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7. SWLS | -.19** | -.49** | .14** | .31** | .33** | .31** | -- | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8. Policy Support | .71** | .59** | -.68** | -.55** | -.64** | .09* | -.20** | -- | | | | | | | | | |
| 9. CCCF1*CA | -.39** | -.40** | .21** | .31** | .36** | .20** | .27** | -.28** | -- | | | | | | | | |
| 10. CCCF2*CA | -.28** | .24** | .34** | -.20** | -.11* | -.67** | -.24** | -.21** | -.00 | -- | | | | | | | |
| 11. COBRASF1*CA | .21** | .47** | -.33** | -.45** | -.47** | -.31** | -.29** | .26** | -.71** | .05 | -- | | | | | | |
| 12. COBRASF2*CA | .24** | -.23** | -.36** | .06 | .02 | .58** | .20** | .23** | .01 | -.87** | .02 | -- | | | | | |
| 13. COBRASF3*CA | .30** | -.23** | -.43** | .10* | -.07 | .73** | .23** | .25** | -.11* | -.85** | .09* | .83** | -- | | | | |
| 14. PWD | -.25** | -.35** | .12** | .28** | .26** | .22** | .17** | -.21** | .19** | -.16** | -.14** | .14** | .15** | -- | | | |
| 15. IWD | .11* | .23** | -.07 | -.18** | -.22** | -.21** | -.10* | .15** | -.01 | .17** | .08 | -.16** | -.16** | .00 | -- | | |
| 16. PWD*CA | .14** | -.17** | -.10* | .13** | .09* | .32** | .13** | .04 | -.06 | -.43** | -.48 | .39** | .35** | .07 | .08 | -- | |
| 17. IWD*CA | -.01 | .14** | .05 | -.11** | -.08 | -.21** | -.09 | .00 | .34 | .24** | .02 | -.18** | -.25** | .06 | .54** | .15** | -- |

Note. All continuous variables are centered. **Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed). *Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4. Full hierarchical regression model predicting policy preferences (N = 510)

| Model Summary | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----|-----|---------------|
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | R Square Change | Change Statistics | | | |
| | | | | | | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |
| 1 | .583 ^a | .340 | .327 | .81396082 | .340 | 25.271 | 10 | 490 | .000 |
| 2 | .599 ^b | .359 | .344 | .80374825 | .019 | 7.266 | 2 | 488 | .001 |
| 3 | .805 ^c | .649 | .635 | .59897016 | .289 | 66.120 | 6 | 482 | .000 |
| 4 | .806 ^d | .650 | .635 | .59942563 | .001 | .634 | 2 | 480 | .531 |
| 5 | .819 ^e | .670 | .653 | .58437394 | .021 | 6.009 | 5 | 475 | .000 |

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Ladder, Female, POC, Age, Queer, PolitParty, HouseIncome, PoliticIden, Education, TotalSWL
- b. Predictors: (Constant), Ladder, Female, POC, Age, Queer, PolitParty, HouseIncome, PoliticIden, Education, TotalSWL, ShouldEgalUS_C, EgalUS_C
- c. Predictors: (Constant), Ladder, Female, POC, Age, Queer, PolitParty, HouseIncome, PoliticIden, Education, TotalSWL, ShouldEgalUS_C, EgalUS_C, SumCCCCF1_C, COBRASF2_C, TotalCAC, COBRASF1C, COBRASF3C, SumCCCCF2_C
- d. Predictors: (Constant), Ladder, Female, POC, Age, Queer, PolitParty, HouseIncome, PoliticIden, Education, TotalSWL, ShouldEgalUS_C, EgalUS_C, SumCCCCF1_C, COBRASF2_C, TotalCAC, COBRASF1C, COBRASF3C, SumCCCCF2_C, EgalUSC_CA, ShouldEgalUSC_CA
- e. Predictors: (Constant), Ladder, Female, POC, Age, Queer, PolitParty, HouseIncome, PoliticIden, Education, TotalSWL, ShouldEgalUS_C, EgalUS_C, SumCCCCF1_C, COBRASF2_C, TotalCAC, COBRASF1C, COBRASF3C, SumCCCCF2_C, EgalUSC_CA, ShouldEgalUSC_CA, SumCCCCF1_CA, COBRASF2_CA, COBRASF1_CA, SumCCCCF2_CA, COBRASF3_CA

Table 5. Final hierarchical regression model predicting policy preferences (N = 510)

| Variable | Coefficient | | | | Collinearity Statistics | |
|----------------|-------------|-----|---------|---------|-------------------------|------|
| | B | SE | β | t | Tolerance | VIF |
| SWLS | .00 | .00 | .03 | 1.00 | .62 | 1.60 |
| Race | .34 | .61 | .02 | .56 | .97 | 1.04 |
| Gender | -.01 | .06 | -.01 | -.24 | .94 | 1.06 |
| Sexual Orient. | -.17 | .10 | -.05 | -1.73 | .89 | 1.13 |
| Age | .01 | .00 | .05 | 1.72 | .84 | 1.18 |
| House. Income | -.02 | .01 | -.06 | -1.99* | .73 | 1.38 |
| Education | -.03 | .02 | -.04 | -1.08 | .64 | 1.57 |
| Ladder | .03 | .02 | .07 | 1.61 | .43 | 2.35 |
| Pol. Identity | .12 | .02 | .23 | 5.82*** | .46 | 2.17 |
| Pol. Party | .01 | .03 | .01 | .17 | .82 | 1.22 |
| PWD | .00 | .00 | -.01 | -.31 | .82 | 1.23 |
| IWD | .00 | .00 | .03 | .94 | .89 | 1.13 |
| CCCF1 | .02 | .00 | .36 | 8.71*** | .42 | 2.40 |
| CCCF2 | .02 | .01 | .13 | 2.40* | .24 | 4.25 |
| COBRASF1 | -.01 | .01 | -.12 | -2.12* | .24 | 4.12 |
| COBRASF2 | -.01 | .01 | -.04 | -.83 | .30 | 3.35 |
| COBRASF3 | -.02 | .01 | -.12 | -2.20* | .25 | 3.97 |
| CA | .02 | .00 | .14 | 3.40*** | .43 | 2.34 |

Note. *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

Appendix A: Costs of U.S. Corporate Capitalism Scale

The CCC is intended to measure an individual's attitudes and attributions related to USCC. A sample list of items is listed below which address the domains of social inequality, economic exploitation, and wealth inequality. Criterion validity was measured with Social Dominance Orientation (SDO) (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994) and General Belief in a Just World Scale (Dalbert, Montada, & Schmitt, 1987) and discriminant validity was measured by Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (Paulhus, 1998). Instructions and definitions are also included below.

Instructions: Read each of the following statements. Using the 7-point scale below (1= *strongly disagree*, 2= *moderately disagree*, 3= *slightly disagree*, 4= *neither agree nor disagree*, 5= *slightly agree*, 6= *moderately agree*, 7= *strongly agree*), SELECT the response that best describes how true each statement is for you.

“Oppression” refers to unjust treatment or control of an individual or group. “Oppressed identity” refers to individuals who identify with one or more undervalued minority groups with respect to race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and (dis)ability. “Social inequality” refers to unequal access to opportunities or resources (e.g. employment, education, health care) for certain individuals within a group or society.

Factor 1: USCC As Structural Cause of Costs

1. U.S. corporate capitalism maintains a large gap between the rich and the poor.
2. U.S. corporate capitalism creates a social hierarchy where some groups of people have more advantages than others.
3. U.S. corporate capitalism places wealth in the hands of few.
4. U.S. corporate capitalism causes an “us versus them” mentality.
5. U.S. corporate capitalism creates division between oppressed and privileged groups.
6. Greed is a normal part of U.S. corporate capitalism.
7. U.S. corporate capitalism takes advantage of people.
8. U.S. policies favor privileged identities because they make and spend more money.
9. Large corporations influencing government policies is a problem.
10. U.S. corporate capitalism gives more opportunities to groups that already have privileges (i.e. people who are white, upper class, heterosexual, male).
11. U.S. corporate capitalism creates social inequality.
12. U.S. corporate capitalism prevents all people from having equal opportunities.
13. U.S. corporate capitalism takes advantage of people who are in disadvantaged groups (i.e. through unequal access to resources).
14. U.S. corporate capitalism requires that some groups be treated unfairly.
15. U.S. corporate capitalism forces companies to take advantage of their employees (i.e. making individuals work more hours or have more responsibilities than what they are paid for).
16. U.S. corporate capitalism favors competition over cooperation.

Factor 2: Individual Failure as Cause of Costs

17. Poverty is due to the choices people make, not U.S. corporate capitalism. (R)
18. Low-income individuals are poor because they made bad decisions. (R)
19. All individuals born into poverty can become economically successful in the U.S. (R)
20. All individuals have equal access to employment opportunities. (R)
21. U.S. corporate capitalism caters to individuals with a strong work ethic. (R)

Factor 3: Disagreement with Temporary Solutions to Costs

22. Welfare will not fix social inequalities because it detracts attention from the true cause of poverty (i.e. U.S. corporate capitalism).
23. Increasing access to education will not solve the negative impacts of U.S. corporate capitalism.
24. Purchasing an item to help decrease poverty (e.g. “20% of cost goes to a homeless shelter”) may actually continue poverty because it does not change the root cause.

Appendix B: Factor Loadings for CCC

| Item Factor Loadings (pattern matrix coefficients) for Confirmatory Factor Analysis of CCC | | | |
|--|--------|-----|-----|
| Items | Factor | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Factor 1: Structural | | | |
| 1 | .85 | | |
| 2 | .80 | | |
| 3 | .82 | | |
| 4 | .81 | | |
| 5 | .89 | | |
| 6 | .68 | | |
| 7 | .88 | | |
| 8 | .79 | | |
| 9 | .57 | | |
| 10 | .86 | | |
| 11 | .89 | | |
| 12 | .84 | | |
| 13 | .88 | | |
| 14 | .80 | | |
| 15 | .75 | | |
| 16 | .44 | | |
| Factor 2: Individual | | | |
| 17 | | .90 | |
| 18 | | .82 | |
| 19 | | .75 | |
| 20 | | .82 | |
| 21 | | .63 | |
| Factor 3: Solutions | | | |
| 22 | | | .83 |
| 23 | | | .52 |
| 24 | | | .40 |

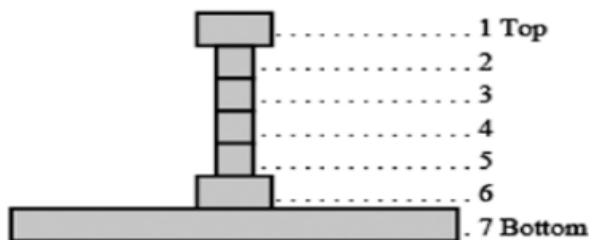
Note. Structural = USCC as Structural Cause of Costs, Individual = Individual Failure as Causes of Costs, Solutions = Disagreement with Temporary Solutions to Costs

Appendix C: Diagrams of Wealth Distribution (Evans & Kelley, 2016)

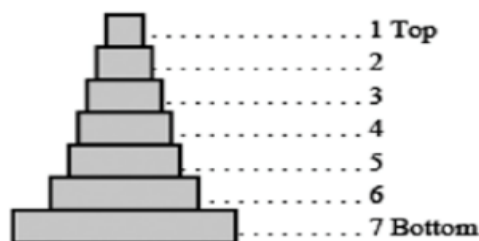
These five diagrams show different kinds of society. Please read the descriptions and look at the diagrams and decide which you think best describes America today...

Type A

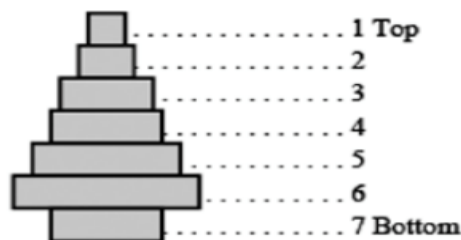
A small elite at the top, very few people in the middle and the great mass of people at the bottom

**Type B**

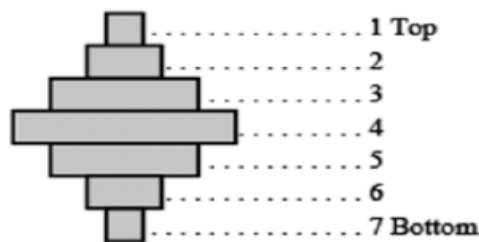
A society like a pyramid, with a small elite at the top, more people in the middle, and most at the bottom

**Type C**

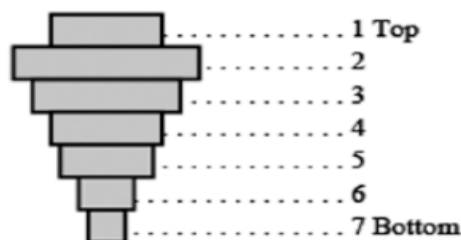
A pyramid except that just a few people are at the very bottom

**Type D**

A society with most people in the middle

**Type E**

Many people near the top and only a few near the bottom



1. First what type of society is the United States (U.S.) today – which diagram comes closest?

Type A Type B Type C Type D Type E

2. Which comes *next* closest?

Type A Type B Type C Type D Type E

3. What do you think the U.S. *ought* to be like – which would you prefer?

Type A Type B Type C Type D Type E

Appendix D: Color-blind Racial Attitudes Scale (COBRAS; Neville et al., 2000)

Directions. Below is a set of questions that deal with social issues in the United States (U.S.). Using the 6-point scale, please give your honest rating about the degree to which you personally agree or disagree with each statement. Please be as open and honest as you can; there are no right or wrong answers. Record your response to the left of each item.

- | | | | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|---|---|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Disagree | | | | | Strongly Agree |
1. Everyone who works hard, no matter what race they are, has an equal chance to become rich.
 2. **Race plays a major role in the type of social services (such as type of health care or day care) that people receive in the U.S.**
 3. It is important that people begin to think of themselves as American and not African American, Mexican American or Italian American.
 4. **Due to racial discrimination, programs such as affirmative action are necessary to help create equality.**
 5. **Racism is a major problem in the U.S.**
 6. **Race is very important in determining who is successful and who is not.**
 7. Racism may have been a problem in the past, but it is not an important problem today.
 8. **Racial and ethnic minorities do not have the same opportunities as White people in the U.S.**
 9. White people in the U.S. are discriminated against because of the color their skin.
 10. Talking about racial issues causes unnecessary tension.
 11. **It is important for political leaders to talk about racism to help work through or solve society's problems.**
 12. **White people in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin.**
 13. Immigrants should try to fit into the culture and adopt the values of the U.S.
 14. English should be the only official language in the U.S.
 15. **White people are more to blame for racial discrimination in the U.S. than racial and ethnic minorities.**
 16. Social policies, such as affirmative action, discriminate unfairly against White people.
 17. **It is important for public schools to teach about the history and contributions of racial and ethnic minorities.**
 18. Racial and ethnic minorities in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin.
 19. Racial problems in the U.S. are rare, isolated situations.

20. _____ **Race plays an important role in who gets sent to prison.**

The following items (which are bolded above) are reversed score (such that 6 = 1, 5 = 2, 4 = 3, 3 = 4, 2 = 5, 1 = 6): item #2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 15, 17, 20. Higher scores should greater levels of “blindness”, denial, or unawareness.

Factor 1: Unawareness of Racial Privilege consists of the following 7 items: 1, **2, 6, 8, 12, 15, 20**

Factor 2: Unawareness of Institutional Discrimination consists of the following 7 items: 3, **4, 9, 13, 14, 16, 18**

Factor 3: Unawareness to Blatant Racial Issues consists of the following 6 items: **5, 7, 10, 11, 17, 19**

Results from Neville et al. (2000) suggest that higher scores on each of the CoBRAS factors and the total score are related to greater: (a) global belief in a just world; (b) sociopolitical dimensions of a belief in a just world, (c) racial and gender intolerance, and (d) racial prejudice. For information on the scale, please contact Helen Neville (hneville@uiuc.edu).

Appendix E: Critical Consciousness Scale; Critical Action Items (Diemer et al., 2017)

Instructions: Please respond to the following statements by circling how often you were involved in each activity in the last year. For each statement, choose “Never did this,” “Once or twice last year,” “Once every few months,” “At least once a month,” or “At least once a week.”

| Never did this | Once or twice last year | Once every few months | At least once a month | At least once a week |
|---|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1. Participated in a civil rights group or organization | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Participated in a political party, club, or organization | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Wrote a letter to a school or community newspaper or publication about a social or political issue | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Contacted a public official by phone, mail, or email to tell him/her how you felt about a particular social or political issue | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Joined in a protest march, political demonstration, or political meeting | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Worked on a political campaign | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. Participated in a discussion about a social or political issue | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. Signed an email or written petition about a social or political issue | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Participated in a human rights, gay rights, or women’s rights organization or group | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Appendix F: Policy Questions (Kuziemko et. al, 2015)

1. As you may know, there have been proposals recently to decrease the federal deficit by raising income taxes on millionaires. Do you think income taxes on millionaires should be increased, stay the same or decreased? [Increased/Stay the same/Decreased]
2. The Federal Estate tax (also known as the Death Tax) is a tax imposed on the transfer of wealth from a deceased person to his or her heirs. [This only applies when a deceased person leaves more than \$5 million in wealth to their children. Estate tax is not applied to wealth left to a spouse or charitable organization.] Do you think the Federal Estate tax should be decreased, left as is or increased? [Decreased/Left as is/Increased]
3. The minimum wage is currently \$7.25 per hour. Do you think it should be decreased, stay the same or increased? [Decreased/Stay the same/Increased]
4. Do you support or oppose the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) program? [This tax supports low- to middle-income working parents.] [Support/Indifferent/Oppose]
5. Should the federal government increase or decrease its spending on food stamps? (Food stamps provide financial assistance for food purchasing to families and individuals with low or no income.) [Significantly increase/Slightly increase/Keep at current level/Slightly decrease/Significantly decrease]
6. Should the federal government increase or decrease spending on aid to the poor? [Significantly increase/Slightly increase/Keep at current level/Slightly decrease/Significantly decrease]
7. Should the federal government increase or decrease its spending on public housing for low-income families? [Significantly increase /Slightly increase/Keep at current level/Slightly decrease/Significantly decrease]

Appendix G: Policy Questions (by author)

Below is a list of policies. Answer “Yes” if you support this policy and answer “No” if you do not support this policy.

1. Universal Healthcare (free healthcare for all).
2. Basic Income (periodic payment to all individuals in the U.S. regardless if the person is employed or not).
3. Free Higher Education (government spending and charitable donations that cover the cost of tuition for all individuals in the U.S.).

Appendix H: Satisfaction With Life Scale (Diener et al., 1985)

Instructions: Below are five statements that you may agree or disagree with. Using the 1 - 7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number on the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in your responding.

- 7 - Strongly agree
 - 6 - Agree
 - 5 - Slightly agree
 - 4 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - 3 - Slightly disagree
 - 2 - Disagree
 - 1 - Strongly disagree
- _____ In most ways my life is close to my ideal.
- _____ The conditions of my life are excellent.
- _____ I am satisfied with my life.
- _____ So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.
- _____ If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

Scoring: Though scoring should be kept continuous (sum up scores on each item), here are some cut- offs to be used as benchmarks.

- 31 – 35: Extremely satisfied
- 26 – 30: Satisfied
- 21 – 25: Slightly satisfied
- 20: Neutral
- 15 – 19: Slightly dissatisfied
- 10 – 14: Dissatisfied
- 5 – 9: Extremely dissatisfied

Appendix I: Complete Online Survey

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Consent Form

| | |
|--|--|
| Project Title | Perceptions of Inequality and Economic Policy Preferences |
| Purpose of the Study | <p>This research is being conducted by Rajni Sharma, M.A. at the University of Maryland, College Park. I am inviting you to participate in this research project because you are at least 18 years of age, reside in the U.S., and you can provide a unique perspective on the issues assessed in the survey. You will be asked to rate your feelings associated with a number of issues related to the U.S. wealth distribution and economic policies. The purpose of this research project is to study individuals' perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes about economic wealth distribution in the U.S., race, and economic policy choices.</p> |
| Procedures | <p>The procedure involves completing an approximately 12-minute confidential one-time online survey (responding to items such as, "U.S. corporate capitalism maintains a large gap between the rich and the poor," "Poverty is due to the decisions people make, not U.S. Corporate Capitalism," "Race is very important in determining who is successful and who is not") and providing background information such as age, race, class, etc. If you choose to participate in this study, you will earn \$1.50 for use on Amazon.com through the Mechanical Turk payment system.</p> <p>The researcher may remove data that is determined to be false, fake, or provided without thoughtful consideration. A limited number of items will be made throughout the survey to ensure that you are providing thoughtful and honest responses (e.g. "Please choose 'Agree' for this item"). The researcher reserves the right to not compensate participants who provide false or fake responses or do not respond correctly to these items.</p> |
| Potential Risks and Discomforts | <p>There may be some risks to participating in this research study. It is possible that taking time away from other activities or answering questions about personal beliefs and attitudes may cause some distress while completing the questionnaire. There are no known physical or medical risks associated with participating in this research project. However, you are welcome to stop participating at any time or skip any question you do</p> |

<https://umdsurvey.umd.edu/Q/EditSection/Blocks/Ajax/GetSurveyPrintPreview>

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| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| | not wish to answer. Please contact the investigator if you would like a list of resources to address any discomfort or distress. |
| Potential Benefits | This research is not designed to help you personally. However, a potential benefit of participating in this study is that you will be helping me understand perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes towards the U.S. economic system and wealth distribution, as well as further understand the factors that promote and inhibit support for certain government economic policies. |
| Confidentiality | <p>I will do my best to keep your personal information confidential. To help protect your confidentiality: (1) a generic study ID will be used to replace your name on all data collected; (2) through the use of the study ID, the researcher will be able to link your survey data to your identity; and (3) only the researcher will have access to the identification key. If I write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible as I will report results for the group – not a specific individual – so that no one will know the identity of any one study participant.</p> <p>The data will be securely stored and retained for 10 years after the completion of the study, according to the University of Maryland policy on human subject files, and then will be destroyed. Your information may be shared with representatives of the University of Maryland, College Park or governmental authorities if you or someone else is in danger or if we are required to do so by law. For example, we are required to report situations in which a participant is at risk for self-harm or harm to others.</p> <p>There is a minimal risk that security of any online data may be breached since (1) the online host (Qualtrics survey software) has SAS 70 Certification and meets the rigorous privacy standards imposed on health care records by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA; see http://www.qualtrics.com/security-statement for Qualtrics' data security statement), and (2) your data will be removed from the server soon after you complete the study, it is highly unlikely that a security breach of the online data will result in any adverse consequence for you. Your IP address (a numerical identification tied to your internet service provider) will not be known to the researchers, and will not be collected with your answers.</p> |
| Compensation | If you choose to participate in this study, you will earn \$1.50 for use on Amazon.com through the Mechanical Turk payment system. |

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| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Right to Withdraw and Questions</p> | <p>Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify. If you are an employee or student at UMD, your employment status or academic standing at UMD will not be affected by your participation or non-participation in this study.</p> <p>If you decide to stop taking part in the study, if you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or if you need to report issues related to the research, please contact the investigator, Rajni Sharma at: 3228 Benjamin Building, University of Maryland, College Park, MD, 20742 or rsharma8@umd.edu.</p> |
| <p>Participant Rights</p> | <p>If you have questions about your rights as a research participant or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">University of Maryland College Park Institutional Review Board Office 1204 Marie Mount Hall College Park, Maryland, 20742 E-mail: irb@umd.edu Telephone: 301-405-0678</p> <p>This research has been reviewed according to the University of Maryland, College Park IRB procedures for research involving human subjects.</p> |
| <p>Statement of Consent</p> | <p>Clicking on the "CONTINUE" button below indicates that you are at least 18 years of age; you reside in the U.S.; you have read this consent form or have had it read to you; your questions have been answered to your satisfaction and you voluntarily agree to participate in this research study. You may print a copy of this signed consent form.</p> <p>If you agree to participate, please click the button below.</p> |

MTurk ID

Please provide your MTurk ID:

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Satisfaction with Life Scale

Instructions: Below are five statements that you may agree or disagree with. Using the 1 - 7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by selecting the response that best describes your answer. Please be open and honest in your responding.

| | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Slightly disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Slightly agree | Agree | Strongly agree |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| In most ways my life is close to my ideal. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| The conditions of my life are excellent. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I am satisfied with my life. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| So far I have gotten the important things I want in life. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Policy Questions; Kuziemko et al., 2015

Instructions: Please read each of the following questions and SELECT the response that best describes your answer.

As you may know, there have been proposals recently to decrease the federal deficit by raising income taxes on millionaires. Do you think income taxes on millionaires should be decreased, stay the same or increased?

- Decreased
- Stay the same
- Increased

The Federal Estate tax (also known as the Death Tax) is a tax imposed on the transfer of wealth from a deceased person to his or her heirs. [This only applies when a deceased person leaves more than \$5 million in wealth to their children. Estate tax is not applied to wealth left to a spouse or

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charitable organization.] Do you think the Federal Estate tax should be decreased, left as is or increased?

- Decreased
- Left as is
- Increased

The federal minimum wage is currently \$7.25 per hour. Do you think it should be decreased, stay the same or increased?

- Decreased
- Stay the same
- Increased

Do you support or oppose the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) program? [This tax supports low- to middle-income working parents.]

- Oppose
- Indifferent
- Support

Instructions: Read each of the following statements. Using the scale below, SELECT the response that describes your answer.

| | Significantly decrease | Slightly decrease | Keep at current level | Slightly increase | Significantly increase |
|---|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Should the federal government increase or decrease its spending on food stamps? (Food stamps provide financial assistance for food purchasing to families and individuals with low or no income.) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Should the federal government increase or decrease spending on aid to the poor? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

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| | Significantly decrease | Slightly decrease | Keep at current level | Slightly increase | Significantly increase |
|---|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Should the federal government increase or decrease it's spending on public housing for low-income families? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

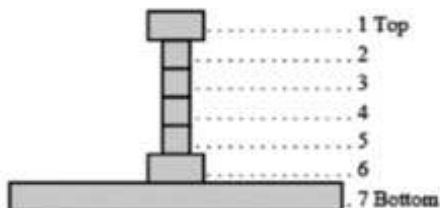
Instructions: Below is a list of policies. Answer "Yes" if you support this policy and answer "No" if you do not support this policy.

| | Yes | No |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Universal health care (free healthcare for all). | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Basic income (periodic payment to all individuals in the U.S. regardless if the person is employed or not). | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Free higher education (government spending and charitable donations that cover the cost of tuition for all individuals in the U.S.). | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

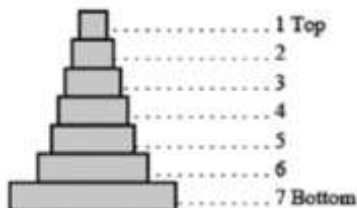
Evans and Kelley (2017)

Instructions: These five diagrams show different kinds of society. Please read the descriptions and look at the diagrams and decide which you think best describes the U.S. today....

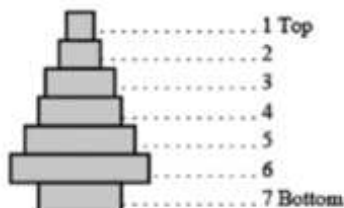
Type A
 A small elite at the top, very few people in the middle and the great mass of people at the bottom



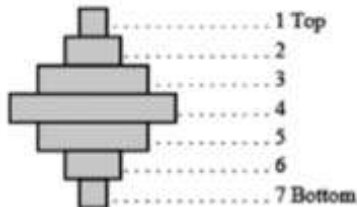
Type B
 A society like a pyramid, with a small elite at the top, more people in the middle, and most at the bottom



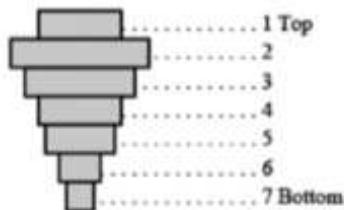
Type C
 A pyramid except that just a few people are at the very bottom



Type D
 A society with most people in the middle



Type E
 Many people near the top and only a few near the bottom



Type A Type B Type C Type D Type E

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| | Type A | Type B | Type C | Type D | Type E |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| First what type of society is the United States (U.S.) today - which diagram comes closest? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Which comes next closest? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| What do you think the U.S. ought to be like - which would you prefer? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

CCC; thesis questionnaire

Instructions: Read each of the following statements. Using the 7-point scale below, SELECT the response that best describes how true each statement is for you.

"Oppression" refers to unjust treatment or control of an individual or group. "Oppressed identity" refers to individuals who identify with one or more undervalued minority groups with respect to race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and (dis)ability. "Social inequality" refers to unequal access to opportunities or resources (e.g. employment, education, health care) for certain individuals within a group or society. "U.S. corporate capitalism" is a term that describes the involvement of large corporations in government decision making and policy. This term also describes the large portion of the U.S. economy that is dependent upon the wealth of corporations.

| | Strongly Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Slightly Agree | Moderately Agree | Strong Agree |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| U.S. corporate capitalism maintains a large gap between the rich and the poor. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| U.S. corporate capitalism creates a social hierarchy where some groups of people have more advantages than others. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| U.S. corporate capitalism places wealth in the hands of few. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| U.S. corporate capitalism causes an "us versus them" mentality. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

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| | Strongly Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Slightly Agree | Moderately Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| U.S. corporate capitalism creates division between oppressed and privileged groups. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Greed is a normal part of U.S. corporate capitalism. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| U.S. corporate capitalism takes advantage of people. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| U.S. policies favor privileged identities because they make and spend more money. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

| | Strongly Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Slightly Agree | Moderately Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Large corporations influencing government policies is a problem. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| U.S. corporate capitalism gives more opportunities to groups that already have privileges (i.e. people who are white, upper class, heterosexual, male). | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| U.S. corporate capitalism creates social inequality. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

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| | Strongly Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Slightly Agree | Moderately Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| U.S. corporate capitalism prevents all people from having equal opportunities. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| U.S. corporate capitalism takes advantage of people who are in disadvantaged groups (i.e. through unequal access to resources). | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| | | | | | | | |
| | Strongly Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Slightly Agree | Moderately Agree | Strongly Agree |
| U.S. corporate capitalism requires that some groups be treated unfairly. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Please choose "Slightly Disagree" for this item. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| U.S. corporate capitalism forces companies to take advantage of their employees (i.e. making individuals work more hours or have more responsibilities than what they are paid for). | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| U.S. corporate capitalism favors competition over cooperation. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

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| | Strongly Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Slightly Agree | Moderately Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Poverty is due to the choices people make, not U.S. corporate capitalism. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Low-income individuals are poor because they made bad decisions. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| All individuals born into poverty can become economically successful in the U.S. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| All individuals have equal access to employment opportunities. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

| | Strongly Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Slightly Agree | Moderately Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| U.S. corporate capitalism caters to individuals with a strong work ethic. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Welfare will not fix social inequalities because it detracts attention from the true cause of poverty (i.e. U.S. corporate capitalism). | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Increasing access to education will not solve the negative impacts of U.S. corporate capitalism. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Purchasing an item to help decrease poverty (e.g. "20% of cost goes to a homeless shelter") may actually continue poverty because it does not change the root cause. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

COBRAS; Neville et al., 2000

Instructions: Below is a set of questions that deal with social issues in the United States (U.S.). Using the 6-point scale, please give your honest rating about the degree to which you personally

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agree or disagree with each statement. Please be as open and honest as you can; there are no right or wrong answers.

| | Strongly Disagree | | | | | Strongly Agree |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Everyone who works hard, no matter what race they are, has an equal chance to become rich. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Race plays a major role in the type of social services (such as type of health care or day care) that people receive in the U.S. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| It is important that people begin to think of themselves as American and not African American, Mexican American or Italian American. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Due to racial discrimination, programs such as affirmative action are necessary to help create equality. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Racism is a major problem in the U.S. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Race is very important in determining who is successful and who is not. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| | Strongly Disagree | | | | | Strongly Agree |
| Racism may have been a problem in the past, but it is not an important problem today. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Racial and ethnic minorities do not have the same opportunities as White people in the U.S. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

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| | Strongly Disagree | | | | | Strongly Agree |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| White people in the U.S. are discriminated against because of the color their skin. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Talking about racial issues causes unnecessary tension. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Please choose "Strongly Disagree" for this item. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| It is important for political leaders to talk about racism to help work through or solve society's problems. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| | Strongly Disagree | | | | | Strongly Agree |
| White people in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Immigrants should try to fit into the culture and adopt the values of the U.S. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| English should be the only official language in the U.S. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| White people are more to blame for racial discrimination in the U.S. than racial and ethnic minorities. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Social policies, such as affirmative action, discriminate unfairly against White people. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| It is important for public schools to teach about the history and contributions of racial and ethnic minorities. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| | Strongly Disagree | | | | | Strongly Agree |

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| | Strongly Disagree | | | | | Strongly Agree |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Racial and ethnic minorities in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Racial problems in the U.S. are rare, isolated situations. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Race plays an important role in who gets sent to prison. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

CritCon Action Items; Diemer et al., 2017

Instructions: Please respond to the following statements by choosing how often you were involved in each activity in the last year. For each statement, choose "Never did this," "Once or twice last year," "Once every few months," "At least once a month," or "At least once a week."

| | Never did this | Once or twice last year | Once every few months | At least once a month | At least once a week |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Participated in a civil rights group or organization | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Participated in a political party, club, or organization | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Wrote a letter to a school or community newspaper or publication about a social or political issue | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Contacted a public official by phone, mail, or email to tell him/her how you felt about a particular social or political issue | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Joined in a protest march, political demonstration, or political meeting | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

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| | Never did this | Once or twice last year | Once every few months | At least once a month | At least once a week |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Worked on a political campaign | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Participated in a discussion about a social or political issue | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Signed an email or written petition about a social or political issue | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Participated in a human rights, gay rights, or women's rights organization or group | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Demographics

Instructions: Please answer all the demographic questions below. Your responses will be used to describe participants in general, and at no time will they be reported individually. Please do not omit any questions.

Which of the following best describes your gender identity?

- Man
- Woman
- Transman
- Transwoman
- Non-binary
- Other (please specify):

Which of the following best describes your sexual identity/orientation?

- Bisexual
- Lesbian/Gay
- Heterosexual

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- Pansexual
- Questioning
- Asexual
- Other (please specify):

Age:

Racial/ethnic identification:

-
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian/Asian American
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino/Latina/Latinx
- Middle Eastern/Arab
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Multi-ethnic/multi-racial
- Other (please specify):

Citizenship:

-
- U.S. Citizen
- U.S. Permanent Resident
- Other citizenship
- Other (please specify):

State of Residence:

Education:

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- Less than High School
- High School/GED
- Some college
- Associate's Degree
- Bachelor's Degree
- Graduate Degree
- Professional Degree
- Other (please specify):

Think of the ladder below as representing where people stand in the United States. At the top of the ladder are the people who are those who have the most money, most education, and best jobs. At the bottom are the people who are those who have the least money, least education, and worst jobs or no job.



Where would you place yourself on this ladder?

Geographic region:

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- Rural
- Suburban
- Urban
- Other (please specify):

What is your political identity?

- Very conservative
- Conservative
- Moderately conservative
- Moderate
- Moderately liberal
- Liberal
- Very liberal
- Other (please specify):

Which U.S. political party do you identify with?

- Republican
- Democrat
- Independent
- Libertarian
- No affiliation
- Other (please specify):

What socio-economic class have you spent the majority of your life in?

- Lower class
- Working class
- Middle class
- Upper middle class
- Upper class

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Other (please specify):

What is your total household income before deductions for taxes, bonds, dues, or other items?

- Less than \$10,000
- \$10,000 to \$19,999
- \$20,000 to \$29,999
- \$30,000 to \$39,999
- \$40,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$59,999
- \$60,000 to \$69,999
- \$70,000 to \$79,999
- \$80,000 to \$89,999
- \$90,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,000
- \$150,000 or more
- Prefer not to disclose

Religion/Spirituality:

- Agnostic (not sure if there is a God)
- Atheist (do not believe in a God)
- Buddhist
- Catholic
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Mormon (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints/LDS)
- Orthodox Christian (Greek, Russian, or some other orthodox church)
- Jehovah's Witness
- Muslim
- Protestant (Bapist, Methodist, Non-denominational, Lutheran, Pentecostal, Episcopal, etc.)
- Unitarian/Universalist
- Spiritual

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No Religious Affiliation

Other Faith/Religious tradition (please specify):

Do not consider yourself as someone with a disability?

No

Yes (please specify):

In your honest opinion, should we use your data in our analysis in this study?

Yes

No

Random Number

Thank you for completing this survey.

Please copy and paste this survey code into MTurk to confirm that you completed this HIT:

ZGD73TU2

Please click the button below to finish the survey.

Powered by Qualtrics

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