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Endorsement of Abstract Ideals versus Actual Outcomes of American Ideologies: Nuances of System Justification Theory

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ENDORSEMENT OF ABSTRACT IDEALS VERSUS ACTUAL OUTCOMES OF

AMERICAN IDEOLOGIES: NUANCES OF SYSTEM JUSTIFICATION THEORY

A Dissertation

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Requirements for the Degree of

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BY

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<u>VITA</u>

The author was born in Illinois. She graduated from East Leyden High School, received her Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology from the University of Illinois at Chicago, a Master of Arts degree in experimental psychology from DePaul University, and a Doctor of Philosophy degree in experimental psychology from DePaul University.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Many people would probably agree that the United States is known as the "land of opportunity." Anecdotal evidence suggests that one of the main reasons people immigrate to the U.S. is to live the American dream: acquiring a better education and advancing one's economic status. America seems to maintain its reputation for being a nation where people have equal rights and opportunities and dreams come true. However, in reality there are large economic, social, political, educational, and health disparities in American society based on race, ethnicity, class, gender, and sexual orientation.

People of higher status (e.g., Whites, the rich, men) have more access to resources and more opportunities for advancement than people of lower status (e.g., ethnic minorities, the poor, and women). For example, African American families earn roughly 60% of the income that White families earn (US Census Bureau, 2006). There is an even larger discrepancy in wealth. African American families own 18% of the wealth that White families own, and the richest 5% of all American households own more than half of the nation's wealth (Wolff, 2003). Given these large economic disparities, it is important to examine why people may continue to perceive America as the land of opportunity despite the realities of inequality.

<u>System Justification Theory</u>

System justification theory asserts that despite current inequality, people do continue to perceive America and American systems as just (Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004). The theory posits that people legitimize or justify current social, cultural, economic, and political systems and perceive them as fair and just (Jost &

Banaji, 1994; Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004; Jost & Thompson, 2000). According to system justification research, people can justify the status quo with the use of stereotypes (Jost & Banaji, 1994; Reyna, 2000, 2008) and ideologies (Jost & Burgess, 2000; Jost & Hunyady, 2002).

Although stereotypes can be used to protect the self (e.g., Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950; Katz & Braly, 1935) and the status of one's group (Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Huici, 1984; Tajfel, 1981), according to Jost and Banaji (1994), they can also be used to protect and legitimize a system. Research on gender demonstrates how stereotypes help justify the gendered division of labor (e.g., Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Steffen, 1984, 1986; Eagly & Wood, 1982; Skrypnek & Snyder, 1982). For example, women are stereotyped as communal and men are stereotyped as agentic, which helps justify why women are assigned to a homemaker role and men are assigned to a breadwinner role (Eagly & Steffen, 1984). These results were extended to show that female part-time workers were stereotyped as more communal and male part-time workers were stereotyped as less agentic compared to their full-time worker counterparts (Eagly & Steffen, 1986), demonstrating how stereotypes can help explain people's social roles. Thus, stereotypes can serve an attributional function whereby current conditions are explained (Reyna, 2000, 2008). For example, the stereotype "Blacks are lazy" helps justify why Blacks are less successful than Whites and undeserving of government assistance programs. The stereotype that working class members are unintelligent and incompetent helps justify their lower economic status. Stereotypes are used to explain the successes and failures of individuals and groups and enable current conditions to be perceived as fair, natural, and justified.

In addition to stereotyping, endorsing certain ideologies can be an effective tool for justifying a system (Jost & Burgess, 2000; Jost & Hunyady, 2002). For example, belief in the Protestant work ethic (PWE; also known as economic individualism) can explain or justify why some people enjoy a happy and prosperous life while others struggle or live in squalor (Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost & Hunyady, 2002, 2005). People who endorse the PWE believe that hard work leads to success and those who are successful deserve their higher status. Endorsement of this ideology could also provide a justification for why the poor are in their present state. If success is determined by one's effort and striving, then the poor have only themselves to blame for falling short of success.

What is paradoxical and provocative about this research is that, although high status members tend to justify the system more than low status members (e.g., Jost & Thompson, 2000; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Wakslak, Jost, Tyler, & Chen, 2007), there are times when low status members are just as or more likely than high status members to endorse system-justifying beliefs (Jost, Pelham, Sheldon, & Sullivan, 2003b; McCoy & Major, 2007). It seems reasonable for high status members to justify the status quo (via system justification) because current conditions typically work in their favor. Legitimizing the system allows high status members to maintain their power and control over others. However, it seems counterintuitive for low status members to justify the status quo because current conditions typically work against their self-interests. Moreover, whereas the consequences of justifying the system are largely positive for high status members, they are largely negative for low status members. For example, high status members who endorsed system-justifying ideologies exhibited more positive affect

and reductions in moral outrage and guilt (Kluegel & Smith, 1986; Wakslak et al., 2007). When exposed to a "rags to riches" mindset, high status members were less likely to experience moral outrage which in turn decreased support for redistributing resources more fairly and helping the disadvantaged (Wakslak et al., 2007). Endorsing opposition to equality was negatively related to self-esteem, ingroup favoritism, and support for Affirmative Action among African Americans (Jost & Thompson, 2000). Thus, the consequences of legitimizing the status quo are positive for high status members but can be negative for low status members.

These findings seem to support one of the main tenets of system justification theory: people legitimize the system even at the expense of personal and/or group interests. Jost and Banaji (1994) explained that whereas achieving individual (ego justification), group (group justification), and system interests (system justification) are compatible for high status members, they are in conflict for low status members. In other words, to uphold the status quo or system, low status members would have to endorse ideologies, beliefs, and social policies that undermine their group's (and ultimately their own) interests. Thus, low status members who justify the system do so at the expense of their competing ego and group interests.

This position, however, conflicts with the long-standing belief that people are motivated to defend the self and the in-group. According to early social psychological research, people use stereotypes and ideologies in order to see themselves positively (Adorno et al., 1950; Allport, 1954; Katz & Braly, 1935). For example, Katz and Braly (1935, p. 182) asserted, "Group prejudices are rationalizations by which the individual maintains his self-esteem and advances his economic and other interests." Similarly,

social identity theory predicts that people are motivated to favor in-group members and derogate out-group members in order to boost and maintain their self-esteem and the status of one's group (Tajfel, 1982; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). System justification theory, however, asserts that low status members should be motivated to resolve competing interests of the ego, group, and system. For low status members, there is a need to see oneself and one's group positively, but these goals and motivations are in direct competition with seeing one's system positively. System justification researchers reason that low status members justify the status quo because they have a false consciousness (Jost, 1995; Jost et al., 2004; Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost & Hunyady, 2002). That is, they continue to believe in ideologies held by dominant members of a society that actually work against their own personal and group level interests and inevitably keep them disadvantaged.

Low Status Justification or Resistance?

System justification researchers are surprised that, up until recently, little research has examined how people of low status may engage in processes that lead to system maintenance: "The neglect of system-justifying processes is ironic, given that the historical record reveals far more acquiescence than identity-based competition or revolt on the part of disadvantaged group members" (Jost et al., 2004, p. 886). Jost and colleagues, though, may be underestimating the extent to which low status people openly oppose and resist dominant systems that disadvantage them. In America, for example, working class New Yorkers protested at Mayor Bloomberg's speech, accusing him of protecting the rights of the wealthy and ignoring those of the working class (Wall Street Journal, 2009). Every May 1, thousands across the United States participate in the May

Day march for immigration reform and worker rights. Gay and lesbian activists protested

when Proposition 8 (legislation banning same-sex marriages) was passed and later upheld

in California court. In other countries, low status groups risk personal freedom and safety

to oppose leaders that promote a status quo that keeps them at the bottom. Recently,

hundreds of thousands of Iranians took to the streets en masse to protest the re-election of

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. In Kyrgyzstan, rural citizens overthrew the

government during mass protests over accusations of corruption and oppression, and

growing unrest among the citizens of Thailand has put the Thai government in a state of

limbo.

All these examples of resistance illustrate a group of individuals (typically but not

always low status) protesting against, blaming, and even disrupting governments or

systems that they perceive as putting them in a state of disadvantage. People who criticize

and mistrust a government, protest en masse, and use pressure or force to demand

change, are expressing their dissatisfaction with aspects of the current system. They are

fighting because they realize that the values of their society are not being achieved—

aspects of the system are failing. It is difficult to imagine that low status members would

endorse national ideologies for the purpose of legitimizing a system when their actions

show criticism and contempt toward the current system. Moreover, these examples

suggest that members of society who resist and rebel against the system perceive

problems at the systemic, and not at the individual or group, level.

Researchers have demonstrated that the permeability of a system is a determining

factor as to whether individuals and groups acquiesce or resist a current system (e.g.,

Wright, Taylor, & Moghaddam, 1990). Wright et al. (1990) experimentally tested

different degrees of permeability and found that people placed in a powerless, low status position were more likely to take non-normative actions (e.g., collectively protest) when the system was completely impermeable (i.e., when none of the low status members were allowed to gain entry into the higher status group even though some of them met the requirements) compared to when the system was open or slightly permeable. Thus, when low status members personally experience how the system fails to reward deserving members of society, they perceive this treatment as unfair and respond accordingly.

Not only have others replicated the relationship between impermeability and taking action against the system (see Reynolds, Oakes, Haslam, Nolan, & Dolnik, 2000), but they have also found that low status members use stereotyping to justify or legitimize taking collective action against the system. Although there is some evidence to suggest that high status members stereotype low status members more so than vice versa (e.g., Fiske, 1993), Reynolds et al. (2000) reasoned that stereotyping is a process that occurs through interpersonal interaction, enabling either high or low status members to stereotype the out-group. According to these researchers, stereotyping may be used by people who hold power to exercise control over low status members or by people who are powerless to benefit their own interests (e.g., improve one's status by demanding change; Reynolds et al., 2000). In fact, they found that low status members in the impermeable condition stereotyped the high status group as cold, mean, and rude (as opposed to how they were described to low status participants—analytical, complex, conscientious, and creative) compared to those in the open and slightly permeable conditions (who formed stereotype-consistent attitudes; Reynolds et al., 2000). Moreover, stereotyping the out-group as cold, mean, and rude partially mediated the relationship between impermeability

and rebellion against the out-group. This partial mediation demonstrates that low status members do use stereotyping as a tool for justifying collective protest. Although both high and low status members seem to use stereotyping as a tool for legitimization, research suggests that they use it for different types of legitimization (see Reynolds et al., 2000). High status members seem to use stereotyping to legitimize the status quo whereas low status members use it to legitimize the need for change.

In other words, high and low status members seem to use stereotyping as a means to justify their motives and actions. Although their motives are very different, they may use stereotyping for a similar purpose—to promote their agenda. What has not been investigated is whether high and low status members use ideologies to serve similar or different interests and motives. System justification research has assumed that because high and low status members endorse ideologies in terms of their abstract goals that people of all statuses use these beliefs to uphold the status quo. However, the research on stereotyping suggests that endorsement of ideologies would serve different legitimizing functions based on status. People of all statuses may endorse the same ideologies but for the purpose of serving different interests and motives. Just because people endorse ideologies does not mean that their intent is to legitimize the status quo. In fact, they may endorse them in order to justify the need for system-level change so that society more accurately reflects the goals of the ideology. Or they may endorse ideologies simply because they believe in the positive abstract goals espoused by them. Zelditch (2001) asserts that the concept "legitimacy" is not synonymous with ideology or belief. Instead, "Belief in something is different from using that belief to justify that something else is 'right'" (Zelditch, 2001, p. 48).

Deconstructing Legitimacy: Prescriptive versus Descriptive Standards

Jost and colleagues proposed that, "One's ideological beliefs, values, and goals, for example, affect the likelihood of judging existing institutional forms and practices to be fair, legitimate, and just and therefore deserving of continued support" (Jost, Blount, Pfeffer, & Hunyady, 2003a, p. 54). However, it is plausible for people to endorse "ideological beliefs, values, and goals" and also recognize that these values and goals are not being achieved. One's "ideological beliefs, values and goals" would only "affect the likelihood of judging existing institutional forms and practices to be fair, legitimate, and just" to the extent that the goals and values were perceived as being reached in reality (Jost, Blount, Pfeffer, & Hunyady, 2003a, p. 54). In other words, it is important to ask people not only what they think *should* be happening in society but also what they think is *actually* happening in society.

Philosophers such as Plato and Locke concentrated on normative (i.e., ideal) models of legitimacy whereas Aristotle and Machiavelli, Rousseau, and Weber theorized about descriptive (i.e., actual) models of legitimacy (Zelditch, 2001). Past research has typically used people's normative beliefs or beliefs about what "should be" as evidence of system justification. When people agree with ideologies of social dominance orientation and Protestant work ethic (common scales used in this research; Jost & Thompson, 2000; Jost & Hunyady, 2002), researchers use this as evidence that people justify the system. What researchers are measuring then is people's endorsement of values or intended goals of a system. They measure what "ought to" or "should be" in a society. When Jost (2001) makes reference to past research supporting system justification he claims that, "What these distinct bodies of evidence have in common is

the notion that *what is* tends to be experienced as *what ought to be*" (p. 95). But what if Jost and his colleagues are measuring participants' support for an ideal system that promises to achieve certain objectives, without measuring whether they believe that the objectives are being achieved? Lipset posited that if members of a society all support a group or common goal, there is legitimacy (Zelditch, 2001). However, as Kelman (2001) and Linz (1978) point out, failing to achieve a group goal leads to delegitimization. So in the end, people might agree with a certain ideology because it is the system's goal but once they see that the current system is not achieving its goal, they might start to delegitimize it and possibly devalue the ideology.

For example, cross-sectional and longitudinal studies showed that endorsement of the Protestant work ethic was reduced among African American, but not European American participants when Hurricane Katrina was made salient to them (Levy, Freitas, Mendoza-Denton, & Kugelmass, 2006). African Americans also showed less trust toward the United States government than European Americans after the Katrina manipulation. According to Gallup polls, a majority of African Americans believed that the government's slow response to the devastation was due to the fact that New Orleans was highly populated with African Americans. Thus, a low status group that is reminded of a flawed or failing system (i.e., government's slow response to a natural disaster and the perception of discrimination against African Americans), is temporarily less likely to legitimize the system and endorse the American ideology that hard work can lead to success.

An Alternate Perspective on Low Status System Justification

Although most members of American society believe in or value certain ideologies in the abstract, such as the Protestant work ethic, some people may think these ideologies manifest in society the way they should more than others. That is, some people may believe that the objectives or goals of these ideologies become a reality in our current society (i.e., hard work *does* lead to success) whereas others may believe that the objectives only become a reality for certain groups of people or under certain conditions (i.e., hard work leads to success only for people who are given special opportunities or are privileged). Because these abstract principles may or may not come to fruition for all members of society in the eyes of the latter group, these people might believe that society fails to achieve the objectives or goals of these ideologies.

According to standpoint theory (McCann & Kim, 2003), people make sense of their world through personal experiences. People's group memberships affect their standpoint and how they construct the world around them. For example, ethnic minorities who are racially profiled and discriminated against in the workplace will probably view society as less equal and fair compared to others who have never experienced discrimination. Politically unconnected groups and organizations that feel unheard by government may view society as less democratic compared to groups that have a voice in politics. Poor people who work more than one job to make ends meet may be less likely to think that people can get ahead by working hard. Thus, people of lower status may be less likely to believe that the goals of American ideologies manifest themselves in society for all people than people of higher status because they do not experience the fulfillment

of society's goals. Scott (1985) stresses that low status members might endorse a dominant ideology but recognize its limitations:

> Without straying beyond the prevailing ideology, workers may contrast the meritocratic ethos with the reality of 'connections,' favoritism, and unequal access to superior education; they may contrast the democratic ideology of 'one man, one vote' with the reality of corporate influence on the media and elections; they may contrast the bountiful promise of capitalism with periodic recessions and unemployment…it is clear that a radical critique of *existing* arrangements may arise in virtually any subordinate class that takes the dominant ideology to heart and, at the same time, penetrates in daily life the realities that betray or ignore the implicit promises of that ideology (p. 339).

In contrast, people who are granted the rights they deserve, have their voices heard, and are able to succeed personally experience the fulfillment of these ideological goals. To them, hard work does lead to success. Americans do have a say in how society operates. America is the land of opportunity. Because people of higher status are more likely to experience the achievement of these goals, they may see more of a congruency between the abstract goals of an ideology and its actual outcomes than people of lower status.

People high in status believing that ideological goals are achieved in society might explain why they are more likely to make internal (i.e., personal or dispositional) attributions when explaining large societal disparities compared to people of low status (Dubois & Beauvois, 1996; Fox & Ferri, 1992; Kluegel & Smith, 1986; Lee & Tiedens, 2001; McConahay & Hough, 1976). In other words, if high status groups believe that

hard work does lead to success, they would be likely to attribute people's success or lack thereof to work ethic (an internal attribution) rather than educational opportunities, privilege, or discrimination (external attributions). Trends based on five years of data from the General Social Survey (GSS) show that Whites continue to primarily use only individualist (e.g., inborn ability and motivation) or a combination of individualist and structuralist (e.g., education and discrimination) rather than purely structuralist reasons to explain the gap in socioeconomic status between Whites and Blacks (Kluegel, 1990). Individualistic beliefs are typically more popular than structuralist ones, though (Kluegel & Smith, 1986).

More importantly, higher status people may endorse abstract ideologies in order to legitimize their higher status and power over others (i.e., the status quo) and to deny help to those who are perceived as violating these ideologies. Whites who use individualist reasons to explain the socioeconomic gap between Whites and Blacks are more likely to oppose government policy aimed at improving the status of Blacks (Henry & Sears, 2002; Hughes, 1997; Kinder & Sanders, 1996; McConahay, 1982; Kluegel, 1990). After all, if Blacks' lower socioeconomic status is due to inborn inferiority or lack of motivation, government programs will not solve the White-Black socioeconomic gap.

If low status members are better able to detect that the goals of American ideologies do not play out the way they are supposed to for everyone in society, they may continue to endorse these ideologies in the abstract, not because they want to legitimize current inequality, but because they hope that one day the goals can be achieved. When Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech in 1963 he mentioned some of the struggles that African Americans were currently experiencing (e.g., police

brutality, lack of voting rights, and segregation); however, he also expressed that Americans should not give up hope that America could be an equal society one day:

> But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation…And so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.'

Martin Luther King Jr.'s speech is a clear example illustrating how a low status person might continue to endorse an ideology (perhaps even more strongly than a high status person) as a direct response to the current unequal conditions in American society.

Rationale

According to Jost and Hunyady (2005) there are several system-justifying ideologies: Protestant work ethic (Jost & Hunyady, 2002), meritocratic ideology (Jost et al., 2003b), fair market ideology (Jost et al., 2003a), economic system justification (Jost & Thompson, 2000), and social dominance orientation (Jost & Thompson, 2000). One potential problem with many of the ideologies used to support system justification research is that they typically measure people's attitudes about their ideals and goals, but they do not necessarily measure whether people believe that these ideals are achieved in the current society. People of high and low status might agree with the abstract goals, but they may have differing opinions regarding whether the goals are actually achieved. Thus, it is difficult to claim that people use ideologies to legitimize the status quo as natural, inevitable, and fair when they are only asked what they think should be

happening in society, without asking what they think is actually happening in society. People should be asked whether they are satisfied with the current conditions and not just with the ideals of a system.

Jost and colleagues acknowledged that perceptions of fairness should be measured in terms of both procedures and outcomes (Jost et al., 2003a). When they developed the 25-item fair market ideology (FMI), an ideology measuring the free market system, 15 items measured it in terms of procedures (e.g., "In free market systems, people tend to get the outcomes that they deserve.") and 10 items measured it in terms of outcomes (e.g., "The fact that wealthier people live in bigger homes and better neighborhoods than poor people who cannot afford to pay the same prices is fair."). These researchers found differences in perceptions of fairness based on educational socialization. Five of the seven samples were composed of MBA students and two were composed of non-MBA students. MBA students in all five samples perceived the market-driven procedures and outcomes to be fair and ethical; however, this belief was not shared by either of the non-MBA student samples. Moreover, one of the non-MBA samples significantly disagreed with the belief that procedures and outcomes were fair (Jost et al., 2003a).

These findings are consistent with prior research suggesting that university coursework influences attributions of blame for social problems (Guimond, Begin, & Palmer, 1989; Guimond & Palmer, 1990). Students in the social sciences blamed the system more than the individual and students in business administration blamed the individual more than the system for unemployment, poverty, and economic inferiority (Guimond et al., 1989). In the Jost et al. (2003a) study, it seems that those who are socialized to uphold the economic system (e.g., MBA students) perceived the system as

fair whereas those who are socialized to see the limitations of the economic system (e.g., non-MBA students) perceived the system as unfair. There might be similar effects for people of different statuses. People of high status may be socialized to perceive the actual society as fair whereas people of low status may be socialized to perceive the actual society as unfair. These studies demonstrate the importance of measuring people's perceptions of actual outcomes, as well as their perceptions of abstract ideals.

Although Jost and colleagues did not investigate whether there is a discrepancy between endorsing the intended positive goals of belief systems and whether the goals of these belief systems are perceived as being achieved for people of different statuses, it will be examined in this paper. If people of low status believe that the goals of ideologies are not being fulfilled, it may be less likely that they are endorsing the ideologies in the abstract for the purpose of legitimizing the status quo. Rather, they may endorse the ideologies in the abstract for a different reason and to serve a different need. This research could explain the seeming contradiction of low status members "legitimizing" the system while at the same time resisting and challenging aspects of the system.

This paper has several aims. First, it will try to replicate system justification theory, namely that people of both high and low statuses endorse ideologies in terms of their abstract, intended goals. Second, people's status will determine whether they believe that the abstract goals of these ideologies are actually being achieved in society. It is predicted that people of higher status will believe that the goals are achieved more than people of lower status. Third, people's perceptions about the actual outcomes of ideologies, rather than the abstract goals of ideologies, will better predict their satisfaction with America and support for policy. Fourth, people of different statuses will

endorse the abstract goals of ideologies in order to satisfy different interests and motivations. Fifth, people of high status will make political decisions that benefit the interests of the ego, group, and system, but people of low status will make them to favor the interests of the ego and group over the system.

The goal of Study 1 was to examine whether people's status influenced their perceptions of how society actually operates and whether these views are congruent with or divergent from their views of what should be occurring in society. Testing the difference in these ideology frames may shed some light on whether people of high and low status are legitimizing the actual system (i.e., believing that the goals of ideologies are being achieved in society) or an ideal system (i.e., believing that the goals of ideologies should be achieved). If people believe that there is a congruency between society's ideals and actual outcomes, then one could conclude that they are justifying the actual system. However, if people believe that there is a discrepancy between society's ideals and outcomes (e.g., they believe in the ideals but do not believe the ideals are being achieved), they may not be justifying the actual system but rather an ideal system—one that they hope will one day be achieved.

<u>Statement of Hypotheses</u>

I.   Low status members would be just as, or more, likely as high status members to endorse the abstract goals of ideologies; however, high status members would be more likely than low status members to believe that the goals of the ideologies are being achieved in society. This prediction was tested using the following ideologies: equality, Protestant work ethic, economic system justification, and democracy.

II.   High status members would be more satisfied with America than low status members.

III.   The relationship between status and satisfaction with America (H2) would be mediated more by the assessment of actual outcomes than the belief of abstract ideals of ideologies.

IV.   High status members would be less supportive of federal spending benefiting low status groups than low status members.

V.   The relationship between status and support for federal spending (H4) would be mediated more by the assessment of actual outcomes than the belief of abstract ideals of ideologies.

CHAPTER II

METHODS (STUDY 1)

Study 1 examined the extent to which people of high and low status endorsed the abstract goals and believed in the actual outcomes of several ideologies. Conceivably, some people might agree with the goals of an ideology and believe that the goals are being achieved in society whereas others might agree with the goals of an ideology but believe that the goals are not being achieved in society. Participants rated the extent to which they believed in the abstract goals and actual outcomes of equality, Protestant work ethic (PWE), economic system justification (ESJ), and democracy. Participants also rated the extent to which they were satisfied with America and would support federal spending to benefit low status groups.

Participants

Data were collected from college students and non-college adult participants. Student participants were recruited from the introductory psychology subject pool and received one hour of research credit. Non-college adult participants were recruited from a number of Chicago neighborhoods at various locations (e.g., laundromats, coffee/tea shops) and were paid five dollars or volunteered. Because the pattern of data was the same for students and non-college adults, these data were combined and analyzed together. The sample included 387 participants (130 males, 249 females, one other, and seven participants did not indicate gender). Ages ranged from 17 to 75, the mode was 19, the median was 22, and the mean was 29. Participants' annual household income ranged from under $25,000 to more than $200,000, the mode was $25,000-$50,000, the median was $75,000-$100,000, and the mean was $75,000-$100,000. Sixty-five percent of

participants were Caucasian, 14% African American, 12% Latino/a, 6% Asian, 1%

Middle Eastern, 1% Native American, and 1% other.

<u>Materials and Procedure</u>

Participants were told that they would complete a survey that would measure their

beliefs about American culture and society, specifically related to America's ideals,

goals, and values and whether these ideals, goals, and values are achieved in America.

The questionnaire was divided into four sections. The first section measured whether

participants endorsed ideologies in the abstract. For each ideology in the abstract,

participants were told, "Listed below are a series of statements. These statements measure

how you think our society <u>should be</u>." The second section assessed whether participants

believe that ideologies actually manifest in society. In this section, participants were told,

"Listed below are a series of statements. These statements measure what you think

<u>actually</u> happens in our society." These two sections of the questionnaire could determine

whether people conceptualized the system differently depending on if the ideology was

presented as an abstract ideology or an actual outcome. Because participants answered

questions about both of these ideology frames, the order of these two sections was

counterbalanced. The third section included questions that measured satisfaction with

America as well as policy items related to federal spending and assistance programs. In

the fourth and final section of the survey, participants completed demographic

information. This section was critical because it identified participants' status. There are

many dimensions of status; for example, status may be defined as wealth, socioeconomic

status, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, religion, citizenship, and education level. In

this paper we tested for status differences by looking first at people's annual household income and then their race.

Equality

The Social Dominance Orientation (SDO) scale (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994) was used as an equality measure. This 16-item scale[1] measured the degree to which individuals believed in social, political, and economic equality; that is, the extent to which they believed that all groups should be equal and have equal opportunities. The scale includes questions such as, "All groups should be given an equal chance in life" and "Group equality should be our ideal." See Appendix A for the complete scale. Participants rated these questions on a 5-point scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). These items were combined to form the *abstract ideology* scale ($\alpha = .89$).

Participants also completed a 10-item scale that measured the degree to which they believed that the goals of equality are actually achieved in the current society. This scale includes questions such as, "Some groups of people in our society have more opportunities than others" (reverse-scored) and "Discrimination in American society contributes to inequality" (reverse-scored). See Appendix A for the complete scale. Participants rated these questions on a 5-point scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). These items were combined to form the *actual outcome* scale ($\alpha = .78$).

Protestant Work Ethic (PWE)

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[1] Jost and Thompson (2000) have suggested that social dominance orientation is composed of two related factors (general opposition to equality and group-based dominance) and that opposition to equality is tied more to system justification theory than group-based dominance. The opposition to equality subscale and the full SDO scale were tested.

The PWE scale is a 7-item scale that measured the belief that people who work hard should be successful (Ho & Lloyd, 1984). Two sample items from the PWE are: "If one works hard enough, he or she is likely to make a good life for him/herself." and "If you work hard you will succeed." See Appendix A for the complete scale. Participants rated these questions on a 5-point scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). These items were combined to form the *abstract ideology* scale (α = .84).

Participants also completed eight questions that gauged whether they believed that hard work actually leads to success. This scale includes questions such as, "Discrimination limits some people's ability to succeed" (reverse-scored) and "In America, people get rewarded for their effort." See Appendix A for the complete scale. Participants rated these questions on a 5-point scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). These items were combined to form the *actual outcome* scale (α = .64).

Economic System Justification (ESJ)

The ESJ scale includes 17 items measuring the extent to which economic conditions are inevitable and natural (Jost & Thompson, 2000). Two sample items include, "Laws of nature are responsible for differences in wealth in society" and "If people wanted to change the economic system to make things equal, they could" (reverse-scored). See Appendix A for the complete scale. Participants rated these questions on a 5-point scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). These items were combined to form the *abstract ideology* scale (α = .71).

Participants also answered 11 items assessing whether our society's economic disparities are fair. This scale included items such as, "Wealthy people are rich because they work hard" and "Wealthy people are rich because of the circumstances into which

they were born" (reverse-scored). See Appendix A for the complete scale. Participants

rated these questions on a 5-point scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

These items were combined to form the *actual outcome* scale ($\alpha = .53$).

Democracy

In order to measure the abstract ideals and values of democracy participants

answered a 10-item scale. The items measured beliefs about liberty, freedom of speech

and religion, equal voting rights, separation of church and state, and equal criminal

justice procedures. The scale included items such as, "All Americans should have equal

access to voting" and "All Americans should receive the same legal proceedings." See

Appendix A for the complete scale. Participants rated these questions on a 5-point scale

from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). These items were combined to form the

abstract ideology scale ($\alpha = .80$).

Participants also answered a 10-item scale that measured whether the abstract

ideals of democracy are actually held up in the current society. Example items include,

"All Americans have the same access to voting" and "All Americans are equally

protected under the criminal justice system." See Appendix A for the complete scale.

Participants rated these questions on a 5-point scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5

(*strongly agree*). These items were combined to form the *actual outcome* scale ($\alpha = .73$).

Belief in a Just world (BJW)

The BJW is a 16-item scale that measured the belief that people get what they

deserve (Rubin & Peplau, 1975). In other words, the scale measured the extent to which

participants believe good things happen to good people and bad things happen to bad

people. This scale measured actual outcomes only. An example item is, "By and large,

people deserve what they get." See Appendix A for the complete scale. Participants rated these questions on a 5-point scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

Satisfaction with America

Participants answered four items that measured their satisfaction with America. Items were as follows: "I am satisfied with how America operates today," "The way America works today is fair," "The structure of American society needs to change" (reverse-scored), and "I trust the government." Participants rated these questions on a 5-point scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). These four items were averaged to form a scale ($\alpha = .78$).

Support for Federal Spending

Eleven items were adapted from the General Social Survey (Davis, Smith, & Marsden, 2007) related to federal spending and assistance programs for low status groups. These items were averaged to form three scales: *education*, *quality of life*, and *general benefits*. The *education* scale included the following items: "The government should spend more money on pre-school or other early education programs in poor neighborhoods," "The government should provide special college scholarships for children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds who maintain good grades," and "The government should provide more chances for children from poor families to go to college" ($\alpha = .80$). The *quality of life* scale included the following items: "The government should increase support for people receiving food stamps," "The government should not have to provide housing for those who cannot afford it" (reverse-scored), "The government should provide a job to anyone who wants one," "The government should create a free universal health care system," "The government should spend less on

benefits for the poor" (reverse-scored), and "The government should strive to hire people of color more" ($\alpha = .71$). The *general benefits* scale included the following items: "We should not spend any more federal money on programs that assist Blacks" (reverse-scored) and "The government should provide a decent standard of living for the unemployed" ($r = .30$, $p = .001$). Participants rated questions on a 5-point scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

Status

Status was determined by two variables: annual household income and race. Annual household income was mean centered and race was contrast coded (African Americans = -1, European Americans = 1).

CHAPTER III

RESULTS (STUDY 1)

It was predicted that low status members would endorse abstract ideologies as much, or more, as high status members; however, high status members would believe in the actual outcomes of those ideologies more so than low status members. In order to test this prediction, regression analyses were conducted for each ideology (i.e., equality, Protestant work ethic, economic system justification, and democracy). The predictor variable was status (operationalized in two ways: income and race) and the criterion variable was a difference score between the actual outcome and the abstract ideal so that higher numbers mean more belief of the actual outcome than the abstract ideal. When a difference scores is regressed on a predictor variable, a significant slope indicates an interaction and a significant y-intercept indicates a main effect of the repeated-measures variable (see Judd, Kenny, & McClelland, 2001).

<u>Equality</u>

When the difference score of ideology frame of equality (actual outcome minus abstract ideal) was regressed on income, the y-intercept was significant indicating a main effect of ideology frame, $b = -2.06$, $t(368) = -36.11$, $p = .000$. Participants believed in the abstract ideal more than the actual outcome of equality. The slope of income was significantly different from zero indicating an interaction, $t(368) = 3.76$, $p = .000$. Simple slope tests demonstrated that income was a significant predictor of endorsement of the abstract ideal of equality, $b = -.07$, $t = -4.92$, $p = .000$, but not of the actual outcome, $b = .02$, $t = 1.41$, ns. That is, people of higher income (i.e., 2 SD above the mean) were less likely to believe in the abstract values of equality ($M = 3.62$) compared to people of lower

income (i.e., 2 SD below the mean; $M = 4.29$); however, people of higher ($M = 1.98$) and lower income ($M = 1.80$) were just as likely to believe in the actual outcomes of equality. The status difference in endorsement of the abstract ideals replicates system justification findings. However, everyone agreed that the abstract ideals of equality were not being achieved in society because the means are well below the midpoint of the scale. These results demonstrate that endorsing the abstract goals of an ideology is not the same as judging whether the actual outcomes of a system achieve those goals.

The analysis above was conducted again; this time the difference score of equality was regressed on race. There was no interaction, $t (269) = 1.40$, *ns*. However, there was a significant effect of the ideology frame such that African Americans and European Americans endorsed the abstract ideals of equality significantly more ($M = 3.98$) so than they believed that the goals were being achieved ($M = 1.85$), $b = -2.13$, $t (269) = -21.46$, $p = .000$. This finding replicates the main effect result above where income was used as the status variable.[2]

Protestant Work Ethic (PWE)

We regressed the difference score between the actual outcome and abstract ideal of PWE on income and found that the y-intercept was significant, indicating a main effect of ideology frame, $b = -1.54$, $t (367) = -33.02$, $p = .000$. Participants believed in the abstract ideal ($M = 4.05$) more than the actual outcome of PWE ($M = 2.51$). The slope of income was also significantly different from zero, indicating an interaction, $t (367) =$

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[2] These analyses were tested using the full SDO scale. When these analyses were rerun using the opposition to equality subscale, we replicated the interaction pattern using income as the status variable. When we reran the analysis using race as the status variable we found a significant interaction. The pattern was the same as that for income. Specifically, African Americans endorsed the abstract ideals more than the European Americans; however, African Americans endorsed the actual outcomes just as much as did the European Americans.

2.94, p = .004. Simple slope tests demonstrated that income was a significant predictor of assessment of the actual outcome of PWE, b = .04, t = 3.80, p = .000, but not of endorsement of the abstract ideal of PWE, b = -.01, t = -.66, ns. Income related more to belief of PWE in terms of actual outcomes than in terms of abstract ideals. Specifically, people of higher income were more likely to believe that the goals of the PWE were being achieved in society (M = 2.72) compared to people of lower income (M = 2.29); however, people of higher (M = 3.99) and lower income (M = 4.10) were just as likely to endorse the abstract ideals of PWE. Again, we replicated system justification predictions with the results of the abstract ideals; however, we found support for our predictions with the results of the actual outcomes. Namely, lower status individuals can more easily see that the relationship between hard work and success is not always achieved, even though the abstract concept is valued.

The same analysis was conducted, but this time the difference score of PWE was regressed on race. The y-intercept was significant indicating a main effect of ideology frame, b = -1.64, t (270) = -20.24, p = .000. Participants believed in the abstract ideal (M = 4.09) more than the actual outcome of PWE (M = 2.46). The slope of race was significantly different from zero indicating an interaction, t (270) = 2.02, p = .045. African Americans endorsed the abstract ideals significantly higher (M = 4.17) than the actual outcomes of PWE (M = 2.38) and European Americans also endorsed the abstract ideals significantly higher (M = 4.01) than the actual outcomes of PWE (M = 2.54). However, the difference between the abstract ideal and the actual outcome was significantly larger for African Americans than European Americans. This finding

supports our prediction that there is a larger discrepancy between the actual outcomes and abstract ideals for people of lower status than higher status.

Economic System Justification (ESJ)

When the difference score of ideology frame of ESJ was regressed on income, the slope of income was not significantly different from zero indicating no interaction, t (366) = 1.06, ns. However, the y-intercept was significant indicating a main effect of ideology frame, $b = .12$, t (367) = 4.57, $p = .000$. Participants believed in the actual outcome of ESJ ($M = 2.86$) more than the abstract ideal ($M = 2.73$). Despite this difference in ideology endorsement, means were below the midpoint of the scale, suggesting that they did not believe that economic conditions were inevitable, natural, and fair. There was a significant effect of income such that people of higher income were more likely to endorse the abstract ideals ($b = .04$, $t = 4.28$, $p = .000$) and actual outcomes ($b = .05$, $t = 5.89$, $p = .000$) of ESJ than people of lower income.

The analysis above was conducted again using race. The y-intercept was not significant indicating no main effect of ideology frame, t (269) = .64, ns. The slope of race was significantly different from zero indicating an interaction, t (269) = 2.98, $p = .003$. Simple slope tests demonstrated that race was a significant predictor of assessment of the actual outcome of ESJ, $b = .12$, $t = 3.12$, $p = .002$, but not of endorsement of the abstract ideal of ESJ, $b = -.00$, $t = -.03$, ns. That is, European Americans were more likely to believe that the goals of the ESJ were being achieved in society ($M = 2.89$) compared to African Americans ($M = 2.65$); however, European Americans ($M = 2.74$) and African Americans ($M = 2.74$) were just as likely to endorse the abstract ideals of ESJ. The similar endorsements of the abstract ideals of ESJ for both African Americans and

European Americans replicate system justification theory; however, the dissimilar assessments of actual outcomes between African Americans and European Americans support our prediction.

Democracy

When the difference score of ideology frame of democracy was regressed on income, the y-intercept was significant indicating a main effect of ideology frame, $b = -1.59$, $t(368) = -29.63$, $p = .000$. Participants believed in the abstract ideal of democracy ($M = 4.17$) more than they believed that actual outcomes reflect the goals of democracy ($M = 2.58$). The slope of income was also significantly different from zero indicating an interaction, $t(367) = 2.60$, $p = .010$. Simple slope tests demonstrated that income was a significant predictor of assessment of the actual outcome of democracy, $b = .04$, $t = 3.21$, $p = .001$, but not of endorsement of the abstract ideal of democracy, $b = -.02$, $t = -1.22$, ns. Income related more to the belief of democracy in terms of actual outcomes than in terms of abstract ideals. Specifically, people of higher income were more likely to believe that the goals of democracy were being achieved in society ($M = 2.78$) compared to people of lower income ($M = 2.38$); however, people of higher ($M = 4.09$) and lower income ($M = 4.25$) were just as likely to endorse the abstract ideals of democracy. This result is consistent with many of the other ideology results reported earlier. Finding that people of high and low status endorse the abstract goals of democracy equally supports system justification theory; however, finding that people of higher status are more likely to perceive that the goals are actually being achieved compared to people of lower status supports our prediction.

The same analysis was conducted, but this time the difference score of democracy was regressed on race. The slope of race was not significantly different from zero indicating no interaction, t (270) = .23, ns. However, we did find a significant effect of ideology frame such that regardless of race, people were more likely to endorse the abstract ideals (M = 4.13) than the actual outcomes of democracy (M = 2.50), b = -1.63, t = -18.19, p = .000.

Belief in a Just World (BJW)

We conducted a regression analysis by regressing BJW on income. As predicted, participants with higher income believed that the goals of BJW were being achieved in society more than those with lower income, b = .03, t (353) = 3.47, p = .001. That is, people of higher status endorsed the belief that people actually do get what they deserve more (M = 3.15) so than people of lower status (M = 2.87). However, neither higher nor lower income members agreed that this outcome happens. Means were either at or below the midpoint of the scale.

We repeated the above analysis examining the effects of race. European Americans believed that the goals of BJW were being achieved in society more so (M = 3.06) than African Americans (M = 2.89), b = .09, t (315) = 3.58, p = .000. Again, though, means were at or below the midpoint of the scale, suggesting that these goals were not being achieved. Both of these findings did support the prediction that higher status people perceive that the goals of an ideology actually manifest in society more than lower status people; however, neither high nor low status members agreed with this outcome.

Satisfaction with America

It was predicted that people of higher status would be more satisfied with America than people of lower status. In order to test whether status predicts satisfaction with America, people's satisfaction with America was regressed on income. Income significantly predicted satisfaction, such that participants with higher income were more satisfied with America ($M = 2.60$) than those with lower income ($M = 2.00$), $b = .06$, t (365) = 3.49, $p = .001$. It is worth noting, though, that people of higher and lower income were disappointed overall with America because the means are below the midpoint of the scale. This finding supports our prediction and refutes system justification theory that predicts that all people will be satisfied with the status quo. In order to test whether the ideology frame (abstract ideal vs. actual outcome) mediated the relationship between income and satisfaction, multiple meditation models for each of the four American ideologies were conducted using a bootstrap technique (see Preacher & Hayes, 2008). It was predicted that the actual outcomes of these ideologies would better mediate the relationship between status and satisfaction than the abstract ideals of the ideologies. The abstract ideals of equality marginally mediated this relationship, the actual outcomes of PWE and democracy significantly mediated this relationship, and both the abstract ideals and actual outcomes of ESJ significantly mediated this relationship (See Table 1 and Figure 1).

Table 1. Magnitude and Significance Tests of the Multiple Mediation Effects of Income with Abstract Ideals and Actual Outcomes of Ideologies as the Mediators for Satisfaction with America (Study 1)

		95% *CI*		Sobel Test	
	Mediation Effect *(SE)*	Lower	Upper	*Z*	*P*
Equality					
Abstract Ideal	.01 (.01) †	-.00	.02	1.66	.096
Actual Outcome	.01 (.01)	-.00	.02	1.57	.12
PWE					
Abstract Ideal	.00 (.00)	-.00	.01	.59	.56
Actual Outcome	**.03 (.01)**	.01	.04	3.58	.000
ESJ					
Abstract Ideal	**.03 (.01)**	.01	.04	3.49	.001
Actual Outcome	**.02 (.01)**	.01	.04	3.09	.002
Democracy					
Abstract Ideal	.00 (.00)	-.00	.01	1.20	.23
Actual Outcome	**.03 (.01)**	.01	.05	3.18	.002

Note: 95% CI are based on the 95% bias corrected and accelerated confidence intervals computed using Preacher and Hayes (2008) SPSS mediation macro. Bold face type highlights significant mediation effects.

Figure 1. Multiple Mediation Models with Four American Ideologies Mediating the
Relationship between Income and Satisfaction with America (Study 1)
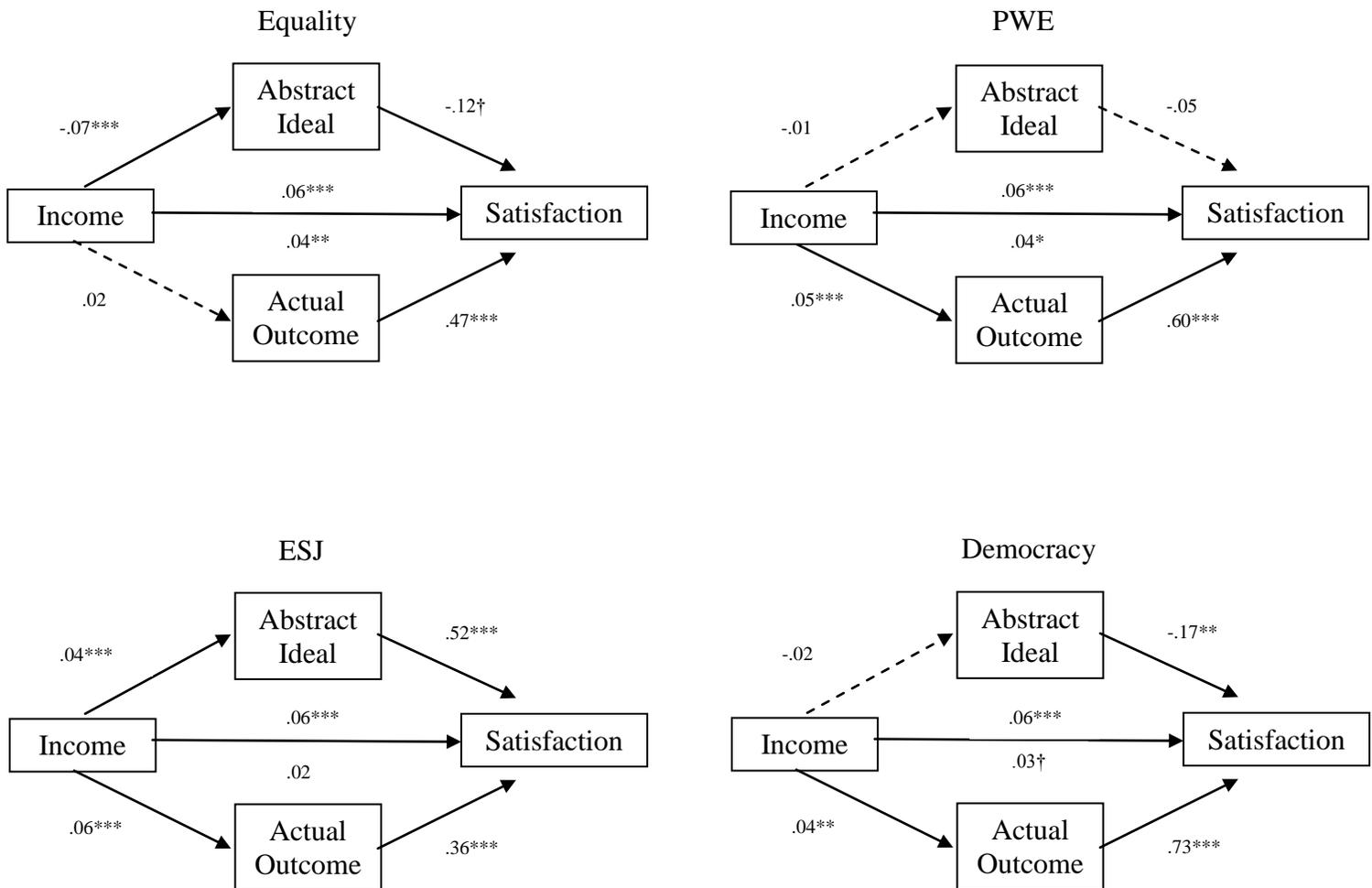
Note: Mediation models used 5,000 bootstrap samples
† *p* < .10, * *p* < .05, ** *p* < .01, *** *p* < .001

We repeated the above analysis examining the effects of race. Race significantly predicted satisfaction with America, such that European Americans were more satisfied with America (M = 2.33) than African Americans (M = 1.97), b = .18, t (269) = 2.46, p = .014. Similar to the income results, despite differences between European and African Americans, both races were dissatisfied with America. In order to test whether the ideology frame (abstract ideal vs. actual outcome) mediated the relationship between race and satisfaction, multiple meditation models for each of the four American ideologies were conducted. The actual outcomes of ESJ mediated this relationship, the abstract ideals and the actual outcomes of democracy mediated this relationship, but neither equality nor PWE mediated this relationship (See Table 2 and Figure 2).

Table 2. Magnitude and Significance Tests of the Multiple Mediation Effects of Race with Abstract Ideals and Actual Outcomes of Ideologies as the Mediators for Satisfaction with America (Study 1)

| | Mediation Effect *(SE)* | 95% *CI* | | Sobel Test | |
		Lower	Upper	*Z*	*p*
Equality					
Abstract Ideal	.02 (.01)	-.00	.06	1.30	.19
Actual Outcome	.02 (.02)	-.02	.07	.91	.36
PWE					
Abstract Ideal	.00 (.01)	-.01	.03	.73	.47
Actual Outcome	.05 (.03)†	-.02	.12	1.68	.09
ESJ					
Abstract Ideal	.00 (.02)	-.03	.04	.06	.95
Actual Outcome	**.07 (.03)**	.02	.14	2.60	.01
Democracy					
Abstract Ideal	-.02 (.01)†	-.06	-.00	-1.67	.09
Actual Outcome	**.09 (.04)**	.03	.17	2.47	.01

Note: 95% CI are based on the 95% bias corrected and accelerated confidence intervals computed using Preacher and Hayes (2008) SPSS mediation macro. Bold face type highlights significant mediation effects.

Figure 2. Multiple Mediation Models with Four American Ideologies Mediating the Relationship between Race and Satisfaction with America (Study 1)

Note: Mediation models used 5,000 bootstrap samples
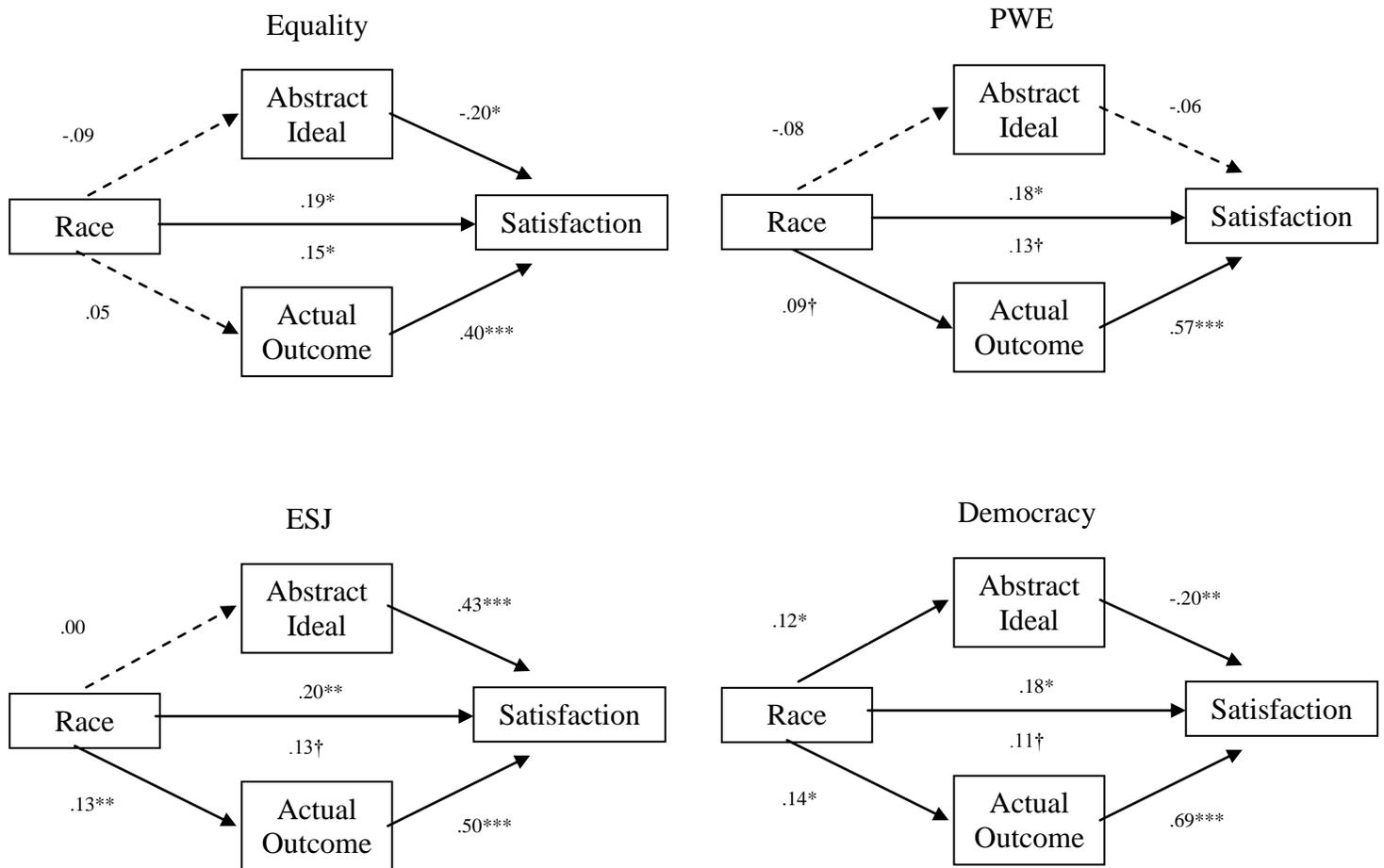† *p* < .10, * *p* < .05, ** *p* < .01, *** *p* < .001

These results demonstrate the importance of asking people not only whether they endorse the abstract goals of ideologies but also whether they believe that people's life outcomes reflect the fulfillment of these goals. Participants' endorsement of ideologies, when framed in terms of abstract goals, replicates system justification research. For example, they value a social system that is based on equal rights and opportunities and an economic system that rewards hard work. However, participants, especially those of lower status, are less likely to believe that everyone in America is given the same opportunities to succeed; they are also less likely to think that there is a clear link between hard work and success. In other words, people might believe that inequality is an acceptable outcome, but only if everyone had the same opportunity to succeed. These findings show that participants believed that America was failing to achieve its goals, suggesting that people do not necessarily believe that people's life outcomes are deserved and fair.

Support for Federal Spending

If people of higher status believe that life outcomes are controllable, they may be less likely to support public policies that would improve conditions for disadvantaged groups than people of lower status. In order to examine whether higher status members would be less supportive of federal spending to benefit low status groups than lower status members, three regression models were conducted. Each analysis regressed one of the federal spending scales (education, quality of life, and general benefits) on income, controlling for political affiliation. Above and beyond people's political affiliation, income significantly predicted support for federal spending, such that people of higher income were less likely to support federal spending on education ($b = -.06$, $t = -3.71$, $p =$

.000), quality of life ($b = -.06$, $t = -4.08$, $p = .000$), and general benefits ($b = -.04$ $t = -2.23$, $p = .026$) for low status groups compared to people of lower income.

It was also tested whether the ideology frame (abstract ideal vs. actual outcome) mediated the effect between income and support for federal spending. Multiple meditation models for each of the four American ideologies were conducted using a bootstrap technique (see Preacher & Hayes, 2008). It was predicted that the actual outcome would better mediate this relationship than the abstract ideal. Regarding support for federal spending on education, quality of life, and general benefits, the abstract ideals of equality mediated the relationship, the actual outcomes of PWE and democracy mediated the relationship, and both the abstract ideals and actual outcomes of ESJ mediated the relationship (See Table 3 and Figures 3-5).

The above analyses were conducted again using race as the predictor variable. That is, three regression models were conducted, each of them regressing one of the federal spending scales on race, controlling for political affiliation. Above and beyond people's political affiliation, race significantly predicted support for federal spending, such that European Americans were less likely to support federal spending to support education ($b = -.20$, $t = -2.62$, $p = .009$), quality of life ($b = -.22$, $t = -2.63$, $p = .009$), and general benefits ($b = -.35$, $t = -5.56$, $p = .000$) for low status groups compared to African Americans.

Table 3. Multiple Mediation Effects of Income with Abstract Ideals and Actual Outcomes of Ideologies as the Mediators for Policy (Study 1)

	Mediation Effects (SE)		95% *CI*		Actual Outcome
DV: Education	Abstract Ideal	Actual Outcome	Abstract Ideal	Actual Outcome	
Equality	**-.03 (.01)**	-.00 (.00)	-.05, -.02	-.02, .00	
PWE	-.01 (.01)	**-.02 (.01)**	-.02, .01	-.03, -.01	
ESJ	**-.01 (.01)**	**-.02 (.01)**	-.03, -.01	-.03, -.01	
Democracy	-.01 (.01)	-.00 (.00)	-.03, .01	-.01, -.00	
DV: Quality of Living					
Equality	**-.03 (.01)**	-.00 (.00)	-.04, -.02	-.01, .00	
PWE	-.00 (.00)	**-.01 (.01)**	-.01, .00	-.03, -.01	
ESJ	**-.01 (.00)**	**-.03 (.01)**	-.02, -.01	-.05, -.02	
Democracy	-.00 (.00)	**-.01 (.00)**	-.01, .00	-.02, -.00	
DV: General Benefits					
Equality	**-.03 (.01)**	-.01 (.01)	-.05, -.02	-.02, .00	
PWE	-.00 (.00)	**-.02 (.01)**	-.01, .00	-.03, -.01	
ESJ	**-.02 (.01)**	**-.03 (.01)**	-.04, -.01	-.05, -.01	
Democracy	-.01 (.01)	**-.01 (.01)**	-.02, .01	-.03, -.00	

Note: 95% CI are based on the 95% bias corrected and accelerated confidence intervals computed using Preacher and Hayes (2008) SPSS mediation macro. Bold face type highlights significant mediation effects. All effects calculated while controlling for political orientation.

Figure 3. Multiple Mediation Models with Four American Ideologies Mediating the Relationship between Income and Support for Federal Spending on Education (Study 1)

Equality

Abstract Ideal

-.06*** .45***

Income -.07*** Education

-.03*

.02 Actual Outcome -.29***

PWE

Abstract Ideal

-.01 .42***

Income -.06*** Education

-.04*

.04*** Actual Outcome -.40***

ESJ

Abstract Ideal

.04*** -.39***

Income -.06*** Education

-.03†

.05*** Actual Outcome -.30**

Democracy

Abstract Ideal

-.01 .60***

Income -.06*** Education

-.05***

.03** Actual Outcome -.13†
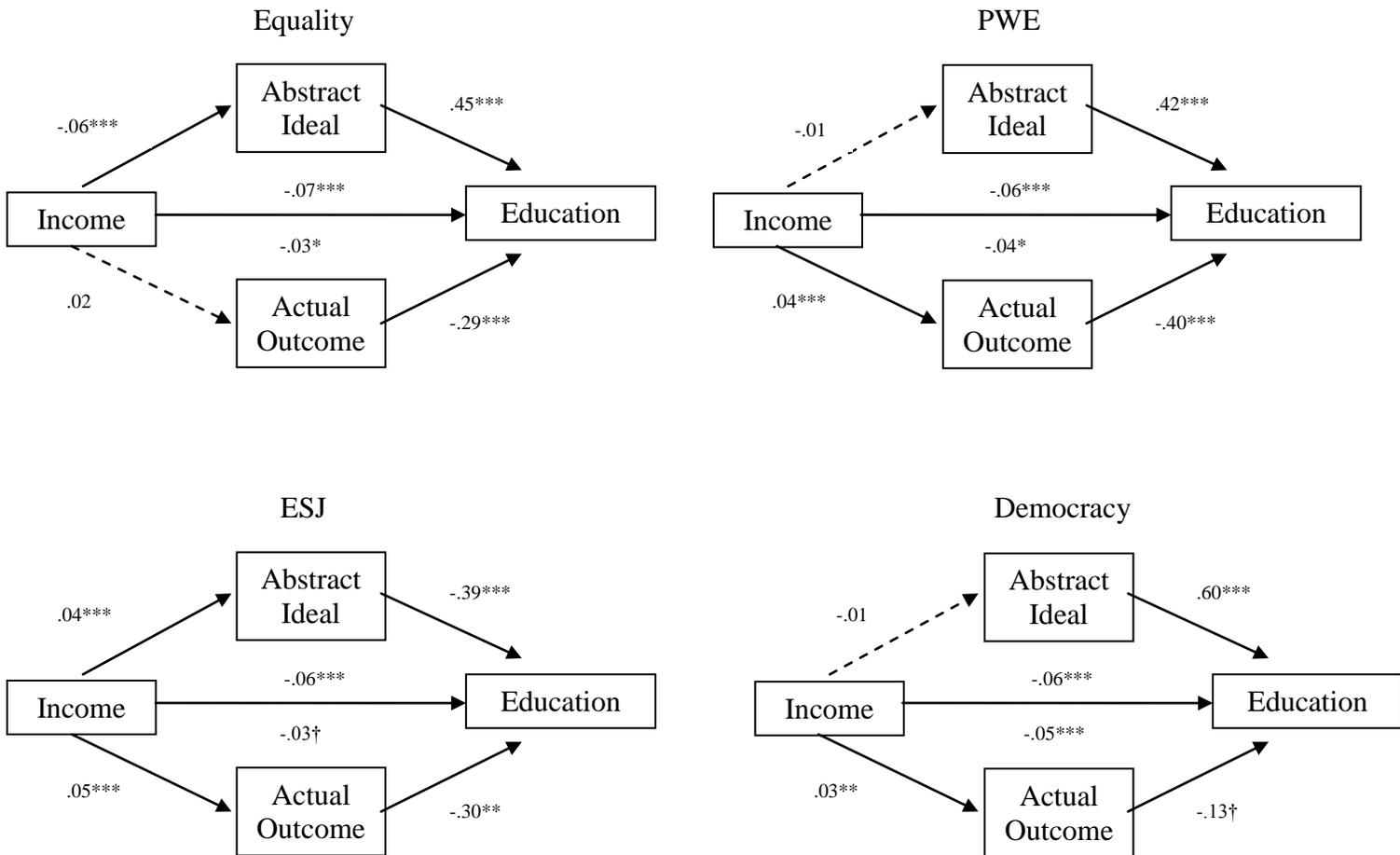
Note: Mediation models used 5,000 bootstrap samples
† $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Figure 4. Multiple Mediation Models with Four American Ideologies Mediating the Relationship between Income and Support for Federal Spending on Quality of Life (Study 1)
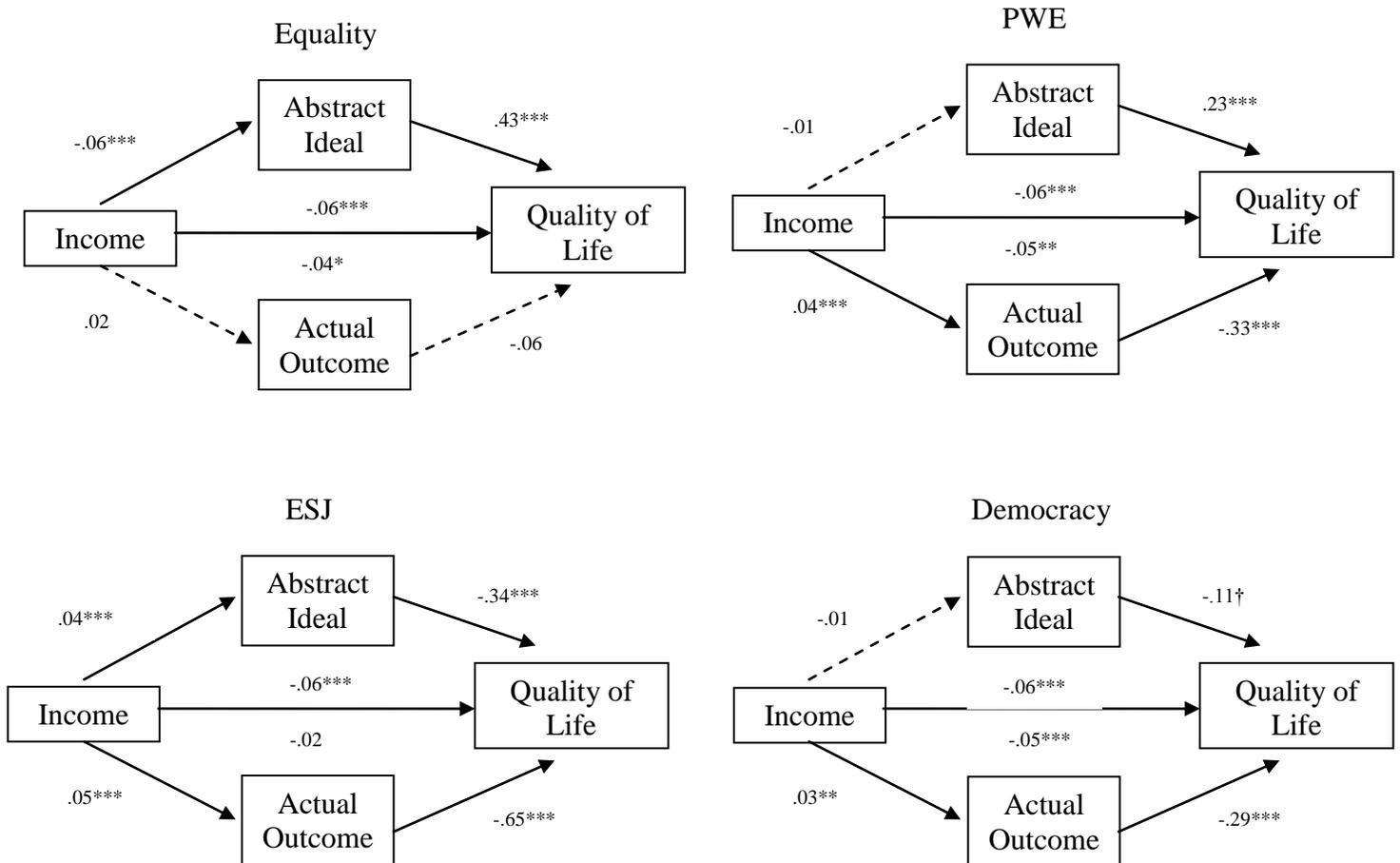
Note: Mediation models used 5,000 bootstrap samples
† *p* < .10, * *p* < .05, ** *p* < .01, *** *p* < .001

Figure 5. Multiple Mediation Models with Four American Ideologies Mediating the Relationship between Income and Support for Federal Spending on General Benefits (Study 1)

Note: Mediation models used 5,000 bootstrap samples
† $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

It was also tested whether the ideology frame (abstract ideal vs. actual outcome) mediated the effect between race and support for federal spending. Multiple meditation models for each of the four American ideologies were conducted using the bootstrap technique. Regarding support for federal spending on education, the abstract ideals of equality and the actual outcomes of PWE mediated this relationship. Neither ESJ nor democracy mediated the relationship between race and support for federal spending on education. Regarding quality of life and general benefits, the abstract ideals of equality mediated the relationship and the actual outcomes of PWE, ESJ and democracy mediated the relationship (See Table 4 and Figures 6-8).

Table 4. Multiple Mediation Effects of Race with Abstract Ideals and Actual Outcomes of Ideologies as the Mediators for Policy (Study 1)

|	Mediation Effects (SE)		95% *CI*		
DV: Education	Abstract Ideal	Actual Outcome	Abstract Ideal	Actual Outcome	Ac
Equality	**-.07 (.03)**	-.01 (.01)	-.13, -.02	-.06, .00	
PWE	-.03 (.03)	**-.05 (.03)**	-.09, .05	-.12, -.00	
ESJ	-.02 (.02)	-.04 (.03)	-.07, .01	-.11, .00	
Democracy	.06 (.04)	-.02 (.02)	-.01, .16	-.07, .00	
DV: Quality of Living					
Equality	**-.06 (.03)**	-.00 (.01)	-.12, -.01	-.02, .01	
PWE	-.02 (.02)	**-.04 (.02)**	-.05, .02	-.10, -.01	
ESJ	-.02 (.02)	**-.10 (.03)**	-.06, .01	-.18, -.05	
Democracy	.02 (.01)	**-.05 (.02)**	-.00, .06	-.10, -.02	
DV: General Benefits					
Equality	**-.08 (.03)**	-.02 (.02)	-.15, -.02	-.06, .01	
PWE	-.02 (.02)	**-.05 (.03)**	-.06, .02	-.12, -.01	
ESJ	-.03 (.02)	**-.11 (.04)**	-.07, .01	-.21, -.04	
Democracy	.05 (.04)	**-.06 (.02)**	-.01, .13	-.12, -.03	

Note: 95% CI are based on the 95% bias corrected and accelerated confidence intervals computed using Preacher and Hayes (2008) SPSS mediation macro. Bold face type highlights significant mediation effects. All effects calculated while controlling for political orientation.
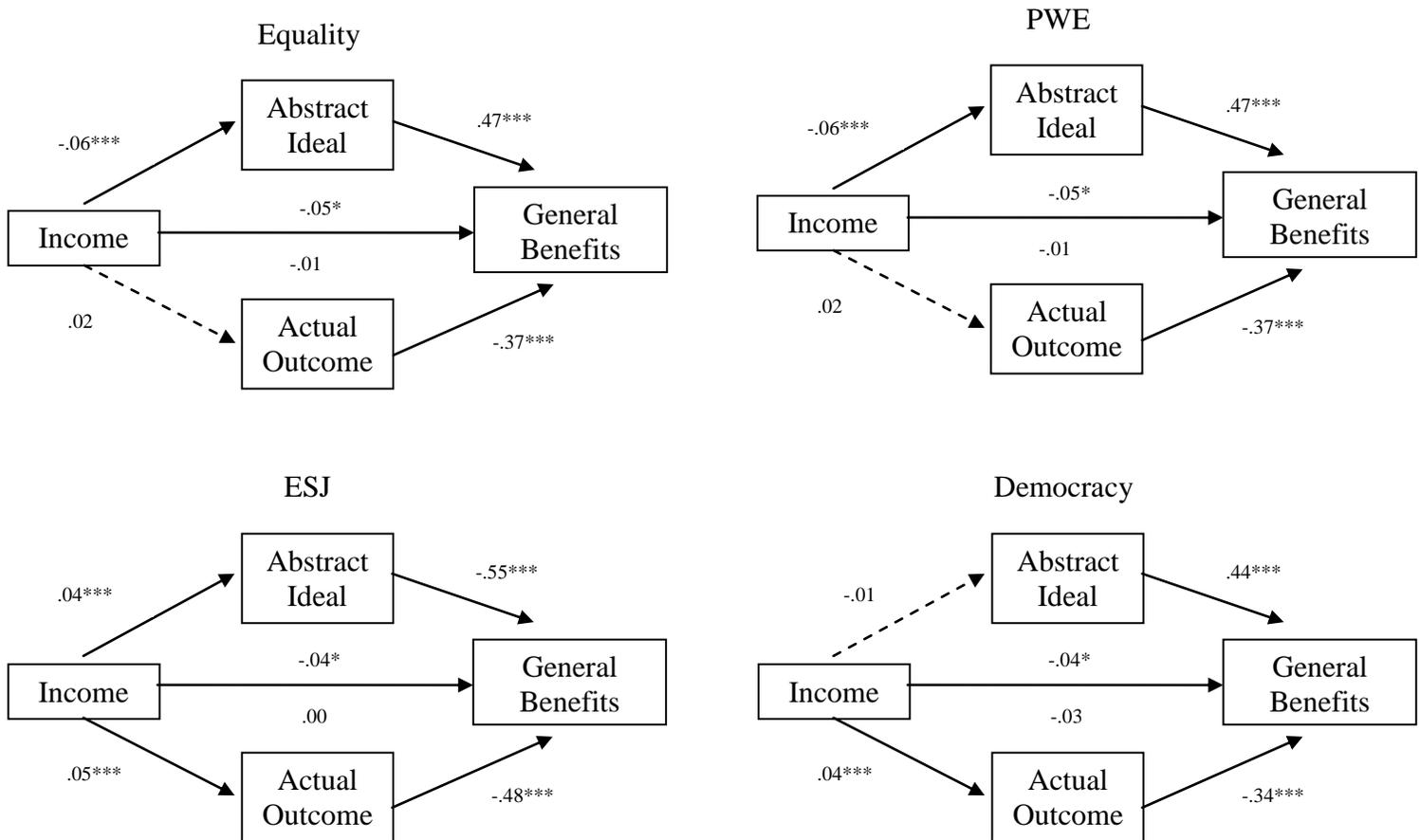
Figure 6. Multiple Mediation Models with Four American Ideologies Mediating the Relationship between Race and Support for Federal Spending on Education (Study 1)
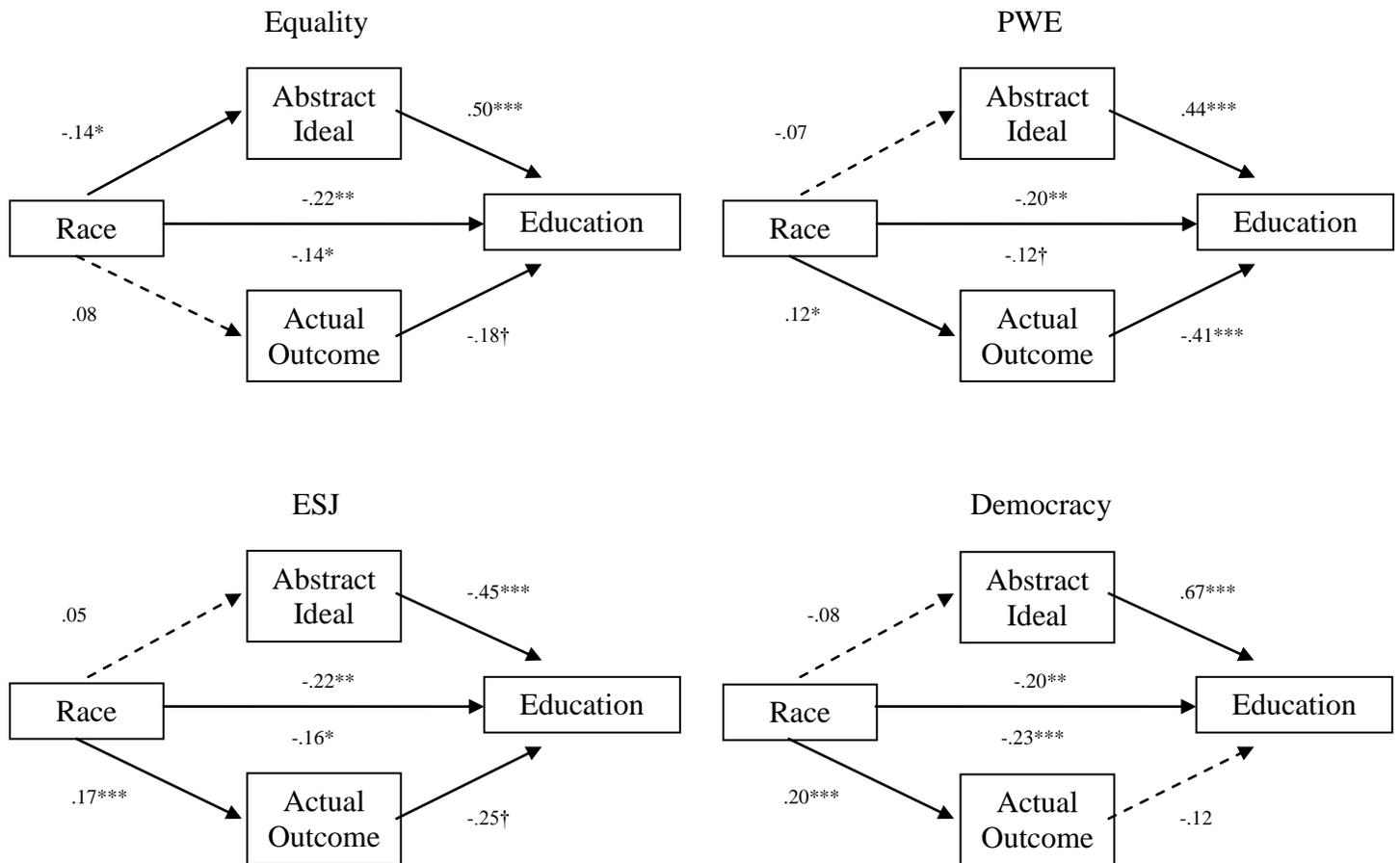
Note: Mediation models used 5,000 bootstrap samples
† *p* < .10, * *p* < .05, ** *p* < .01, *** *p* < .001

Figure 7. Multiple Mediation Models with Four American Ideologies Mediating the Relationship between Race and Support for Federal Spending on Quality of Life (Study 1)
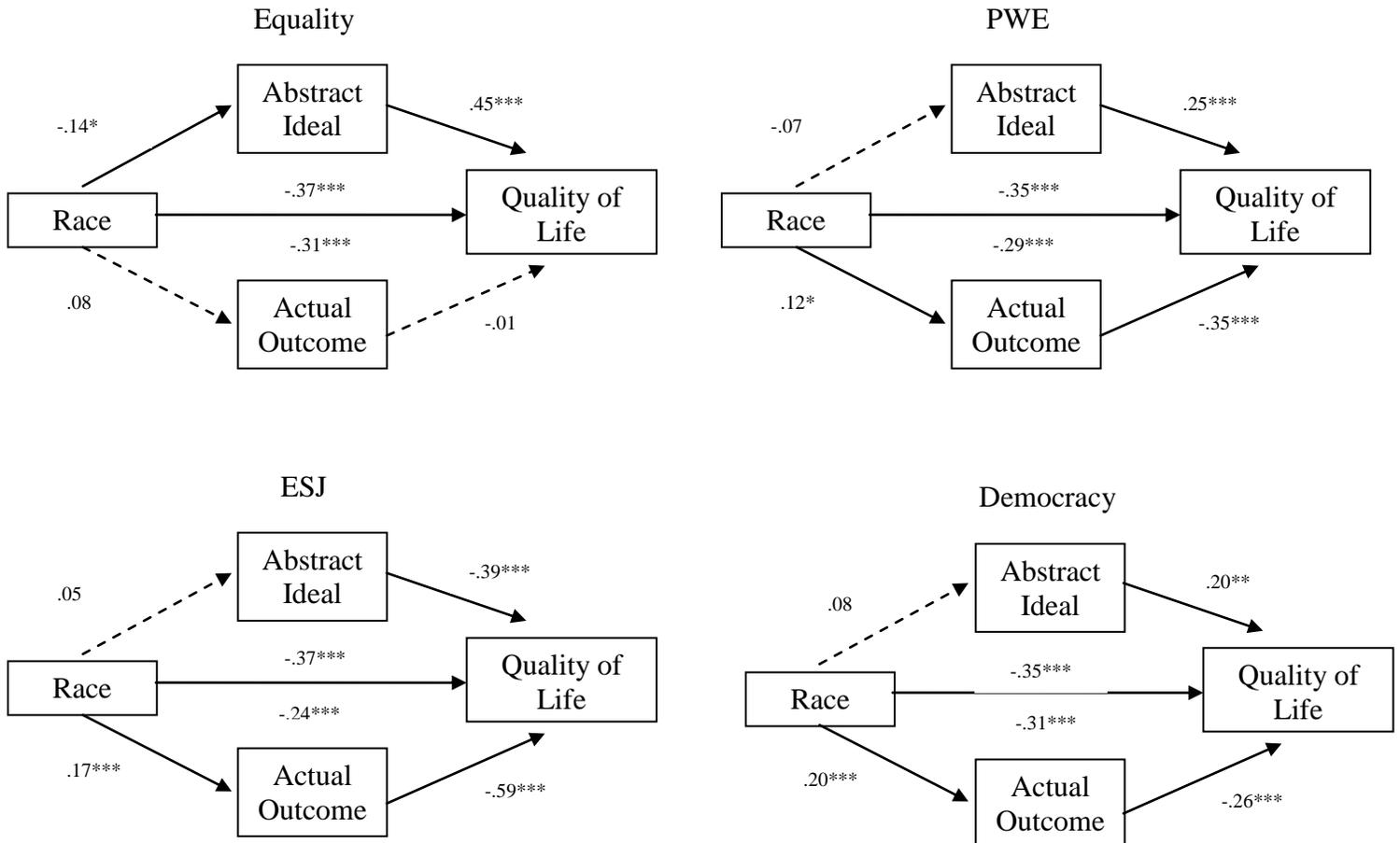
Note: Mediation models used 5,000 bootstrap samples
† *p* < .10, * *p* < .05, ** *p* < .01, *** *p* < .001

Figure 8. Multiple Mediation Models with Four American Ideologies Mediating the Relationship between Race and Support for Federal Spending on General Benefits (Study 1)
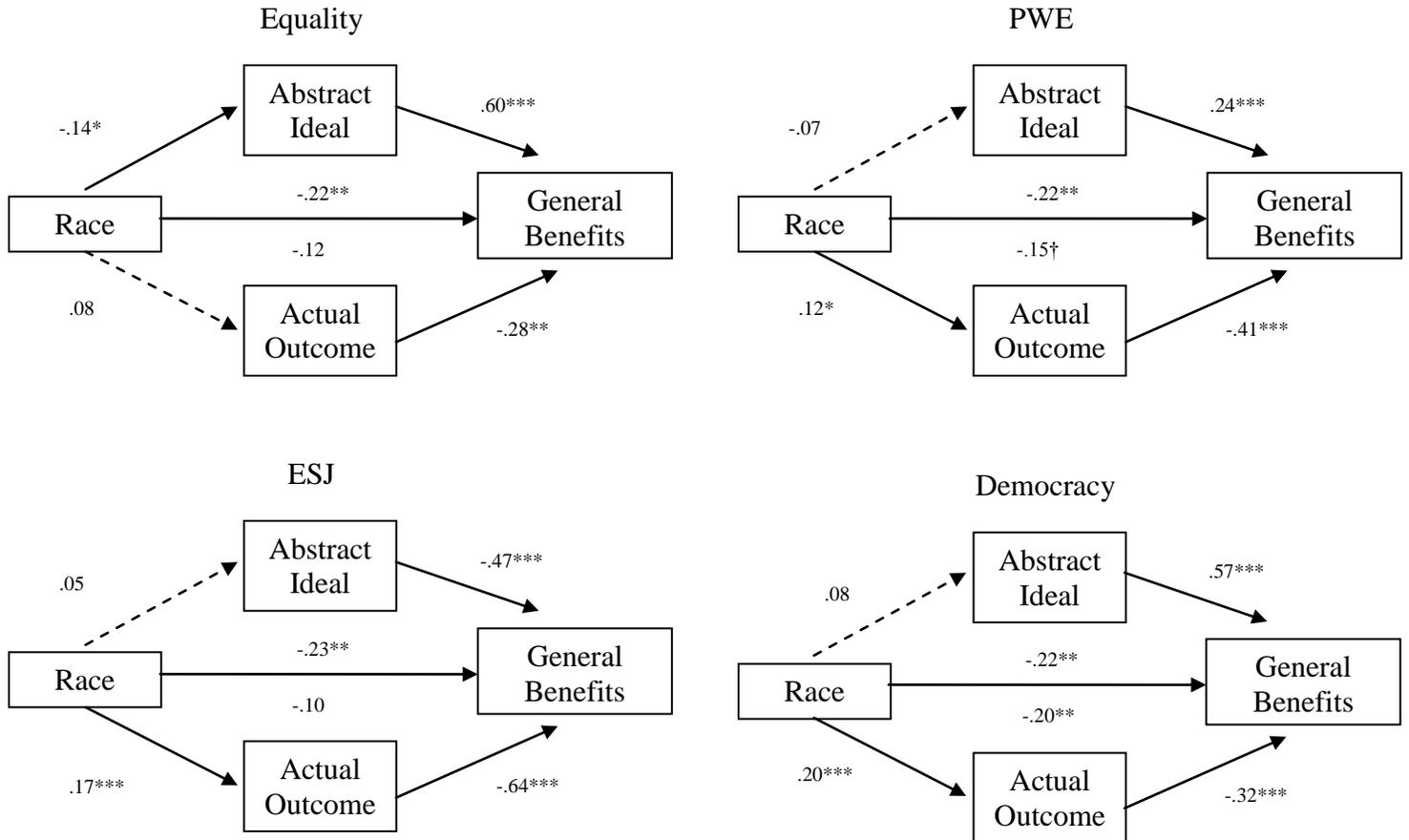
Note: Mediation models used 5,000 bootstrap samples
† *p* < .10, * *p* < .05, ** *p* < .01, *** *p* < .001

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION (STUDY 1)

As predicted, people of lower status endorsed ideologies when framed as abstract ideals just as much as or more than people of higher status, replicating system justification research. That is, they believed in values such as equality, hard work, and democracy and agreed that these values form the foundation of our current social, political and economic systems. Despite endorsing how a system should ideally work, it is important to ask people if they think the system is actually working the way that it is intended. When asked from this perspective, people of higher status were more likely to agree that real outcomes reflect the fulfillment of our ideals than people of lower status, as predicted. Despite these differences in status, though, results showed that both higher and lower status members believed that the systems were failing. Assessments of actual outcomes were either at or below the midpoint of the scale, indicating disagreement with the belief that outcomes reflected the systems' goals. Thus, the current study demonstrates that people value current systems as ideal while simultaneously believing that the objectives of those systems are failing.

When examining people's satisfaction with America and whether they supported federal spending to benefit low status groups, results showed that people of higher status were more satisfied with America and less supportive of federal spending compared to people of lower status. Despite these status differences, though, everyone was dissatisfied with America (i.e., everyone used the lower half of the rating scale). When asked about their attitudes toward policies benefiting low status groups, people of lower status were above the midpoint of the scale, indicating support for these policies, whereas people of

higher status were at or below the midpoint of the scale, indicating neutrality or opposition to these policies.

The results of multiple mediation analyses partially supported the predictions. Broadly speaking, the abstract ideals of equality and the actual outcomes of PWE, ESJ, and democracy mediated these relationships. These findings suggest that people's perceptions about what is actually happening in society (but not as much about what should be happening) predicted people's satisfaction and support for federal spending. Believing that America falls short of achieving its goals predicted dissatisfaction with America, as evidenced by the belief that America is unfair and in government distrust. People who perceived that America was failing to achieve its goals were more supportive of policies benefiting low status groups than people who perceived that America was achieving its goals. It is clear from these findings, that people's satisfaction toward the system and support for government change is due to status differences, but these differences are being driven by people's perceptions of whether the system is operating inline with its ideals. Although not predicted, results also showed that the ideal value of equality was a significant mediator for both the status and satisfaction relationship and the status and support for policy relationships. Equality and equal opportunities seem to be particularly universal values that are commonly used in post-civil rights discourse (e.g., Bonilla-Silva, Lewis, & Embrick, 2004; Schuman, 1997), explaining why the abstract ideal of this ideology mediated these relationships.

Although high and low status members both endorsed American ideologies in the abstract, it could be argued that they believe in them for different reasons. Because high status members were more likely than low status members to believe that the aims of the

ideologies are actually achieved in society, high status members may believe in the abstract ideologies with the intent to system justify, whereas low status members may believe in them with the intent to be hopeful—hopeful that one day they will become a reality for all. The motivations of high and low status members should be investigated further.

Research also showed that high status members were more satisfied with America and less likely to support federal spending to benefit low status groups than low status members. High status members' perceptions and attitudes seem to be serving ego, group, and system interests. High status members are supporting the system by agreeing that they are more satisfied with America and they are supporting the ego and group by opposing federal spending that would not benefit them and from which they might actually incur costs (e.g., higher taxes). Low status members' perceptions and attitudes seem to be serving ego and group interests but not system interests. Low status members are not supporting the system because they are not satisfied with America but they are supporting the ego and group by supporting federal spending that would benefit them and other low status people. These patterns suggest that high status members simultaneously support ego, group, and system interests, as system justification theory predicts. They also suggest that low status members support ego and group interests over system interests, a prediction contrary to system justification theory. These patterns will be more directly tested in Study 2.

CHAPTER V

RATIONALE AND HYPOTHESES (STUDY 2)

One goal of Study 2 was to replicate the finding from Study 1, specifically that high and low status members both endorsed the abstract ideals of ideologies; however, high status members assessed that actual outcomes reflect the ideals of ideologies more so than low status members. Another aim of Study 2 was to investigate the underlying motivation of high and low status members to endorse ideologies in the abstract. High status members likely value the abstract goals of ideologies because they are more likely to believe that they are being attained in society than low status members. However, it is less clear why low status members value these abstract goals since they believe that they are not being achieved. It was predicted that if high status members are more likely than low status members to believe that the goals of ideologies are actually being achieved in society, they would be motivated to endorse ideologies in the abstract as a means to legitimize the system. That is, by endorsing these abstract goals (and believing that they are being achieved), they are able to rationalize and justify current social and economic disparities. However, if low status members are less likely than high status members to believe that the goals of ideologies are actually being achieved in society, it was predicted that they would be motivated to endorse these abstract belief systems because they value the goals of these ideologies and believe that they *should* be achieved. In other words, low status members value these ideologies because their egalitarian goals and ideals offer low status members hope that combating current inequality is possible.

Finally, Study 2 examined whether people of different statuses would use connections and support bailout plans and raising taxes to benefit their ego, group, and/or

system interests. These behaviors were chosen because they all measure the extent to which people of high and low status support economic policies or make economic-oriented decisions out of self-interest. Some social and political scientists have empirically demonstrated that people of low status are not more likely than people of high status to support economic policies that would redistribute wealth in their own favor (Fong, 2001; Gilens, 1999; Jost et al., 2003b). However, others have contended that lower income Americans do vote for their own economic interests either to promote their own financial situation (e.g., Bartels, 2006) or to address the economic grievances of a collective (e.g., Kinder & Kiewiet, 1979, 1981). It is predicted here that low status people would be motivated more by ego and group interests than system interests. Because ego, group, and system interests appear to be congruent for high status people, it was predicted that they would be motivated to support economic policies that would benefit their ego, group, and system interests.

<div align="center">Statement of Hypotheses</div>

I. Low status members would endorse the abstract ideals of economic individualism as much as, or more than, high status members; however, high status members would assess that actual outcomes reflect the ideals of economic individualism more than low status members.

II. High status members would be more motivated to endorse the abstract goals of economic individualism because they are perceived as being achieved as actual outcomes rather than just ideals; however, low status members would be more motivated to endorse the abstract goals of economic individualism

because they are perceived as ideal goals rather than being achieved as actual outcomes.

III.   High status members would use connections to get themselves, their group, and the system ahead; however, low status members would use connections to get themselves and their group ahead more than the system (i.e., they will prioritize ego and group interests over system interests).

IV.   High status members would support a bailout plan that benefits the ego, group and system; however, low status members would support a bailout plan that benefits the ego and group more than the system (i.e., they will prioritize ego and group interests over system interests).

V.   High status members would support raising taxes that benefit the ego, group, and system; however, low status members would support raising taxes that benefit the ego and group more than the system (i.e., they will prioritize ego and group interests over system interests).

CHAPTER VI

METHODS (STUDY 2)

In this study, participants rated the extent to which they endorse the abstract ideals of individualism and whether or not the goals of individualism are actually being achieved in society. It also directly investigated what motivates high and low status members to endorse the abstract goals of individualism. Finally, this study examined the extent to which people would use connections, support a bailout plan, and support raising taxes to satisfy ego, group, and/or system interests.

Participants

The sample included 78 (41 males, 37 females) non-college adults. Undergraduate students were not recruited in this study because the questionnaire asked more real-world questions related to the U.S. economy (e.g., bailout plans, tax policy) with which they might have less direct experience. Ages ranged from 22 to 76, the mode was 53, the median was 36, and the mean was 39. Participants' annual household income ranged from under $25,000 to more than $200,000, the mode was $25,000-$50,000, the median was $50,000-$75,000, and the mean was $75,000-$100,000. Sixty-seven percent of participants were Caucasian, 8% African American, 11% Latino/a, 6% Asian, and 8% other. Participants completed a paper-pencil or an online survey and received five dollars for their participation or volunteered.

Materials and Procedure

The questionnaire was divided into four sections. The first section measured the degree of people's belief in the abstract goals of economic individualism and whether the goals of economic individualism were being achieved. The second section tested people's

motivations for endorsing this ideology in the abstract. The third section measured the extent to which people would use connections and support a bailout plan and tax policy to favor their ego, group, and/or system interests. The fourth section measured demographics in order to determine people's status.

Individualism

One item measured the endorsement of the abstract ideal of individualism: "On the whole, do you support or oppose the belief that 'hard work should lead to success.'" Participants rated this question on a 6-point scale from 1 (*definitely oppose*) to 6 (*definitely support*). In order to measure the actual outcomes of individualism, a scale consisting of six items measured the extent to which people believe that hard work leads to success (Feldman, 1988). Two sample items from this scale are: "If people work hard, they almost always get what they want" and "Even if people try hard, they often cannot reach their goals" (reverse-scored). See Appendix B for the complete scale. Participants rated these questions on a 7-point scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Items scaled together reasonably with a Cronbach's alpha of .63 (see Feldman & Steenbergen, 2001).

 Individualism Follow-up Questions

After participants answered the economic individualism items, they answered two follow-up questions. The goal of asking these follow-up questions was to measure people's motivations for endorsing economic individualism in the abstract. Participants were told, "The questions in this section will continue to ask your thoughts and opinions about the belief that *hard work should lead to success*." The items that followed were, "I support this belief because it describes the way society *should* operate" and "I support

this belief because hard work *does* lead to success." These items were rated on a 7-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*).

Connections

The next section asked participants to indicate the extent to which they would use connections to benefit their ego, group, and system. Participants answered the following items: "If I had powerful connections, I would use them to get a good job for myself" (ego), "If I had powerful connections, I would use them to improve my neighborhood" (group), and "If I had powerful connections, I would use them to advance my political party" (system). These three items were rated on a 7-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*).

Bailout Plan

Participants then answered seven questions about whether they would support a number of potential bailout plans intended to help individuals, groups, and systems. These items asked participants if they would support a bailout plan to financially protect individuals (i.e., unemployed individuals and individuals who lost their home due to foreclosure, $r = .37$, $p = .002$), communities (i.e., small businesses, local schools, and community improvement projects, $\alpha = .76$), and systems (i.e., the banking and auto industries, $r = .54$, $p = .000$). See Appendix B for the exact items. These items were rated on a 7-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*).

Raising Taxes

Participants answered four questions indicating the extent to which they would support raising taxes to benefit the ego (measured as personally benefiting from government programs), group (measured as their family and neighborhood benefiting

from government programs), and the system (measured as America benefiting from government programs). See Appendix B for the exact items. These items were rated on a 7-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*).

Status

      Status was determined in two ways: annual household income and race. Annual household income was mean centered and race was contrast coded (African Americans and Latinos = -1, European Americans = 1). In this study we combined African Americans and Latinos into one low status group. Some have asserted that African Americans' status is comparable to Latinos' status and therefore can be combined into one low status group (e.g., Haley & Sidanius, 2006).[3]

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[3] The pattern of data for African Americans was the same for Latinos and therefore combined.

CHAPTER VII

RESULTS (STUDY 2)

It was predicted that low status members would endorse economic individualism as much, or more, as high status members when framed as an abstract ideal; however, high status members would believe in economic individualism more so than low status members when framed as an actual outcome. A regression analysis was conducted with status as the predictor variable and the difference score between the actual outcome and the abstract ideal as the criterion variable (higher numbers mean more endorsement of the actual outcome than the abstract ideal). See Study 1 for a more detailed explanation of the meaning of this analysis. It was expected that this analysis would replicate results from Study 1.

Economic Individualism

To test whether people of different statuses endorsed the abstract ideals and actual outcomes of economic individualism differently, the difference score between the actual outcome and abstract ideal of economic individualism was regressed on income. The slope of income was significantly different from zero, indicating an interaction, $t(76) = 4.26$, $p = .000$. Simple slope tests demonstrated that income was a significant predictor of endorsement of the abstract ideal, $b = -.09$, $t = -2.14$, $p = .036$ and actual outcome of economic individualism, $b = .10$, $t = 4.10$, $p = .000$. As predicted, people of lower income were more likely to endorse economic individualism in terms of its abstract goals ($M = 5.61$) than people of higher income ($M = 4.98$); however, people of higher income were more likely to believe that the goals of economic individualism were being achieved in society ($M = 5.51$) compared to people of lower income ($M = 3.74$). This finding

replicates the result from Study 1 demonstrating that people of higher income were more likely to claim that actual outcomes reflect the ideals of Protestant work ethic (also referred to as economic individualism) than people of lower income.

The above analysis was rerun using race as a predictor variable. The slope of race was not significantly different from zero indicating no interaction, t (63) = .23, *ns*. There was no significant effect of ideology frame either, t (63) = -.37, *ns*.

Motivation to Endorse Economic Individualism

Although people of different statuses seem to disagree about whether the goals of ideologies are being fulfilled in society, people seem to agree with the aims of these ideologies in the abstract, regardless of status. It was predicted that the reason people endorse these abstract values is different depending on one's status. Specifically, people of higher status should endorse these abstract ideologies more so than people of lower status because they would agree that the values are appropriately reflected in society and thus serve a legitimizing or justifying function. In contrast, people of lower status should endorse these abstract ideologies more so than people of higher status because they describe their conception of an ideal society.

To test this prediction, the difference score between these two motivations was regressed on income (higher numbers reflect a motivation to endorse ideologies to serve a legitimizing function). The y-intercept was significant indicating a main effect of motivation, b = -.89, t (76) = -4.50, p = .000. Participants were more motivated to endorse this ideology because they believed that hard work should lead to success (M = 5.90) more than because they believed that hard work actually does lead to success (M = 5.24). The slope of income was significantly different from zero indicating an interaction, t (76)

= 2.45, *p* = .016. An examination of the intercept at ±2 SD of income indicated that participants with higher income did not differ in their motivations, *b* = -.40, *SE* = .28, *p* = .157. That is, they endorsed the abstract goals of economic individualism because they believed that this is the way society *should* (*M* = 5.44) and *actually* operates today (*M* = 5.53). Conversely, participants with lower income did significantly differ in their motivations to endorse economic individualism, *b* = -1.37, *SE* = .28, *p* = .000. Participants of lower income preferred to believe in economic individualism because it describes the abstract ideal (i.e., hard work *should* lead to success) significantly more (*M* = 6.35) than because it describes the actual outcome (i.e., hard work *does* lead to success; *M* = 4.95). Thus, people of higher income are equally motivated to endorse this ideology because it describes both their ideal and actual society, but people of lower income prefer to believe in it because it represents an ideal society and not because it represents how society actually works. In other words, for higher status members there is congruity between their ideal society and the actual society that they perceive, but incongruity for lower status members.

We conducted the above analysis using race as the predictor variable. There was no interaction. However, there was a significant main effect of motivation, *b* = -1.08, *t* (63) = -3.76, *p* = .000. European Americans, African Americans, and Latinos were more motivated to endorse economic individualism because it describes an abstract ideal (*M* = 6.03) than an actual outcome (*M* = 4.95).

System justification theory predicts that everyone is motivated to endorse these ideologies in order to perceive the actual society as just and fair. However, this prediction only seems to apply to higher status members whose perception of the actual society

matched their ideal society. When no status differences were found (as was found with race), people were only motivated to endorse the egalitarian goals of economic individualism because they described how society *should* operate rather than how society *actually* operates today.

Ego, Group, and System Interests

The following section reveals whether people decide to use connections, support a bailout plan, and favor raising taxes to benefit one's self, group, and/or system. It was predicted that higher status people would be driven to satisfy the interests of the self, group, and system equally; however, lower status people would be driven to satisfy the interests of the self and the group over the system.

Connections. The difference score between using connections to benefit the self minus the system was regressed on income, such that higher numbers mean preference for the self over the system. The slope of income was not significantly different from zero indicating no interaction, t (76) = -.22, *ns*. However, the regression constant was significantly different from zero indicating a main effect of interest, b = 1.10, t (76) = 7.05, p = .000. People of higher and lower income endorsed that they would use connections to get themselves ahead (M = 5.20) more so than their system (M = 4.09). The difference score between using connections to benefit one's group minus the system was also regressed on income, such that higher numbers mean preference for one's group over the system. The y-intercept was significant indicating a main effect of interest, t (76) = 9.95, p = .000. Participants favored using connections to benefit the group (M = 5.77) more than the system (M = 4.09). The slope of income was significantly different from zero indicating an interaction, t (76) = 2.12, p = .037. An examination of the intercept at ±

2SD of the income mean suggests that people of higher income preferred the group ($M =$ 6.00) over the system more ($M = 3.60$; $b = 1.74$, $t = 10.16$, $p = .000$) compared to people of lower income (M *group* $= 5.53$, M *system* $= 4.58$; $b = 1.62$, $t = 9.47$, $p = .000$). This pattern is somewhat inconsistent with predictions and will be elaborated on in the discussion.

The same analyses above were conducted using race as the predictor variable. When regressing the difference score between using connections to benefit the self minus the system, there was no interaction, $t (63) = 1.19$, *ns*. However, the regression constant was significantly different from zero indicating a main effect of interest, $b = .95$, $t (63) = 4.87$, $p = .000$. Participants indicated that they would use connections to get themselves ahead ($M = 5.47$) more so than their system ($M = 4.52$), which is consistent with the results using income as the status variable. Also, there was a significant main effect of race, $t (63) = -2.63$, $p = .011$. African Americans and Latinos indicated that they would use connections ($M = 5.50$) more than Whites ($M = 4.49$). The difference score between using connections to benefit one's group minus the system was regressed on race. The slope of income was not significantly different from zero indicating no interaction, $t (63) = 1.16$, *ns*. However, the regression constant was significantly different from zero indicating a main effect of interest, $b = 1.56$, $t (63) = 6.72$, $p = .000$. Participants indicated that they would use connections to get their group ahead ($M = 6.08$) more so than their system ($M = 4.52$). Results also showed that race was a significant predictor of using connections to benefit the group, $t (63) = -2.53$, $p = .014$ and to benefit the system, $t (63) = -2.63$, $p = .011$. That is, African Americans and Latinos were more likely to use

connections to benefit the group (*M* = 6.43) and system (*M* = 5.14) than Whites (*M group* = 5.73, *M system* = 3.90).

Bailout plan.   The difference score between the individual and system and between the community and system were regressed on income, such that higher numbers mean support for a bailout plan that benefits the self and group over the system. There were no interactions between income and interest. However, there was a main effect of interest in both cases, demonstrating that people of all income supported a bailout plan that favors the individual (*M* = 4.71) over the system (*M* = 3.79; *b* = .95, *t* (67) = 5.71, *p* = .000) and the community (*M* = 5.43) over the system (*M* = 3.79; *b* = 1.65, *t* (67) = 9.92, *p* = .000).

These analyses were conducted again using race as the status variable. There was a marginally significant interaction between race and the difference score between support for a bailout plan to benefit the self over the system, *t* (55) = -1.92, *p* = .060. High and low status members supported a bailout plan benefiting the self (High: *M* = 4.65; Low: *M* = 4.65) more than the system (High: *M* = 3.81; Low: *M* = 3.04); however, the difference was larger for low status members. There was also a significant interaction between race and the difference score between support for a bailout plan to benefit the community over the system, *t* (55) = -3.04, *p* = .004. High and low status member supported a bailout plan benefiting the community (High: *M* = 5.29; Low: *M* = 5.69) more than the system (High: *M* = 3.81; Low: *M* = 3.04); however, the difference was larger for low status members. The pattern of results suggests that high status members were less likely to support a bailout plan that benefited the community compared to low

status members; however, high status members were more likely to support a bailout plan that benefited the system than did low status members.

      <u>Raising taxes</u>.   The difference score between people's endorsement of raising taxes to benefit the self minus the system was regressed on income, such that higher numbers mean preference for self over the system. The slope of income was significantly different from zero indicating an interaction, $t(67) = -3.04$, $p = .003$. An examination of the intercept at $\pm$ 2SD of the income mean suggests that people of higher income preferred the system ($M = 5.11$) over the self ($M = 3.56$; $b = -.81$, $t = -2.37$, $p = .020$) whereas people of lower income preferred the self ($M = 4.80$) over the system ($M = 4.23$; ($b = .66$, $t = 1.95$, $p = .056$). In order to test whether there was a difference between support for raising taxes to benefit the group and the system, the difference score between people's endorsement of raising taxes to benefit their family minus the system was regressed on income, such that higher numbers mean preference for family over the system. The slope of income was significantly different from zero indicating an interaction, $t(67) = -2.41$, $p = .019$. An examination of the intercept at $\pm$ 2SD of the income mean suggests that people of higher income preferred the family ($M = 4.18$) just as much as the system ($M = 5.11$; $b = -.40$, $t = -1.29$, ns); however, people of lower income preferred the family ($M = 5.41$) more than the system ($M = 4.23$; $b = .66$, $t = 2.13$, $p = .037$). Finally, the difference score between people's endorsement of raising taxes to benefit their neighborhood minus the system was regressed on income, such that higher numbers mean preference for neighborhood over the system. The slope of income was marginally significantly different from zero indicating a marginal interaction, $t(67) = -1.88$, $p = .065$. An examination of the intercept at $\pm$ 2SD of the income mean suggests

that people of higher income preferred their neighborhood ($M = 4.97$) just as much as the system ($M = 5.11$; $b = .25$, $t = .86$, ns); however, people of lower income preferred their neighborhood ($M = 5.61$) more than the system ($M = 4.23$; $b = 1.00$, $t = 3.53$, $p = .001$).

The analyses above were conducted again using race as the predictor variable. There were no significant effects of race on the difference score between the individual and system and family and system. However, when regressing the difference score between raising taxes to benefit one's neighborhood minus one's system on race, there was a main effect of interest. European Americans, African Americans, and Latinos all would support raising taxes to improve their neighborhood ($M = 5.36$) more than the system ($M = 4.50$; $b = .85$, $t = 3.07$, $p = .003$).

CHAPTER VIII

DISCUSSION (STUDY 2)

Study 2 replicated the finding that people of lower income were more likely to endorse the abstract ideals of economic individualism than people of higher income; however, people of higher income were more likely to believe that the abstract ideals of economic individualism were being achieved in society than people of lower income. However, this pattern was not replicated with race.

More importantly, results showed that people of different statuses endorsed the abstract values of economic individualism for different reasons. People of higher income were equally motivated to endorse them because they legitimized the ideals and actual outcomes of the current system, whereas people of lower income were more motivated to endorse them because they represent an ideal system rather than the actual system. European Americans, African Americans, and Latinos were all motivated to endorse the abstract goals of economic individualism because they represent an ideal system more than the actual system.

Some scholars have posited that ego, group, and system justifications are congruent for high status members but incongruent for low status members. If low status members are justifying the system (such as endorsing the abstract goals of ideologies), they are assumed to do so at the expense of personal and group interests. We predicted that while these three interests would be congruent for high status members, low status members would make political decisions in line with their self and group interests more than with their system interests. Results showed that when deciding whether to use connections to get ahead, participants favored the ego and group over the system.

Although this pattern was predicted only for lower status members, it applied to higher status members as well. This finding confirms results from Study 1, demonstrating that people were dissatisfied with the system, regardless of status. Unexpectedly, these results also showed that lower status members were more supportive of using connections (including to benefit the system) than higher status members. However, the item measuring support for the system (i.e., using connections to benefit their political party) might have been a poor question for a number of reasons. Americans have very little attachment to a political party, so the meaning of this pattern is unclear. Also, this item might have made group identity salient rather than system identity. Politics in Chicago (where the data were collected) is centered on neighborhood improvement, so people might have perceived how their political party would have direct influence over their neighborhood or group rather than the system. Finally, people's political party might differ in terms of the degree that it intends to perpetuate the current system. In other words, using connections to benefit the system may support hierarchy-enhancement for some and hierarchy-attenuation for others.

Results also showed that people of higher and lower status were inclined to support a bailout plan when it fulfilled ego and group interests over system interests. In some instances (e.g., when race was used to measure status), preference for the ego and group over the system was larger for lower status members than it was for higher status members, as predicted. The tax policy results also confirm the predictions quite well. People of lower income supported tax policy more when it benefited the ego than the system; however, people of higher income supported tax policy more when it benefited the system than the ego. Also, people of higher income prioritized the group and the

system equally, whereas people of lower income prioritized the group over the system. Although there were no significant interactions with race, the patterns were in the predicted direction. Overall, people of lower status made decisions in favor of the self and group more than the system, and to a greater extent than people of higher status. Although these findings support the assertion that low status members' interests are in contention, low status members seem to favor ego and group justifications more than system justification.

CHAPTER IX

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The purpose of the current research was to investigate the nuances of system justification theory. System justification theorists assert that in addition to ego and group justification theories, which posit that people will develop and use ideologies to justify ego and group interests, people will sometimes use ideologies to justify system interests. They claim that people will endorse ideologies in order to uphold the system, even when doing so can pose a threat to their individual and group interests. According to them, endorsing ideologies, such as belief in a just world and Protestant work ethic, allows people to perceive society and its outcomes as fair, just and legitimate and gives them a sense of predictability in the world, thus serving a palliative function.

Although system justification theorists contend that it is more common for high status members to engage in system maintenance than low status members (e.g., Jost et al., 2004; Jost & Hunyady, 2005; Jost & Thompson, 2000; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Wakslak et al., 2007), they also assert that "…hierarchy is maintained not only…by members of dominant groups, but also by the complicity of members of subordinated groups…" (Jost et al., 2004, p. 885). This claim that low status members actively participate in the legitimization of hierarchy, however, conflicts with acts of resistance and instances of collective action taken by low status groups in response to perceived injustices and dissatisfaction with the status quo.

The present research offers a theoretical explanation to bridge the gap between these two apparently incompatible positions. System justification theorists believe that the role of ideologies is to maintain or enhance the legitimacy of an existing system by

explaining or rationalizing inequality as fair and just (e.g., Jost & Hunyady, 2002). However, the ideological scales used to assess system justification typically measure the objectives of a system or how a system should work, but not necessarily if it actually does work. It is difficult to claim that people use the abstract goals of an ideology to rationalize inequality if they do not believe that the actual outcomes of a system reflect the intended goals. For example, how can people use the Protestant work ethic to rationalize or justify others' economic success or lack thereof as fair or just if they do not believe that hard work actually does lead to success? By considering ideologies in terms of both their abstract goals (i.e., what they intend to achieve) and actual outcomes (i.e., what they actually do achieve), we can better understand how low status members may simultaneously support society's ideologies and express dissatisfaction with the system.

In two studies, I explored how the endorsement and function of purportedly system justifying ideologies may differ across people of different statuses. The current research also examined how people's status may influence their satisfaction with America and whether they are motivated by ego, group, and/or system interests to support social and economic policies.

Study 1 demonstrated that while people of low status endorsed supposedly system justifying ideologies in the abstract as much as, or more than, people of high status, people of high status believed that actual outcomes reflect the ideals of these ideologies more than people of low status. The first part of this pattern replicates system justification, namely that people do support existing social systems (in terms of their abstract goals), while the second part of the pattern explains why low status members blame the system for inequality and engage in collective action. Low status members'

perception of a disconnection between an ideology's goals and its outcomes suggests that they blame a failing system rather than themselves for their own outcomes in life. High status members, though, see less of a discrepancy between these ideology frames, perhaps explaining why they typically support values such as equality and equal opportunities but oppose policy intended to redistribute wealth more equally (Bonilla-Silva et al., 2004; Henry & Sears, 2002; Kinder & Sears, 1981). If everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed, then any government assistance intended to benefit some groups and not others tends to be perceived as reverse discrimination and unequal among high status members. Thus, the current research can help explain these paradoxical findings.

Despite that low status members were less likely than high status members to believe that actual outcomes reflect the goals of the ideologies, high and low status members seemed to uphold the same ideal system. That is, low status members were not demanding that the United States adopt new kinds of systems. They were not pushing for socialism over capitalism or aristocracy over democracy. They believed that the systems in place and the ideologies stemming from these systems were valuable and the right ones to live by, but simultaneously believed that the outcomes of these systems, as they were presently being practiced, were flawed and did not match the goals of the systems. For example, the Protestant work ethic or economic individualism is appealing to many (especially low status members) because it appears to be a social equalizer. It promises success to anyone who works hard. Thus, anyone, through their own hard work and effort, can improve their economic situation regardless of their gender, age, race, income, and so on. However, low status members were more likely than high status members to see how this ideal is not a reality for them. People of lower status find that despite

working hard, they remain in a similar low status position. That is, the ideology failed to achieve its objectives. Yet they still believed that hard work *should* lead to success (perhaps even more strongly than high status member) because they recognize that this ideal is not always achieved.

Perhaps the most surprising result was that, despite status differences in the assessment of actual outcomes, people of high and low status believed that the ideologies' goals were not being reflected in reality. This pattern suggests that neither high nor low status member were justifying the actual outcomes of the system. Thus, researchers may need to revise the conclusions they make about the meaning of ideology endorsement, especially when the ideologies only measure abstract goals. As some philosophers have argued (e.g., Kelman, 2001; Linz, 1978), legitimization only happens when people believe that a group goal is being achieved. According to this definition of legitimization, high status members were more likely to justify the system than low status members. However, everyone believed that the system was failing.

Study 1 also demonstrated that people of high status were more satisfied with America than people of low status. Despite these differences, though, everyone was dissatisfied with how America works. This finding also counters system justification theory. The theory predicts that people who endorse ideologies uphold the system and perceive it favorably. The current research, however, found that people were dissatisfied with the system. Moreover, multiple mediation models demonstrated that the relationship between status and satisfaction with America could generally be explained better by the endorsement of the actual outcomes of ideologies than their abstract ideals. In other

words, high status members were more likely than low status members to be satisfied with America *because* they believed that actual outcomes reflected the ideologies' goals.

Finally, Study 1 illustrated that people of high status were less supportive of federal spending policies benefiting low status groups compared to people of low status. Supporting these policies that were intended to help disadvantaged groups suggests support for a hierarchy-attenuating system. Because people of low status were more likely than people of high status to support these policies, it suggests that they are less likely to support a hierarchical system and more likely to favor policies that would benefit them. Similar to the multiple mediation models reported above, the relationship between status and support for policies benefiting disadvantaged groups were mediated, in general, more by the actual outcomes of ideologies than the abstract goals of them. Thus, people's perception about actual outcomes of ideologies was usually a better indicator of whether they would support egalitarian policies than their ideal goals. However, some abstract ideologies, such as equality, did mediate these relationships as well.

Study 1 made some important contributions to the literature; however, there were some limitations that should be mentioned. First, although the ideological patterns supported the predictions across the different ideologies, they should be replicated with other samples and across time to establish their reliability and validity. Second, this study did not directly test high and low status members' motivation to endorse ideologies in the abstract. It was speculated that high status members used them as a means to legitimize current inequality and low status members used them as a means to emphasize how society *should* operate; however these suppositions could not be directly tested. Although

Study 1 did measure the extent to which people of different statuses were satisfied with America and whether they would support policy benefiting disadvantaged groups, it did not explicitly test the extent to which people of high and low status make political decisions and support policies to satisfy ego, group, and/or system interests.

Study 2 though helped address some of these limitations. Specifically, it replicated the ideology pattern demonstrated in Study 1 using economic individualism. That is, people of lower income endorsed the abstract ideals of economic individualism more than people of higher income; however, people of higher income believed that actual outcomes reflect the goals more than people of lower income. Thus, there is some evidence that this pattern is replicable across samples and stable over time. It also investigated what motivates high and low status members to endorse ideologies in the abstract. This question was particularly important to answer for low status members because they endorsed ideologies in the abstract despite perceiving that the goals reflected in these ideologies were not being achieved in society. It was found that high status members were motivated to endorse economic individualism in the abstract because they believed that the ideology was an ideal (i.e., they believed that these goals *should* be attained in society) and an actual outcome (i.e., they believed that these goals were *actually* being attained in society); however, low status members were motivated because they believed that the ideology was an ideal more than because it was an actual outcome.

This finding more directly challenges the conclusions that system justification researchers reach. System maintenance theorists claim that the motivation to endorse ideologies is to justify inequality. However, as others have pointed out, ideologies, such

as the Protestant work ethic (PWE), can be perceived in terms of its literal definition (e.g., hard work should lead to success) or it can take on an "associated meaning" in which it is used to rationalize unequal conditions (e.g., rich people are deserving of success because they worked hard and poor people are to blame for their financial situation because they did not put forth effort; Levy, West, Ramirez, & Karafantis, 2006). Moreover, it was empirically demonstrated that social and cultural experiences in which exposure to others using the PWE to rationalize inequality led people to use the ideology to support anti-egalitarian views (Levy et al., 2006b). The current research seems to show that high status members use these abstract ideologies to partially serve a legitimizing or justifying function in that they believe that society actually reflects these ideals (e.g., hard work *does* lead to success) whereas low status members use these abstract ideologies to emphasize what society *should* be achieving (e.g., hard work *should* lead to success). If people's worldviews are shaped by cultural and social experiences, then it is reasonable to find that people of different statuses use ideologies for different purposes.

Finally, Study 2 examined whether people of high and low status prioritized personal and group interests over system interests. Specifically it tested the extent to which high and low status members would use connections and support a bailout plan and tax policy to justify these different interests. System justification research predicts that ego, group, and system justification will be congruent for high status members but incongruent for low status members (e.g., Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost et al., 2004). Moreover, given this incongruence, "…people [will] have psychological attachments to the status quo that supersede considerations of self-interest…" (Jost et al., 2004, p. 908). System justification predictions, however, were not supported in the current research.

Instead, the findings suggest that people of high and low status make political and economic decisions that would directly benefit themselves, their family, and community more so than the system. These results support prior research finding that people are motivated to uphold the interests of the self and group (Adorno et al., 1950; Allport, 1954; Katz & Braly, 1935; Tajfel, 1982; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). The only findings consistent with system justification theory were that higher status members favored the system over the self and favored the group as much as the system in terms of tax policy.

System justification theory was first published in 1994, when the economy was doing well. Therefore, it is not surprising that people of both high and low status were satisfied with America. Study 1 data were collected in the spring of 2008 and Study 2 data were collected in the spring of 2009. Therefore, it might not be surprising that people of all statuses, in the wake of an economic recession, believed that the system was failing and made political decisions that would benefit them and their community more than the system, because the effects of the economy were far-reaching. In fact, some have shown that economic policy attitudes are heavily dependent on how people's financial situation has recently changed (e.g., Bartels, 2008; Feldman, 1982). Although the timing of this research might call these findings into question, because a widespread recession has the potential for everyone to minimize system interests and bolster ego and group interests, system justification theory makes the opposite prediction (Jost & Hunyady, 2005). Situational factors, such as high system threat, should intensify, not undermine, support for the system (Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003; Landau et al., 2004). This prediction, however, was not found in the current research. Rather, it seemed that

the greater attention paid to the failing economic system led people to become dissatisfied with America and realize that the system was not achieving its goals.

The current research was not intended to challenge the notion of system justification in its entirety. There is a vast body of literature that supports system justification theory, using a number of different methodologies (e.g., stereotypes, ideologies, implicit and behavioral measures of outgroup favoritism, and so on). Rather, this research investigated how specific ideologies may be used by people of different statuses for different purposes, and how under some circumstances people will choose to make decisions that benefit their ego and group interests over system ones. Importantly, it found that during times of economic hardship, people can endorse an ideal version of a system and also believe that the current system is failing, feel dissatisfied with how America works, and make political decisions to promote the interests of the ego and self more than the system.

CHAPTER X

SUMMARY

America is regarded as the land of opportunity, a nation in which anyone can make a name for him or herself. Individual freedom or individualism is considered the cornerstone of our nation's values. As an ideal then, Americans, regardless of race, class, gender, ability, and sexual orientation, should be able to achieve their dreams if they work hard. However, the United States is one of the leading unequal societies in the West. According to economist Edward Wolff (2003), the wealthiest 5% of all American households own more wealth than the remaining 95% of the population collectively. Given such inequality, do Americans believe that everyone has equal rights and opportunities, and do they perceive that everyone has an equal chance of taking advantage of those rights and opportunities if only they work hard?

System justification theory (Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost et al., 2004) asserts that all people legitimize the current American systems and perceive them as inevitable, fair, and just. Researchers emphasize that people will uphold a system, even at the expense of individual and group interests. Thus, low status members, as well as high status members, should justify the system and perceive it as fair, despite costs to the self and group. However, some of the evidence in support of system justification measures people's perceptions of ideologies in the abstract (i.e., what should happen) without also measuring whether they believe that actual outcomes reflect these abstract goals (i.e., what actually happens). People of high and low status might value ideologies in the abstract, but low status members might be more likely to perceive that America is failing

to achieve those goals and perceive the system as unfair compared to high status members.

According to standpoint theory (McCann & Kim, 2003), people of different group memberships perceive society through different lenses. For example, people who do not have the same rights as everyone else (e.g., gays) will probably view society as more unequal and perceive the legal system as unfair. Likewise, other bodies of research (e.g., social identity theory, attribution theory and system blame theory) assert that people of low status will make external, rather than internal, attributions for their status, blame the system for the status quo and perceive the system as unfair. The purpose of the current research was to reconcile these different positions.

Study 1 measured people's endorsement of the abstract, intended goals of several ideologies as well as the actual, concrete outcomes of those ideologies. It was found that high and low status members endorsed the abstract goals of various ideologies; however, high status members endorsed that the goals of the ideologies actually manifest the way they are supposed to in society more so than low status members. Study 1 also tested whether people's endorsement of the abstract or actual outcomes of these ideologies predicted their satisfaction with America and their support for various policies. It was found that, in general, perceptions of actual outcomes, rather than the abstract goals of ideologies, predicted people's satisfaction with America and support for public policies.

The purpose of Study 2 was to directly test high and low status members' motivation for endorsing ideologies in the abstract. It was found that high status members endorsed the abstract goals because they believed that the goals should be attained and were actually being attained in society, whereas low status members endorsed them only

because they represented their ideals. Study 2 also tested whether high and low status members prioritized ego, group, and/or system interests. Results showed that high and low status members would use connections and support bailout plans that prioritized individual and group interests over system interests. High status members, however, supported tax policy when it prioritized group and system interests over individual interests.

The results from Studies 1 and 2 demonstrate that people of different statuses endorse ideologies for different purposes and sometimes make political decisions that benefit their ego and group interests over their system interests. The current research findings suggest that researchers may need to revise the conclusions they reach when people endorse ideologies that only measure abstract goals.

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Appendix A

Instructions: *Listed below are a series of statements. These statements measure how you think our society <u>should be</u>.*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree

#	Statement					
1	All groups should be given an equal chance in life.	1	2	3	4	5
2	In getting what you want, it is sometimes necessary to use force against other groups.	1	2	3	4	5
3	It's okay if some groups have more of a chance in life than others.	1	2	3	4	5
4	We should do what we can to equalize conditions for different groups.	1	2	3	4	5
5	We would have fewer problems if more people were treated equally.	1	2	3	4	5
6	If certain groups stayed in their place, we would have fewer problems.	1	2	3	4	5
7	It's probably a good thing that certain groups are at the top and other groups are at the bottom.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Inferior groups should stay in their place.	1	2	3	4	5
9	We should strive to make incomes as equal as possible.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Sometimes other groups must be kept in their place.	1	2	3	4	5
11	No one group should dominate society.	1	2	3	4	5
12	It would be good if all groups could be equal.	1	2	3	4	5
13	Group equality should be our ideal.	1	2	3	4	5
14	Increased social equality.	1	2	3	4	5
15	Some groups of people are simply inferior to other groups.	1	2	3	4	5
16	To get ahead in life, it is sometimes necessary to step on other groups.	1	2	3	4	5

Instructions: *Listed below are a series of statements. These statements measure how you think our society should be.*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	Nor Disagree	Agree	Agree

#	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	If one works hard enough, he or she is likely to make a good life for him/herself.	1	2	3	4	5
2	People who work deserve success.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Hard work is fulfilling in itself.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Nothing is impossible if you work hard enough.	1	2	3	4	5
5	If you work hard you will succeed.	1	2	3	4	5
6	You should be the best at what you do.	1	2	3	4	5
7	By working hard an individual can overcome most obstacle that life presents and make his or her own way in the world.	1	2	3	4	5

Instructions: *Listed below are a series of statements. These statements measure how you think our society should be.*

| | 1
*Strongly
Disagree* | 2
*Somewhat
Disagree* | 3
*Neither Agree
Nor Disagree* | 4
*Somewhat
Agree* | 5
*Strongly
Agree* |

		1	2	3	4	5
1	If people work hard, they almost always get what they want.	1	2	3	4	5
2	The existence of widespread economic differences does not mean that they are inevitable.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Laws of nature are responsible for differences in wealth in society.	1	2	3	4	5
4	There are many reasons to think that the economic system is unfair.	1	2	3	4	5
5	It is virtually impossible to eliminate poverty.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Poor people are not essentially different from rich people.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Most people who don't get ahead in our society should not blame the system; they have only themselves to blame.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Equal distribution of resources is a possibility for our society.	1	2	3	4	5
9	Social class differences reflect differences in the natural order of things.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Economic differences in society reflect an illegitimate distribution of resources.	1	2	3	4	5
11	There will always be poor people, because there will never be enough jobs for everybody.	1	2	3	4	5
12	Economic positions are legitimate reflections of people's achievements.	1	2	3	4	5
13	If people wanted to change the economic system to make things equal, they could.	1	2	3	4	5
14	Equal distribution of resources is unnatural.	1	2	3	4	5
15	It is unfair to have an economic system which produces extreme wealth and extreme poverty at the same time.	1	2	3	4	5
16	There is no point in trying to make incomes more equal.	1	2	3	4	5
17	There are no inherent differences between rich and poor; it is purely a matter of the circumstances into which you are born.	1	2	3	4	5

Instructions: *Listed below are a series of statements. These statements measure how you think our society should be.*

1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*
Strongly Disagree	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

1   Our country should be democratic.   1   2   3   4   5

2   Our politics should address the needs of some groups more than other groups.   1   2   3   4   5

3   All Americans should have equal access to voting.   1   2   3   4   5

4   All Americans should receive the same legal proceedings.   1   2   3   4   5

5   Police should be able to search anyone without probable cause.   1   2   3   4   5

6   In our society church and state should be separated.   1   2   3   4   5

7   It is okay for jurors to use defendants' physical appearance to determine their guilt or innocence.   1   2   3   4   5

8   All Americans should have a say in government policies.   1   2   3   4   5

9   Some groups should automatically get the right to vote whereas other groups should be required to apply.   1   2   3   4   5

10   Laws should reflect certain religious beliefs.   1   2   3   4   5

Instructions: *Listed below are a series of statements. These statements measure what you think actually happens in our society.*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

1 Affirmative action has accomplished its goal of leveling the playing field for all groups. 1 2 3 4 5

2 Everyone in American society receives the same quality of health care. 1 2 3 4 5

3 Some groups of people in our society have more opportunities than others. 1 2 3 4 5

4 All children in America receive the same quality of education. 1 2 3 4 5

5 Discrimination in American society contributes to inequality. 1 2 3 4 5

6 People of color are just as well off as are Whites. 1 2 3 4 5

7 Poor people and wealthy people receive the same treatment. 1 2 3 4 5

8 High status groups have a better chance of accomplishing their goals/dreams than low status groups. 1 2 3 4 5

9 There are more policies in place that benefit the privileged than the underprivileged. 1 2 3 4 5

10 In America, it is clear that some groups are on the top and other groups are on the bottom. 1 2 3 4 5

Instructions: *Listed below are a series of statements. These statements measure what you think actually happens in our society.*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

1 In American society, working hard does not automatically lead to success.   1 2 3 4 5

2 Employed individuals are responsible people.   1 2 3 4 5

3 People who work really hard might not become successful.   1 2 3 4 5

4 In America, people get rewarded for their effort.   1 2 3 4 5

5 Low status groups do not work as hard as high status groups do.   1 2 3 4 5

6 Discrimination limits some people's ability to succeed.   1 2 3 4 5

7 People get ahead when they know the "right" people rather than when they work hard.   1 2 3 4 5

8 There is not a clear link between hard work and success.   1 2 3 4 5

Instructions: *Listed below are a series of statements. These statements measure what you think actually happens in our society.*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

1 Poor people and wealthy people have similar opportunities in life. 1 2 3 4 5

2 Wealthy people are rich because they work hard. 1 2 3 4 5

3 Poor people cannot rise above poverty on their own. 1 2 3 4 5

4 Some poor people have "moved up the ladder." 1 2 3 4 5

5 Our economic system creates large disparities in income. 1 2 3 4 5

6 The government makes sure that hardworking people earn what they deserve. 1 2 3 4 5

6 There are enough jobs in America for everyone who wants to work. 1 2 3 4 5

7 Our economic system is unfair. 1 2 3 4 5

8 Wealthy people are rich because of the circumstances into which they were born. 1 2 3 4 5

9 Our economic system gives everyone an opportunity to create his/her own financial success. 1 2 3 4 5

10 Poor people work just as hard as do wealthy people. 1 2 3 4 5

Instructions: *Listed below are a series of statements. These statements measure what you think __actually__ happens in our society.*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

1   Our country runs on the principles of democracy.   1   2   3   4   5

2   U.S. policies reflect the interests of majority groups   1   2   3   4   5
     more than minority groups.

3   The United States government ensures that all   1   2   3   4   5
     voices are heard and represented.

4   The United States government listens to the voices   1   2   3   4   5
     of Americans when making decisions about the war
     on terrorism.

5   American political decisions reflect the opinions of   1   2   3   4   5
     a few rather than the majority.

6   American laws are influenced by religious beliefs.   1   2   3   4   5

7   All Americans have the same access to voting.   1   2   3   4   5

8   The United States is doing a bad job of separating   1   2   3   4   5
     church and state (e.g., swearing on the Bible in
     court).

9   The police engage in racial profiling.   1   2   3   4   5

10   All Americans are equally protected under the   1   2   3   4   5
     criminal justice system.

Instructions: *Listed below are a series of statements. These statements measure what you think underlined-actually happens in our society.*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

1   Basically, the world is a just place.   1   2   3   4   5

2   The political candidate who sticks up for his   1   2   3   4   5
    principles rarely gets elected.

3   I've found that a person rarely deserves the   1   2   3   4   5
    reputation he has.

4   People who find money in the street have often   1   2   3   4   5
    done a good deed earlier that day.

5   It is a common occurrence for a guilty person to   1   2   3   4   5
    get off free in American courts.

6   Movies in which good triumphs over evil are   1   2   3   4   5
    unrealistic.

7   Students almost always deserve the grades they   1   2   3   4   5
    receive in school.

8   Crime doesn't pay.   1   2   3   4   5

9   When parents punish their children, it is almost   1   2   3   4   5
    always for good reasons.

10 Although there may be some exceptions, good   1   2   3   4   5
    people often lead lives of suffering.

11 It is often impossible for a person to receive a fair 1 2   3   4   5
    trial in the USA.

12 In almost any business or profession, people who   1   2   3   4   5
    do their job well rise to the top.

13 Although evil men may hold political power for a   1   2   3   4   5
    while, in the general course of history good wins
    out.

14 By and large, people deserve what they get.   1   2   3   4   5

15 American parents tend to overlook the things most   1   2   3   4   5
    to be admired in their children.

16 It is rare for an innocent man to be wrongly sent to 1 2   3   4   5
    jail.

_Instructions__: Listed below are a series of statements. Answer them to the best of your ability._

1. I am satisfied with how America operates today.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

2. The way America works today is fair.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

3. The structure of American society needs to change.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

4. I trust the government.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

Instructions: *These questions will ask your opinion on public policy.*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

1. If your party nominated a Black/African American for President, would you vote for him if he were qualified for the job?   1 2 3 4 5

2. We should not spend any more federal money on programs that assist Blacks.   1 2 3 4 5

3. The government should increase support for people receiving food stamps.   1 2 3 4 5

4. The government should spend more money on pre-school or other early education programs in poor neighborhoods.   1 2 3 4 5

5. The government should provide special college scholarships for children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds who maintain good grades.   1 2 3 4 5

6. The government should provide a job to anyone who wants one.   1 2 3 4 5

7. The government should create a free universal health care system.   1 2 3 4 5

8. The government should not have to provide housing for those who cannot afford it.   1 2 3 4 5

9. The government should strive to hire people of color more.   1 2 3 4 5

10. The government should provide more chances for children from poor families to go to college.   1 2 3 4 5

11. The government should spend less on benefits for the poor.   1 2 3 4 5

12. The government should provide a decent standard of living for the unemployed.   1 2 3 4 5

13. People with high income should pay the same amount of taxes as those with low income.   1 2 3 4 5

__Instructions__: Please provide the following information to help us interpret the results of the questionnaire.

1. Sex (circle one):
  A. Male
  B. Female

2. How old are you?

  _____

3. If you are currently in college answer part a. If not, answer part b.

  a. Your current standing in college (circle one):
    A. First year
    B. Second year
    C. Third Year
    D. Fourth Year
    E. Fifth Year
    F. Graduate student.

  b. What is your highest level of education (circle one):
    A. Less than high school
    B. High school diploma
    C. Vocational/training certificate
    D. Associate's degree
    E. Bachelor's degree
    F. Master's degree
    G. Doctorate

4. Ethnicity (circle one):
  A. Black
  B. White
  C. Latino/Latina
  D. Asian/Pacific Islander
  E. Middle Eastern
  F. Native American
  G. Other (please specify): _____

5. What is your annual household income?
   A. under $25,000
   B. $25,000-50,000
   C. $50,000-75,000
   D. $75,000-100,000
   E. $100,000-125,000
   F. $125,000-150,000
   G. $150,000-175,000
   H. $175,000-200,000
   I. more than $200,000

6. When it comes to politics, do you usually think of yourself as a liberal, a conservative, or a moderate? (Circle the number that best applies.)
   1. Very conservative
   2. Conservative
   3. Somewhat conservative
   4. Moderate/middle of the road
   5. Somewhat liberal
   6. Liberal
   7. Very liberal

7. Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, Democrat or an Independent? (Circle the number that best applies.)

   1. Strong Republican
   2. Not very strong Republican
   3. Independent—leaning toward Republican
   4. Independent
   5. Independent—leaning toward Democrat
   6. Not very strong Democrat
   7. Strong Democrat

Appendix B

Instructions: *Listed below are a series of statements. Please answer them to the best of your ability.*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

1 Even if people try hard, they often cannot reach their goals.   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

2 If people work hard, they almost always get what they want.   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

3 Those who do not get ahead work as hard as people who do.   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

4 Most people who don't get ahead should not blame the system; they really have only themselves to blame.   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

5 Hard work offers little guarantee for success.   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

6 Any person who is willing to work hard has a good chance of succeeding.   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Instructions: *The questions in this section will continue to ask your thoughts and opinions about the belief that* **hard work should lead to success**.

1. On the whole, do you support or oppose the belief that "hard work should lead to success"?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Definitely Oppose	*Oppose*	*Somewhat Oppose*	*Somewhat Support*	*Support*	*Definitely Support*

2. I support this belief because it describes the way society *should* operate.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

3. I support this belief because hard work *does* lead to success.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

4. If I had powerful connections, I would use them to get a good job for myself.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

5. If I had powerful connections, I would use them to advance my political party.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

6. If I had powerful connections, I would use them to improve my neighborhood.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

You have probably heard in the news that the government is developing different bailout plans (i.e., allocating tax payer dollars) to individuals and groups. To what extent do you agree/disagree with the following items?

a. I support a bailout plan that financially protects individuals who become unemployed.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

b. I support a bailout plan that financially protects individuals who lose their home due to foreclosures.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

c. I support a bailout plan that financially protects banks.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

d. I support a bailout plan that financially protects the auto industry.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

e. I support a bailout plan that financially protects small businesses.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

f. I support a bailout plan that financially protects local schools.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

g. I support a bailout plan that financially protects community improvement projects.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

Instructions: *Now we will ask your opinion about raising taxes for all Americans.*

1. I would support raising taxes if I would benefit more from government programs (e.g., healthcare coverage, student loans, social security, food stamps, SSI checks).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

2. I would support raising taxes if my family would benefit more from government programs (e.g., HeadStart, healthcare coverage).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

3. I would support raising taxes if my neighborhood would benefit more from government programs (e.g., better schools, safer streets).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

4. I would support raising taxes if America would benefit more from government programs (e.g., stronger military, more technologically advanced).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Somewhat Disagree*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree*	*Somewhat Agree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*

Instructions: *Please provide the following information about yourself.*

1. Gender (circle one):
    A. Male
    B. Female
    C. Transgender

2. How old are you?

    _____

3. What is your highest level of education (circle one):
    A. Less than high school
    B. High school diploma
    C. Vocational/training certificate
    D. Some college
    E. Associate's degree
    F. Bachelor's degree
    G. Master's degree
    H. Doctorate

4. Race/Ethnicity (circle one):
    A. African American/Black
    B. Caucasian/White
    C. Latino/Latina
    D. Asian/Pacific Islander
    E. Middle Eastern
    F. Native American
    G. Other (please specify): _____

5. What is your average household income?
    A. under $25,000
    B. $25,000-50,000
    C. $50,000-75,000
    D. $75,000-100,000
    E. $100,000-125,000
    F. $125,000-150,000
    G. $150,000-175,000
    H. $175,000-200,000
    I. more than $200,000

6. When it comes to politics, do you usually think of yourself as a liberal, a conservative, or a moderate? (Circle the number that best applies.)

1. Very conservative
2. Conservative
3. Somewhat conservative
4. Moderate/middle of the road
5. Somewhat liberal
6. Liberal
7. Very liberal

7. Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, Democrat or an Independent? (Circle the number that best applies.)

1. Strong Republican
2. Not very strong Republican
3. Independent—leaning toward Republican
4. Independent
5. Independent—leaning toward Democrat
6. Not very strong Democrat
7. Strong Democrat