

What Matters to Americans: Social, Political and Economic Values

A Report from the Anatomy of Civil Societies Research Project



The Anatomy of Civil Societies Research Project is examining the characteristics of individuals who provide financial and human capital support to civil society organizations. The 5-year, Australian Research Council funded project is a collaboration between colleagues in universities in Australia, North America and Europe.

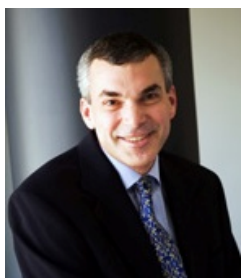
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About the Authors



Timothy Devinney is Professor of Strategy at the University of Technology, Sydney. He has held positions at the University of Chicago, Vanderbilt, UCLA and Australian Graduate School of Management and been a visitor at many other universities. He has published seven books and more than ninety articles in leading journals including *Management Science*, *The Academy of Management Review*, *J. of International Business Studies*, *Organization Science* and the *Strategic Management Journal*. He is a fellow of the Academy of International Business, a recipient of an Alexander von Humboldt Research Award and a Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Fellow. He is on the editorial board of over 10 of the leading international journals, Co-Editor of *AOM Perspectives* and co-editor of the *Advances in International Management Series*. He holds a PhD, an MBA and MA in Public Policy from The University of Chicago, and a BSc from Carnegie Mellon University.



Pat Auger is Associate Professor of Information Systems and E-commerce at the Melbourne Business School at University of Melbourne. He was previously at City University of Hong Kong and has been Visiting Professor at ESCEM School of Business and Management. He has also taught at the College of Business, Shanghai University of Science and Technology and School of Management, Syracuse University. He has published extensively in leading academic journals on ethical consumerism and e-commerce. Associate Professor Auger holds a PhD from Syracuse University, an MBA, and a BSc (Hons) in Chemistry.



Rosalind De Saily is a Senior Researcher at the University of Technology, Sydney. She has held positions at the University of Sydney and University of Western Sydney and has been an adjunct lecturer at the Australian Graduate School of Management. She has published a number of articles in peer-reviewed academic journals in the humanities and social sciences. She also worked in the civil society sector, managing corporate partnerships for global NGO, WWF. Dr De Saily holds an Executive MBA from Australian Graduate School of Management, and a PhD and BA (Hons) from the University of Sydney.



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1. Executive Summary

Societies are complex entities with competing and conflicting and supporting and reinforcing characteristics. This study, part of a multiyear project sponsored by the Australian Research Council (ARC) in conjunction with the University of Technology, Sydney and Melbourne Business School, seeks to chart the social, economic and political preferences of society, using a unique methodology that provides us with a more accurate and robust picture of how individuals, as citizens, make fundamental trade-offs about things of material interest to their society.

The study was conducted in the United States of America with more than 2,800 participants, chosen to match the profile of the voting age population. Similar studies were conducted in the UK, Australia and Germany, providing data on more than 9,000 individuals.¹ Examined were 16 categories of general social, economic and political issues that ranged from the local (for example, crime and public safety) to the global (for example, global security) along with 113 sub-issues that also varied from the local (for example, public transport and children's schooling) to the global (for example, nuclear non-proliferation and third world debt). This information was linked to data on the population's religious and political activities, its general demographics, and donating and volunteering activities with civil society organizations.

Some obvious and not so obvious results arise from this study. What is perhaps most obvious is that local issues dominate global issues. Fundamentally, US citizens are much more concerned about issues that relate to their own lives and their local community. A less obvious finding is that for citizens of one of the world's strongest and wealthiest nations, Americans are overwhelmingly concerned about issues related to personal survival. The wealthiest Americans in our study are aligned with the poorest by making food and health their top concern and by also putting local crime and public safety third in terms of concerns.

The results with respect to religion and religious beliefs are potentially the most critical finding of the US study. Our finding shows that religion is very strongly related to American's support for civil society organisations, yet the same results show that religious Americans are less trusting and supportive of their fellow citizens. There is a tendency to believe that atheists are less community-oriented. However, our data indicates atheists have a firmer belief in their fellow citizens than those who look to a higher power for guidance. American atheists put local humanitarian issues ahead of global humanitarian issues and do not share their fellow citizens' concern that the country is an unsafe place for its citizens. More important, is that with a growing proliferation of public charities in the US, those not aligned to a religious congregation will need a clearer understanding of how to get support from non-religiously active Americans. Half of all Americans are regular

¹ A series of additional country studies are currently being conducted and will be released when available. Other published studies can be downloaded from:
<http://www.modern-cynic.org/social-economic-and-political-values-reports-2/>

churchgoers, half donate to charities and half of all donations have a connection with religion. There may be potential to grow donations by non-religiously affiliated organizations. Yet our study finds no evidence between donating and alignment with causes, demonstrating the challenge ahead.

Overall, our results present a nuanced view of the social, economic and political preferences of the American population. It is valuable in informing businesses, policy makers, politicians and civil society organizations in developing their strategies for the future.

2. Introduction

Why Examine Social, Political and Economic Values?

In this, the first of our global values studies to examine the United States of America, we investigate the citizenship's perspectives on a range of social, economic and political issues. The research looks at individual preferences using a unique methodology that gives us a detailed profile on how people trade-off economic, social and political issues – something standard surveys do not do. The benefit of our approach is in gaining a more realistic and nuanced understanding of people's values, allowing policy makers, third sector groups, and others to more effectively understand what really matters to their key stakeholders and giving them options that are in line with what is truly salient.

What was Done in the Study?

The study is based on six distinct, but related, data collection exercises on a sample representative of the voting age population in the United States:

1. Best-worst experimental assessments of 16 general categories of economic, political and social issues. This allowed us to identify general categories of issues that matter to people.
2. Best-worst experimental assessments of the sub-category issues within each of the general categories, 113 in total. This allowed us to examine what matters within and across issue categories.
3. An assessment of the individual's satisfaction with their home and work/school life, personal health, and the political situation.
4. A battery of demographic and social and political questions about each respondent's situation and position in society (including educational status, employment status, income). This section also recorded religious activities and beliefs, and voting and political party affiliations.
5. An ethical disposition inventory to measure participants' altruistic tendencies.
6. Finally, respondents were asked about their donating and volunteering activities across nineteen general categories, from working in their local church or school to being involved in political parties, museums, homeless or healthcare organizations, animal welfare and environmental organizations and other categories of Civil Society Organizations.

The hallmark of this study is the application of the best-worst experimental assessment. Nearly all research and polling exercises addressing social economic and political issues consider the issues one at a time, typically via a simple multi-point scale. Usually these polling exercises require participants to nominate their position on a scale, for example between one and five, in response to a view, or scenario, put forward by the researcher. However, as outlined in work by members of this research team,² this approach distorts

² Auger, P., Devinney, T.M. & J.J. Louviere (2007). "Using best-worst scaling methodology to investigate consumer ethical beliefs across countries," *J. of Business Ethics*, vol. 70, no. 3, pp. 299-326.

and overstates the importance of emotive social issues while failing to address what really matters in a more realistic situation where trade-offs must be made. This arises because the social issues that matter to people do not exist in isolation to economic issues. Both kinds of issues form part of people's beliefs and political preferences and infiltrate other aspects of their lives. In this sense, the value of a single issue cannot be examined in isolation, as the value of one social, political or economic issue can only be determined by how it stands against other competing issues. We address this by creating a situation where people must make trade-offs amongst issues, thereby effectively generating a relative measure of their value, importance and salience. In addition, because we examine a wide range of issues (more than 100), we get a better approximation to how citizens actually value issues, from the very unimportant to the most critical. Because of how we study the problem, we can get a picture not just as to what matters to society, in general, but to individuals in that society.

Who was Studied?

The study takes a representative sample of the American population, focusing on voting age population. In the United States, citizens over 18 years of age are eligible to vote in public elections, with many states allowing 17 year olds to vote in primaries. The study captures information about each participant's voting and political activities, religious beliefs and practices, and donating and volunteering activities. We also asked respondents to rate their satisfaction, both generally and in relation to their life circumstances. Participants rated their satisfaction with circumstances in their immediate personal situation (school, workplace) and at the societal level (politics).

Core Demographics

The study covers a representative sample of American voters (2,807 respondents). Slightly more than half (56%) of the study population is female and the mean age is 46 years. The average respondent's household income is \$53,398 before tax, and he or she has on average 1.2 children. More than half of all respondents own their home, either with a mortgage or outright (55%). Half the study population is married or widowed, while a quarter is single. Nearly all of the study participants – 98% – are US citizens.

Religiosity

The American population has a strong tendency to Christianity, with more than half of respondents identifying as Christian and only one in six saying they belong to no religion. A small group of around 3% follow Islam, Hinduism and the Eastern religions Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism and Shinto. Only a tenth of all respondents' education was completed at a religiously affiliated institution. Personal religious affiliation is a deliberate choice for Americans, with citizens exhibiting freedom to decide for themselves; a quarter of respondents said they had converted to their religious position.

As intensity of belief and activity does not necessarily align directly with religious affiliation, we asked respondents about their beliefs in a higher power and an afterlife. The results are given in Table 1. As seen in many other surveys, the average American is a strong believer, particularly when compared to peer developed nations. One in twelve Americans are resolute atheists and one in ten are certain there is no afterlife.

Table 1: Intensity of Religious Belief

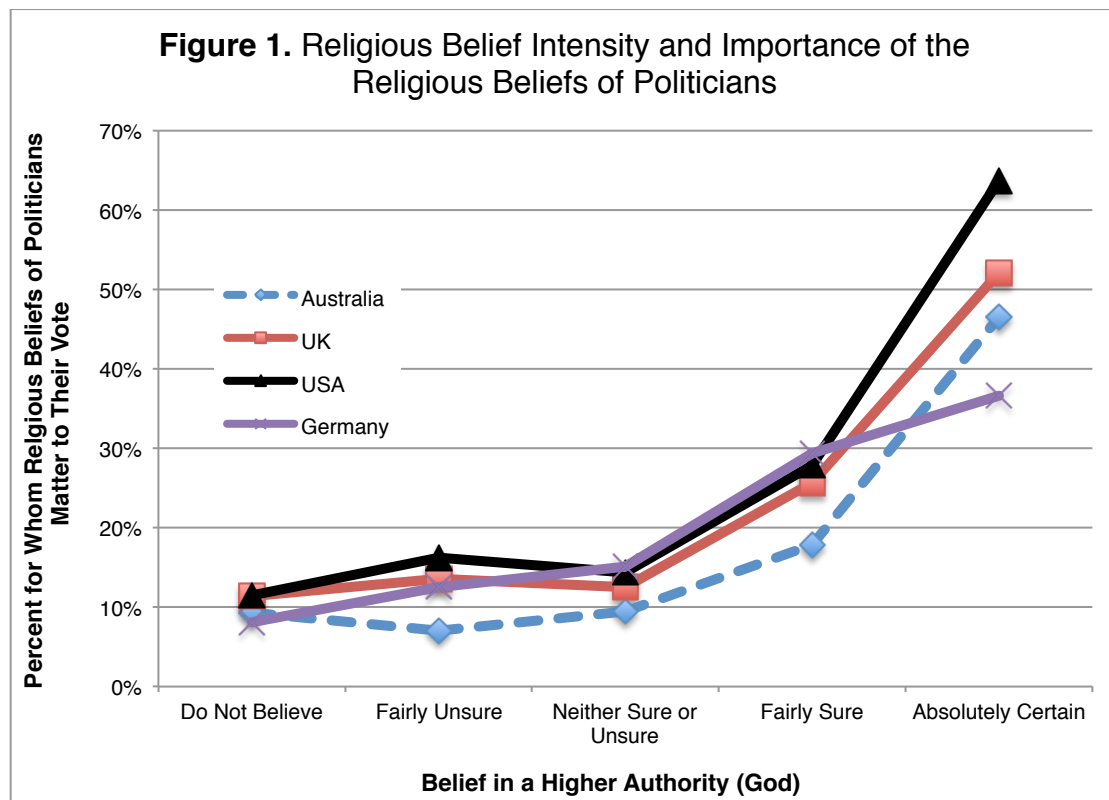
	Intensity and Direction of Belief				
	Do Not Believe	Fairly Unsure	Neither Sure or Unsure	Fairly Sure	Absolutely Certain
Belief in a Higher Authority (God)					
USA	8%	7%	10%	20%	55%
Australia	22%	12%	16%	23%	27%
UK	28%	13%	18%	19%	22%
Germany	33%	9%	21%	21%	16%
Belief in an Afterlife					
USA	11%	9%	14%	20%	46%
Australia	22%	14%	21%	20%	24%
UK	28%	16%	20%	16%	20%
Germany	35%	12%	25%	14%	14%

In order to chart religious preferences, our study examines a variety of religious activities, from the private and personal to public and collective. First we examine communal worship. One quarter of respondents go to church every week and one quarter attend religious services every few weeks. This means that half the survey population are regular churchgoers. Another quarter attend only periodically. One quarter of study participants never take part in collective worship. Overall, the majority of Americans engage in organized worship.

People practice their religion and play out their beliefs in a variety of ways. Nearly two thirds of respondents look to a higher being to guide their life and two-fifths say prayer at meals. In other activities, religion is less integrated into people’s lives, with over a third listening to religious music and one fifth watching religious programming on television or religious web content. In these private activities, religion has some presence for Americans. It is important also to note that while these activities are relatively modest they, like the information given in Table 1, are significantly more intense for Americans than for Germans, Australians and citizens of the UK.

American politics and public activities at a state level are frequently infused with religious references and rhetoric, never more so than in election campaigns. But are the religious beliefs of politicians important to Americans at the polling booth? Our study finds that two-fifths of Americans say the religious beliefs of politicians matter to their vote and that this is directly related to their own beliefs. Figure 1 reveals that this may be a general phenomenon with the overall magnitude and apparent intensity of such beliefs in the US also exacerbated by the fact that America is home to more strong

believers. What is perhaps more startling is that one-quarter of Americans say that they are ok with religious authorities influencing political outcomes. In Germany the comparable figure is 8%, in Australia it is 12% and in the UK it is 15%. Hence while the majority of Americans want to see personal yet public expression of religious belief in their political leaders the majority still want to keep separation of church and state in political outcomes.³ However, surprisingly there is a large minority who do not believe this should be the case.

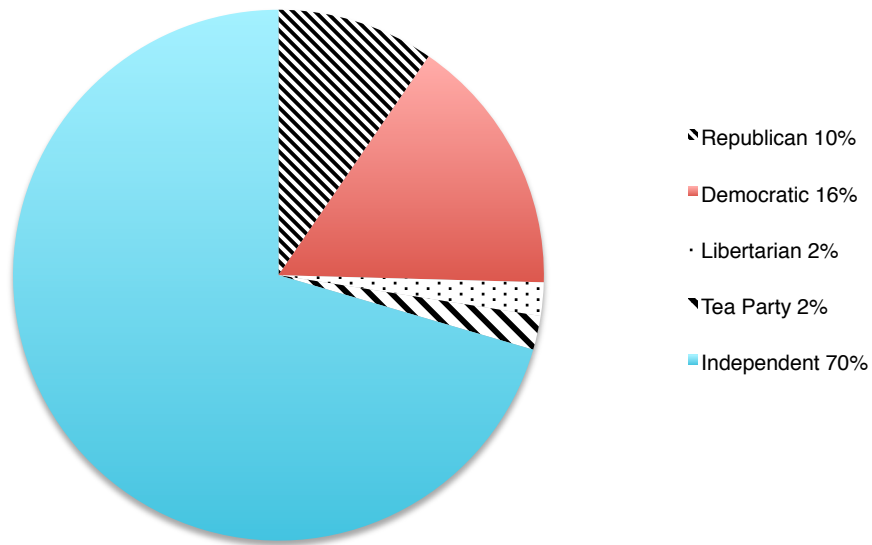


Politics

The major political parties frame the nature of public political debate on major issues that affect society and its members. Study participants were queried as to which political party was closest to representing their political beliefs. The results indicate Americans are much less engaged by politics than they are by organized religion. Nearly three quarters of people in the study were either aligned with an independent political position or did not feel their political values aligned with any of the political representation options available to them through organized political parties. America’s two largest political parties together attracted only a quarter of respondents. A tiny proportion – 2% – believed that the Libertarians, America’s third largest party, represented their political values.

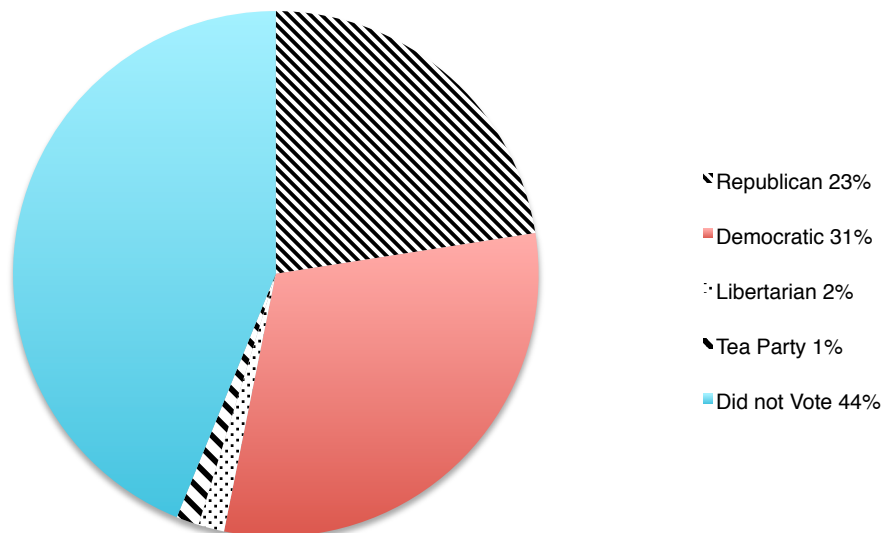
³ More details on this can be seen in Devinney, T.M. (2012). “The Importance of Religion in Politics: or Why American’s are Different”. <http://www.modern-cynic.org/2012/02/27/the-importance-of-religion-in-politics-or-why-americans-are-different/>

Figure 2. Political Values by Alignment with Political Representation



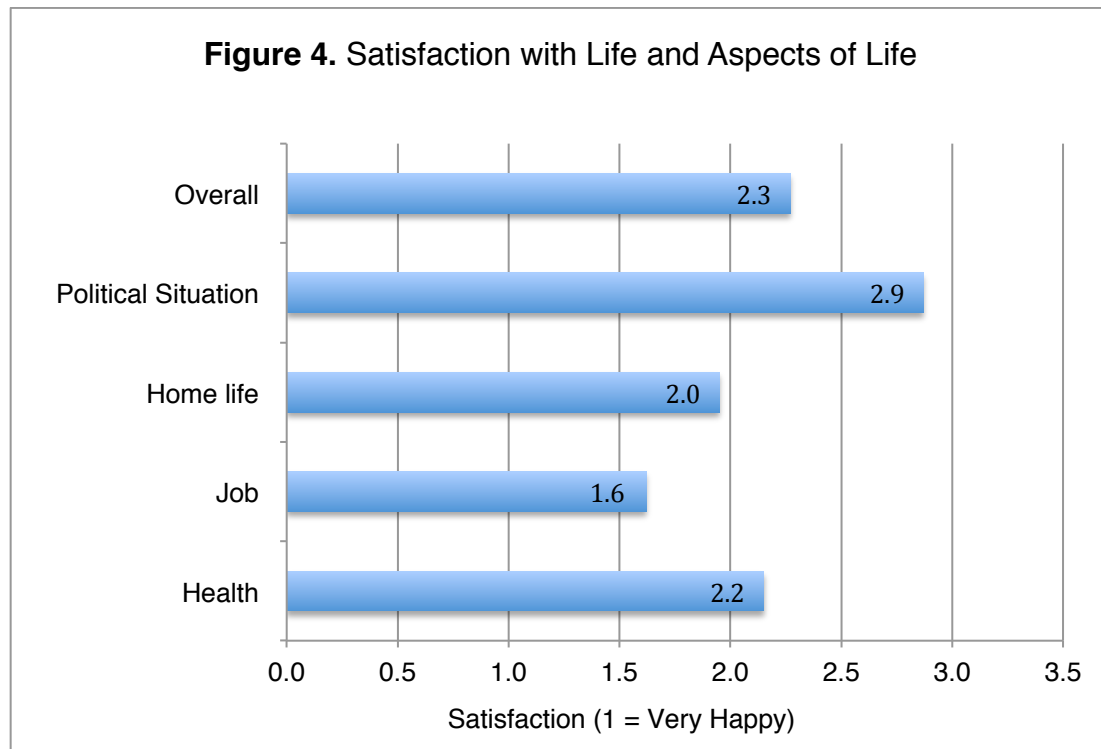
When it comes to supporting parties via the ballot box, though, democratic support for the two major parties doubles. This could indicate that people who believe their values are not represented by any major party decide to nonetheless vote for a major party. The switch that a quarter of the population makes to vote Republican or Democrat may be based on an election issue close to their values or for fleeting reasons aligned neither with their beliefs nor values. Nearly half the population did not vote.

Figure 3. Voting Behavior



Satisfaction with Life

The average American declares him or herself to be moderately happy with life, and more satisfied with their job and life at home than with their health or the political situation. When rating their satisfaction on a scale between “extremely satisfied” (a score of 1) and “extremely dissatisfied” (a score of 4), the average American well-being rating is a score of around 2, which equates to “satisfied”, both overall and across each individual sub-category. When asked to rate their happiness on a similar scale, the average American scores 2.2, which is “happy”. These results are consistent across the countries studied.



It is sometimes argued that “conservatives” are happier than “liberals”.⁴ We find no evidence of this either in the US or in the other countries we studied. Speaking generally, those more aligned with Tea Party Republicans are slightly less happy, but this is not a material effect. Where we do see slight differences is in the fact that individuals with stronger religious beliefs appear to be slightly more satisfied with most aspects of their lives than individuals who are either agnostic or atheistic. This effect is strongest in the US but also material in the case of Germans and citizens of the UK.⁵

⁴ See, e.g., “Are Conservatives Happier Than Liberals?” *Making Sen\$e, PBSNews Hour*, 9 December 2011. http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/business/july-dec11/makingsense_12-09.html.

⁵ More details on this can be seen in Devinney, T.M. (2012). “Are Conservatives Really “Happier” Than Liberals?” <http://www.modern-cynic.org/2012/03/07/are-conservatives-really-happier-than-liberals/>.

Ethical Disposition Inventory

To get a measure of the study participants' levels of altruism, we conducted an ethical disposition survey using the well-known Machiavellianism scale.⁶ Machiavellianism corresponds to an individual's tendency to be unscrupulous and deceptive in pursuit of a personal goal. The results measured Machiavellianism along a scale from 0-100 where scores above 60 are said to represent 'high Machiavellianism'. A position on the low end of the scale has been shown to indicate individuals hold higher levels of trust for others⁷ and greater altruism.⁸ For the American population the mean and median scores – at 53.98 and 55, respectively – are in the moderate low Machiavellianism range (indeed the lowest of the four countries examined). Comparable mean and median scores for citizens of the UK are 56.24 and 56.00, for Australians they are 55.44 and 55.00, and for Germans they are 57.82 and 58.00. The modal response is at the neutral score of 60 (6.8 per cent of the population have this score). 2.1 per cent of the population fall into the 'high' Machiavellianism range (with a score over 70), while over 32.7 per cent fall into the 'low' Machiavellianism range (with a score less than 50). Overall, the results reveal the US population to have a 'low' tendency towards Machiavellianism, with few individuals in the extreme top of the distribution. Overall, the results reveal the population to be less likely to be Machiavellian.

Support for Civil Society: Financial and Human Capital

Americans' involvement in civil society reveals the kinds of organizations that are able to engage people, which, in turn, suggest the issues that matter enough for people to support them actively. The pattern of involvement also indicates the relative influence of different issues and the organizations that represent those issues.

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have grown dramatically around the world; they have increased in number, capacity and influence. They rely on the support of private citizens in order to undertake their mission. Civil society refers to the range of non-governmental and non-profit organizations that represent the interests and values of those who support them. The definition of CSOs may include community groups, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), labor unions, charitable organizations, faith-based organizations, civil rights groups and philanthropic foundations. These organizations are dedicated to considerations that may be ethical, cultural, political, scientific, religious or philanthropic.⁹

⁶ Christie, R. & F.L. Geis (1970). *Studies in Machiavellianism*. New York: Academic Press.

⁷ Gunnthorsdottir, A., McCabe, K. & V. Smith (2002). "Using the Machiavellianism Scale to Predict Trustworthiness in a Bargaining Game," *Journal of Economic Psychology*, Vol. 23, No. 1, pp. 49-66.

⁸ Wilson, D.S. & M. Csikszentmihalyi (2007). "Health and the Ecology of Altruism," in S.G. Post (ed.), *Altruism and Health: Perspectives from Empirical Research*, Oxford, UK: Oxford.

⁹ World Bank (2011). *Defining Civil Society*, <http://go.worldbank.org/4CE7W046K0>. Accessed 21 Feb 2012.

The US government encourages the existence of CSOs, and their support by the general public, through taxation frameworks. The United States Internal Revenue Service qualifies a range of organizations for deductible charitable contributions. To qualify, organizations must operate for a purpose that is religious, charitable, educational, scientific, literary, or for the prevention of cruelty to children or animals. Types of organizations that qualify include churches, amateur sports, government departments, war veterans, civil defense organizations and nonprofit cemeteries, so long as the contribution is solely for public purposes. Under income tax treaties, Americans can contribute to some Canadian, Israeli and Mexican charities. Gifts to these CSOs are tax-deductible, and can include many classes of property, with special rules governing claims for donating taxidermy (costs of killing and transporting the animal are exempt). Organizations that do not qualify for US tax deductible contributions include communist organizations, labor unions, political organizations and candidates.¹⁰

Volunteering is also encouraged via the US taxation system. Americans can also claim out-of-pocket expenses in giving services to qualified CSOs. The IRS recognizes a wide range of voluntary activities for claiming charitable costs, such as supporting students and underprivileged youth, or whaling as a captain for the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission, so long as the donor does not benefit personally. The IRS is strict on expenses only being deductible if there is no personal benefit; for example, a person caring for a foster child because the person wishes to adopt the child cannot claim the associated costs as charitable contributions.

The majority of Americans donate money to CSOs (55%), but less than a third volunteer their time. Americans donate, on average, approximately 1% of annual income amounting to an average annual donation of nearly \$500 distributed across an average of 1.7 different causes.

Donations are tax deductible because the public benefits; there is no private benefit to any individual or organization. Hence, giving is often represented as altruistic, or 'doing good'. However, most donations are made to organizations close to the giver and with which it is likely that the giver has another relationship, either as a member or user of its services. Adding together the percentage of people who donate to religious organizations and places of worship reveals that more than half of American donations are connected with religion. The health and welfare of children attracts the next largest group of donors, followed by health and medical institutes.

¹⁰ IRS Publication 526 (2011), "Charitable Contributions," <http://www.irs.gov/publications/p526/index.html>. Accessed 2 August 2012.

Figure 5. Percent of People Donating to CSOs by CSO Type

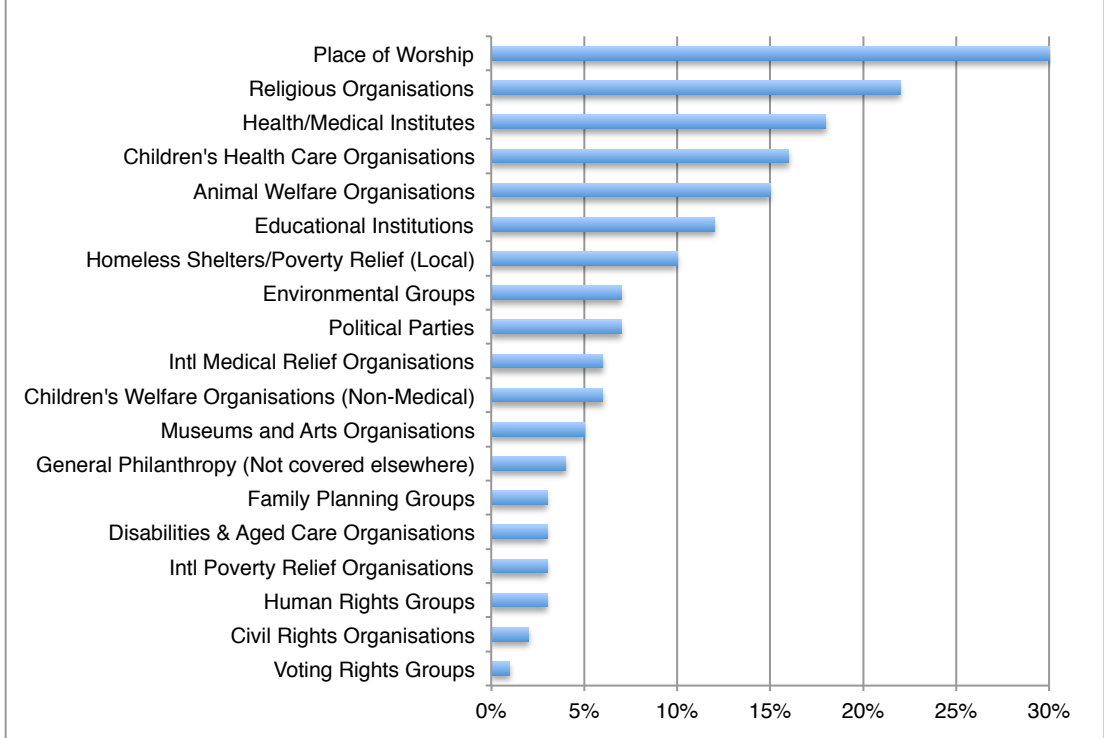
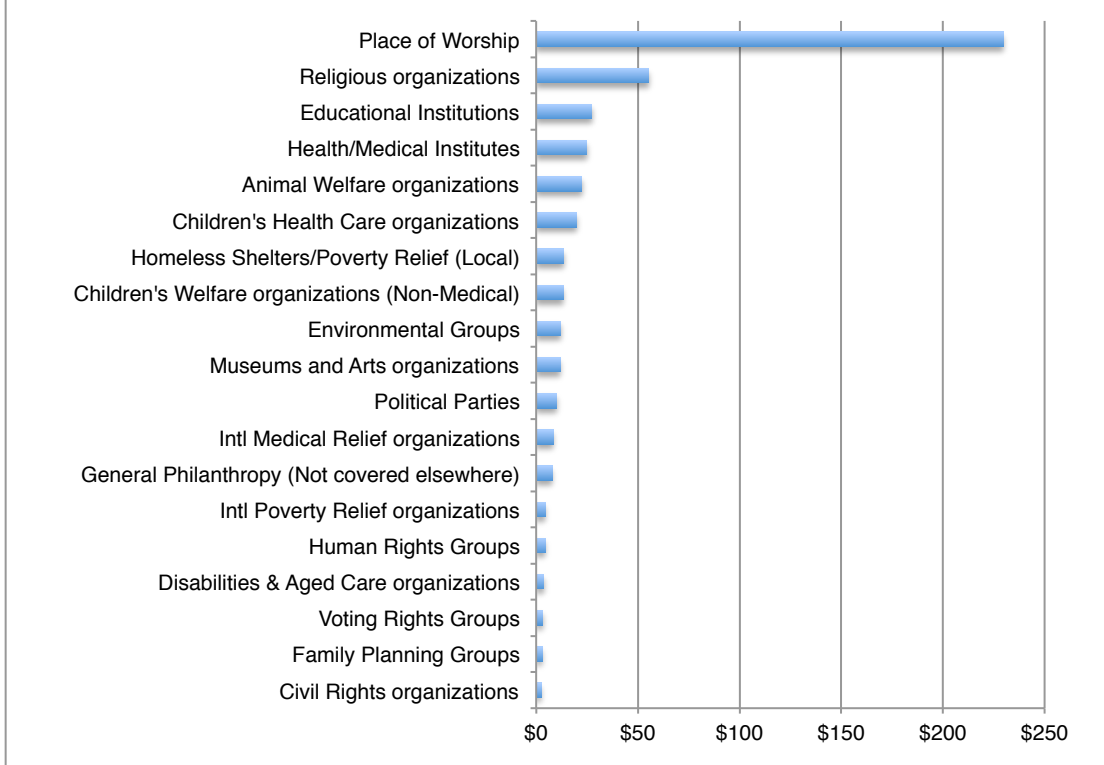


Figure 6. Average Donation by Type of CSO



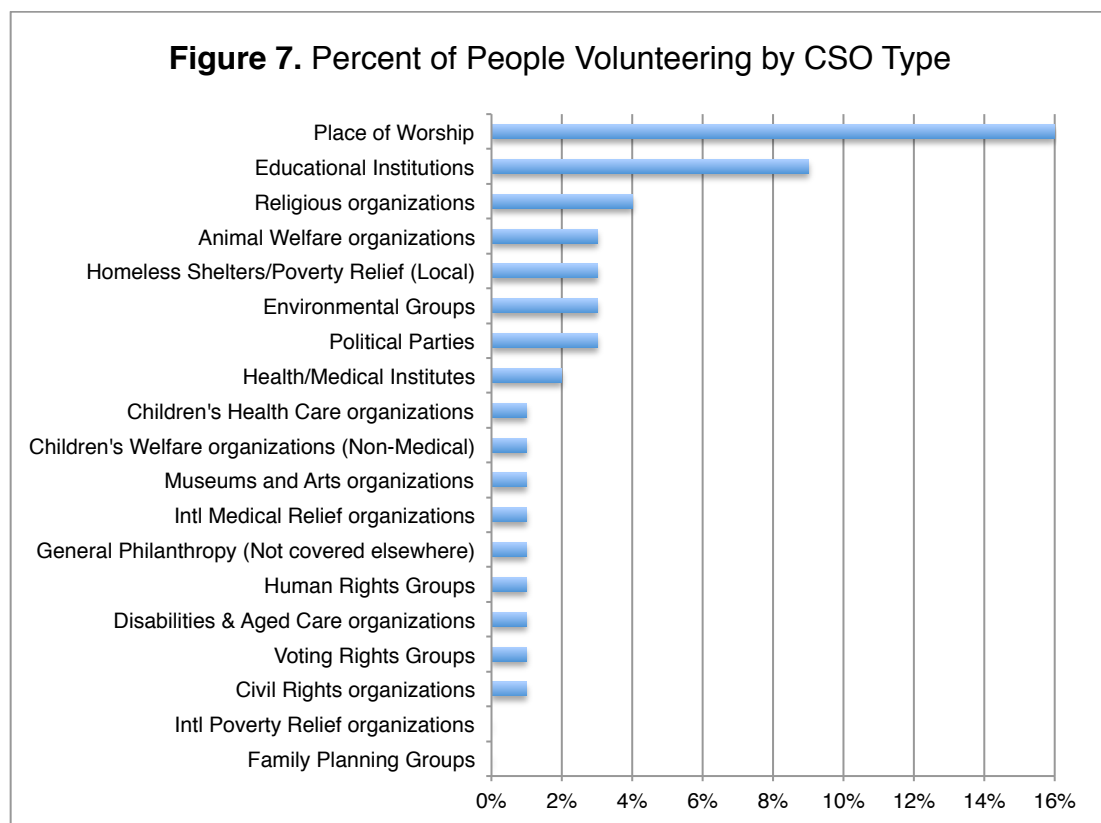
Looking at the dollar amounts donated reveals a slightly different pattern of giving. Americans donate, on average, \$230 to their place of worship. This is more than five times higher than the next largest category, which is also to religiously-affiliated organizations. After collections made by churches, the

amounts collected by every other type of CSO are relatively modest. Many charities in the US that collect funds for a range of social issues are religious, or faith-based organizations, making the charities' share of the American donor dollar even larger.

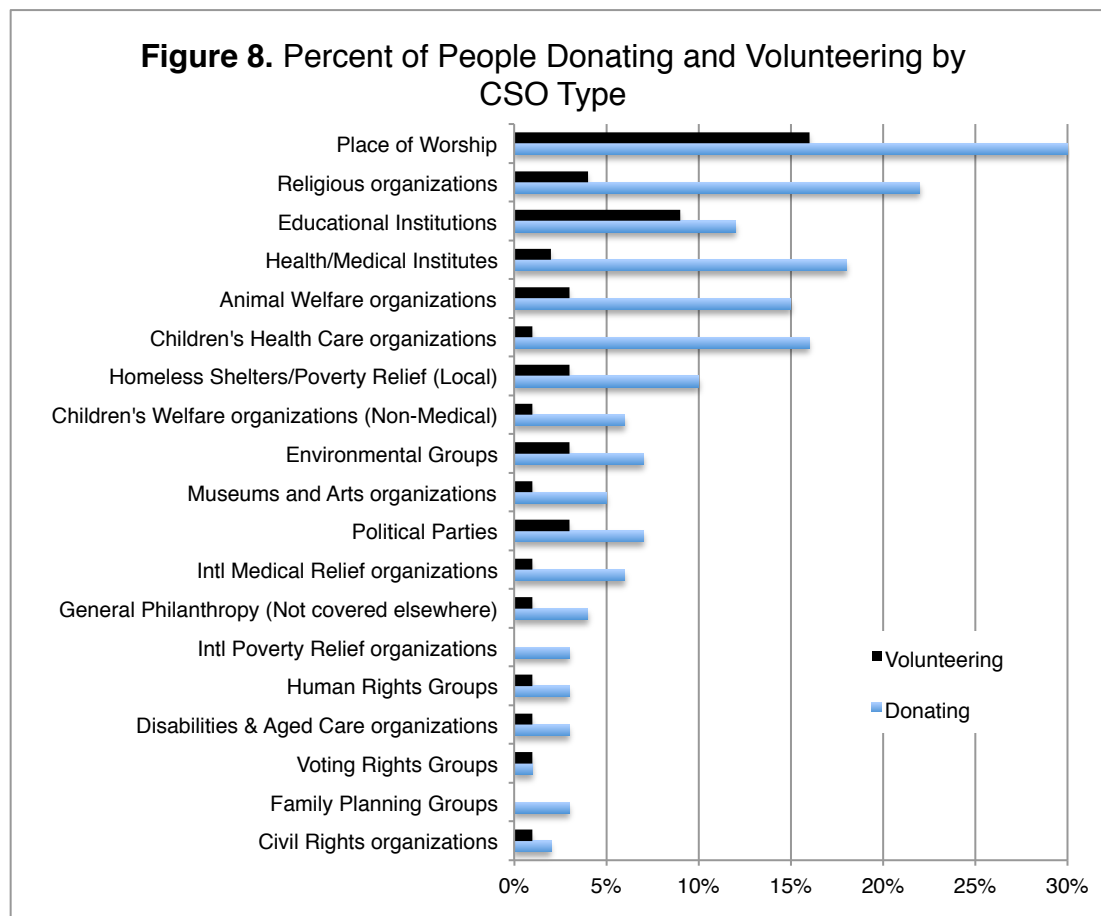
Clearly, US non-profit organizations that are not faith-based must work hard to build each supporter donations to the \$480 average annual total. Donations to places of worship literally dwarf every other category, leading to a long tail. Donations to places of education are higher than several of the more popular types of charities, but the differences are very small.

What we see very clearly is that it is Americans' relationship with their church that matters in their individual lives and it determines where they target their support. What this also reveals is the importance of salient proximity when it comes to Americans' philanthropy.

Volunteering behavior displays a pattern similar to donation behavior. Again, places of worship attract the highest proportion of volunteers. In the case of volunteering, however, the second most popular category is schools, with the same proportion of Americans providing financial and human capital to schools as they do to places of worship. These two types of organizations have the most engagement in terms of people giving their time. After churches and schools there is a long tail indicating very low levels of involvement by Americans across every other cause represented.



This reveals the importance of salient proximity when it comes to Americans' involvement in civil society. Americans are actively involved in their places of worship and schools; these organizations connect them with their familial, community and spiritual obligations. Schools and places of worship have longstanding programs of low-skilled volunteer activities such as fundraising, sports coaching, even property maintenance. Many people are connected to these organizations through their families and their local communities and they will commit to volunteer activities on an ongoing basis. Indeed some voluntary activities are built over generations and people grow up with members of their family demonstrating a model of adulthood that includes active involvement in their place of worship and their school. Many other kinds of NGOs lack this advantage of salient proximity. The majority of NGOs get little volunteer involvement either because the consideration represented may be remote to the average American life experience or it may be a consideration that is relatively recent, such as concern for the environment.



This pattern of involvement in organizations that have high touch points in Americans' lives, repeated in their engagement with CSOs, does not extend to participation in health and medical institutes. More people donate to health and medical institutes than any other type of non-religious organization, probably inspired by someone close who has been afflicted by a particular health or medical condition. Salience thus inspires donations to health and medical institutes. However these organizations require very specialized, expert services, with few opportunities for volunteer involvement.

The data indicate that while there is modest support for organizations that are proximate to the lives of their supporters – either through religious activity, education, family health issues, or the welfare of children and domestic animals – most types of civil society organizations receive very little support from the American population. This is in spite of the tax incentives and a proliferation of charitable organizations seeking their support and the general anecdotal stereotype of Americans as being more liberal in terms of donations. Many parts of civil society, such as human rights groups, cultural institutions, disabled care givers and environmental advocates are fundamentally inconsequential to Americans, based on the dimensions of donating or volunteering by our study respondents. International efforts such as poverty and medical relief attract hardly any support at all. Most American charitable organizations must fight hard to secure individuals' support.

There are more than a million public charities in the U.S, or one for every 300 Americans. Nearly one-quarter is religiously affiliated, but 160,000 are in education and more than 100,000 are dedicated to arts and culture. The number of public charities grew by 59% between 1999 and 2009.¹¹ Most will surely struggle.

¹¹ The Urban Institute (2011), *The Non Profit Sector in Brief 2011*.
<http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/412434-NonprofitAlmanacBrief2011.pdf>. Accessed 2 August 2012

3. What Matters to Americans: A General Profile

In order to capture the general issues that are salient to Americans we asked participants to evaluate sixteen categories of social, political and economic issues. The categories were based on those used in surveys to produce reports on public opinions on major topics, in longstanding programmes such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,¹² and Eurobarometer,¹³ which the European Commission applies to its decision making. We also based our issue categories on those used in the research on social, economic and political causes and issues and obtained advice from political and social writers and academics. The general categories of social issues are listed in Table 2. In addition, each category was made up of a list of sub-category issues that we will discuss shortly. Table 2 also lists some of the indicative sub-category issues. Appendix 1 contains a complete listing.

Individuals' preferences for these issues are determined in a series of trade-offs via what are known as best-worst scaling experiments (See Appendix 2 for a discussion of the approach). Best-worst scaling models the cognitive process individuals use as they select the largest perceptual difference seen in a set of options. Best-worst scales are particularly relevant to the examination of social, political and economic issues for three reasons.

First, because the individual must make trade-offs amongst a set of options, the behavior being examined is more realistic than when using traditional multi-point scales. In other words, individuals are making choices that require that they reveal how they discriminate since they must reveal what they would sacrifice.

Second, a common issue with surveys addressing social issues is that individuals indicate that "everything matters". Best-worst approaches require that individuals make distinct choices; hence they cannot avoid making a decision that excludes an option.

Third, best-worst approaches allow researchers to directly estimate the utility value that individuals get from a choice in a way that is comparable across individuals. Traditional surveys do not allow this because of what is known as "scale invariance" – in other words, one individual's score of "3" on a scale is not comparable to another individual's "3". However, when two individuals make the same choice amongst a set of options, the choice is the same for both individuals.

In our best-worst experiments individuals were presented with specially designed blocks of options representing social, political and economic issues. Their task was to evaluate those issues *in the conduct of their life* and make two choices: (a) which in the set they considered the most important and (b) which in the set they considered the least important.

¹² <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/> Accessed 12 May 2012

¹³ http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm

Table 2: General Categories of Social Issues and Selected Sub-Issues

General Categories	Selected Sub-Issues
Food and health	Water and sanitation, GM foods, obesity, abortion
Local crime and public safety	Safety, child pornography, violent crime, corruption
Rights to basic services	Healthcare, food, education, benefits of last resort
Civil and personal liberties	Rights: legal, to vote, marital, free speech etc.
Equality of opportunities	Discrimination based on age, gender etc.
Individual economic well-being	Inflation, taxation, interest rates, cost of living
Worker/employment rights	Work safety, unions, retirement, child labor
Environmental sustainability	Pollution, climate change, biodiversity loss
Societal economic well-being	Poverty, employment, energy prices, growth, deficit
Global security	Terrorism, nuclear weapons, criminal syndicates
Societal social well-being	Quality of schooling, public transport, immigration
Global economic well-being	Resources management, trade, global finance issues
Animal welfare	Treatment of individual animals and species' survival
Global social well-being	Peace, diseases, poverty
Minority rights	Rights including cultural preservation and expression
Commercial rights	Commerce and ownership such as IP rights

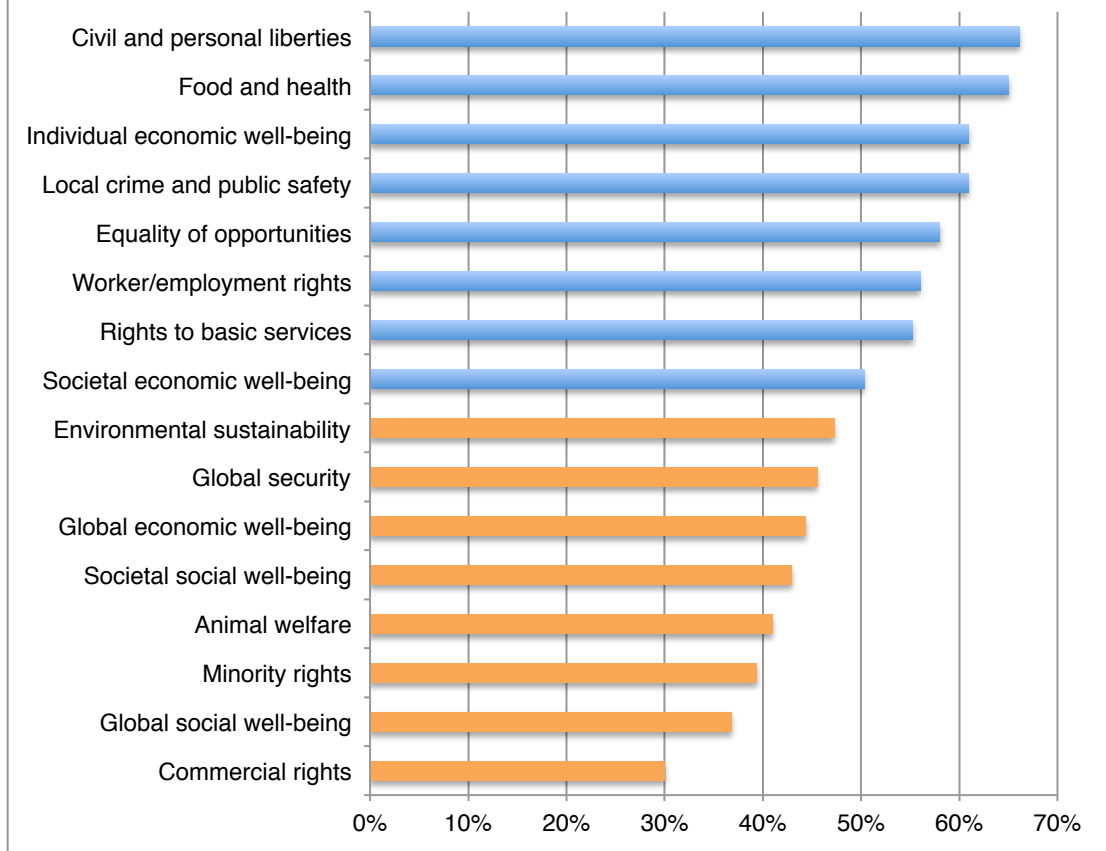
The Most Salient Issues to Americans

Our best-worst scaling experiments result in a picture of the importance for each issue category and all the sub-issues. To identify the salient issues for Americans, we asked respondents to examine a number of issues and make a series of trade-offs amongst those issues.

We can see the salience of the general categories in Figure 9. To make the results easier to understand, we have translated them into a 0-100% scale. The issues at the top are more likely to be selected when put up against the other issues. For example, a score of 100% would imply that whenever that issue was pitted against all other issues it is chosen 'most important' every time. A score of 0% implies that the issue is chosen as 'least important' every time. The beauty of the approach is that the likelihood that an issue is superior in a choice set to any other issue is just the ratio of the two scores.

Civil and personal liberties is the top issue category with a score of 66%, implying that it will be selected as 'most important' nearly seven times out of ten against any mixture of the other issue categories. For simplicity, we distinguish between the issues that dominate Americans' preferences in blue and those that fall below the middle score of 50% in orange.

Figure 9. Salience of General Categories of Social and Economic Issues for Americans



The results reveal that the most salient issues for Americans in the conduct of their lives are those that are most immediate to them and closest to their personal welfare. Personal rights, food, health and personal finances are their top concerns. Americans are effectively indifferent to global and societal issues, rating these significantly lower. The rights of minorities and commercial rights issues have virtually no real resonance with the population. Overall what we see is that issues impacting people’s lives directly on a daily basis matter most, followed by economic issues within society that also directly impact their lives. Dropping down below the middle score for Americans’ concerns are the broader issues: the environment, security at the international level and international finance. After that Americans worry about things that benefit society at large, animals, then minorities, issues affecting people around the world and, last of all, businesses.

Is this salience of proximate issues to American citizens unique to people in the US? Not really. When compared to our investigations in Germany, the UK and Australia we find remarkable stability across nations; an issue’s salience to a person’s life still determines its priority, independent of the national origin of that person. Slight national variations do result from strong elements of national culture – e.g., Germans focus on conflict and peace more than other nationalities – that can make an issue more or less primary for that population. These variations suggest that history has a part to play in

moulding issue preferences via influencing prevailing cultural identities critical contemporary communal issues, such as the 9/11 events in the US.

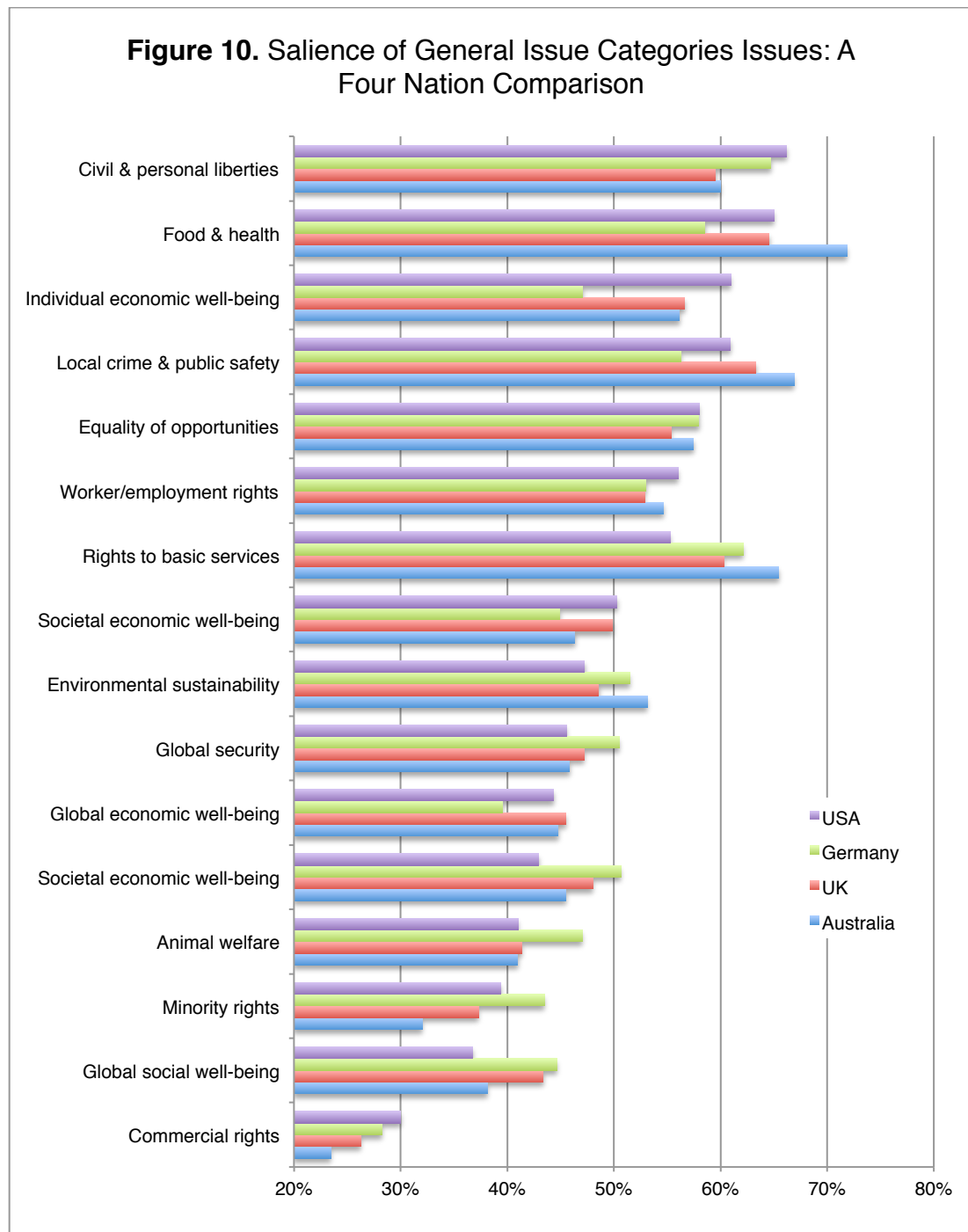


Figure 10 gives the salience scale for all the nations we have studied so far. Six major issues are salient for all four nations. The UK and Australia are by far the closest in agreement, sharing their seven top issues.

Comparing the nations in our study, surprisingly few strong differences emerge. Germans and Americans put civil and personal liberties ahead of every other issue. The salient categories for Americans that are not shared by the other nations are individual economic well-being (not salient for Germans)

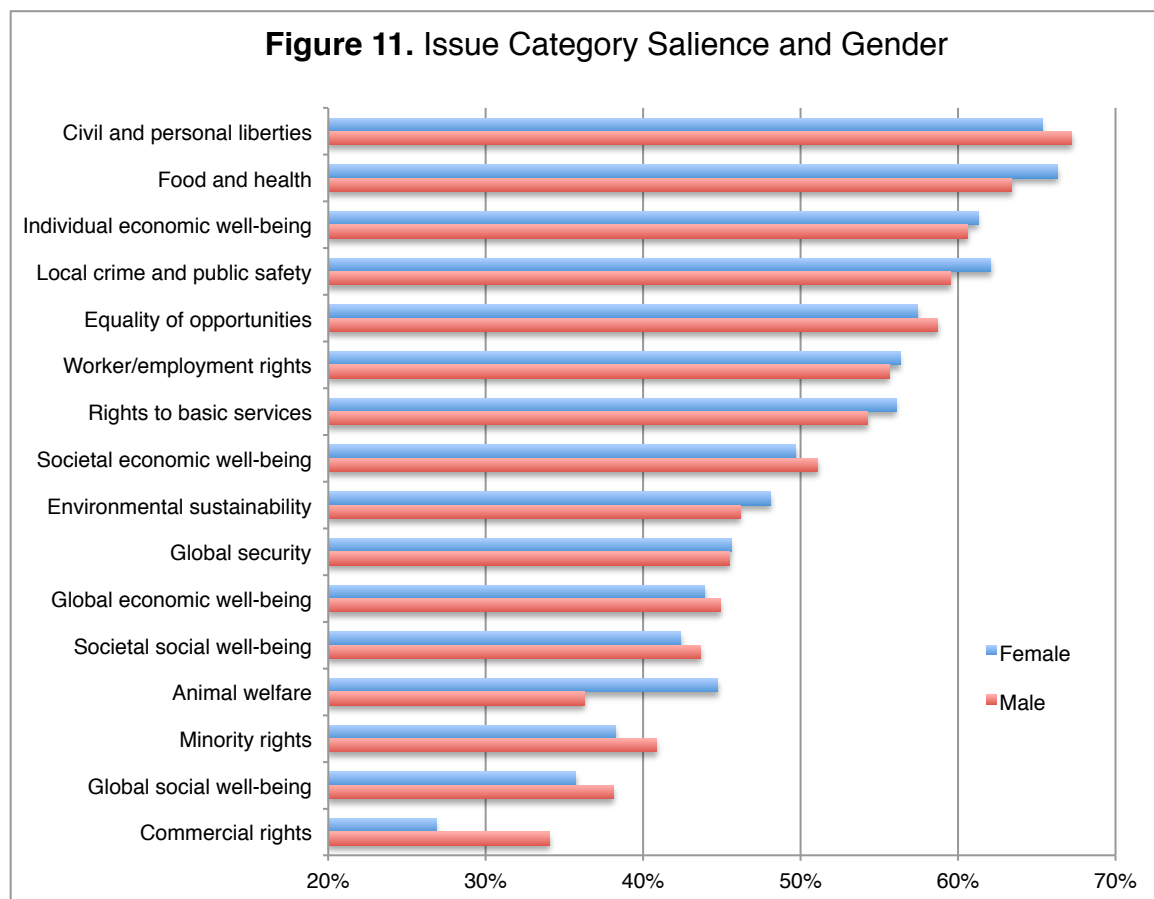
and economic matters at a societal level (salient for neither the Germans nor Australians but salient to Americans). Germans downplay individual economic well-being for societal social well-being and global security. Concerns about environmental sustainability are salient only for Germans and Australians, with Americans being the least environmentally concerned of the four countries studied. Aside from small national differences, all the nations in our study put less proximate issues at the lower end of the scale of concerns. Effectively, remote issues do not matter to Americans, Australians, Germans, or to people in the United Kingdom.

4. What Matters: Distinctive Breakdowns

This section describes general population breakdowns, based on income, age, politics, religiosity and gender, and looks at shifts in the salience of the general categories of social, political and economic issues. Our data allows for many relevant comparisons. Appendix 3 includes some tabular results for those seeking more detail.

Gender

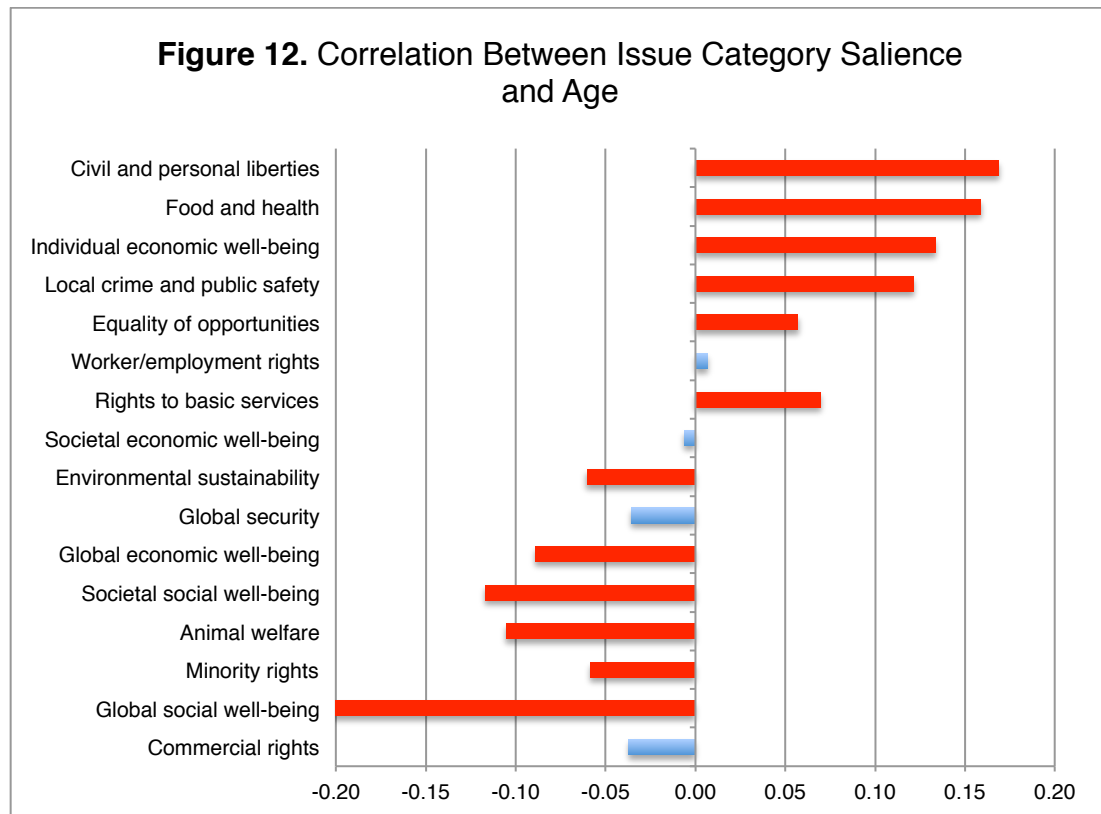
The gender split of the study population was roughly equal. Differences between the genders in terms of their priorities are slight. Women are more interested in food and health (their top issue) and also local crime and safety (rating it number three). Men are less interested in issues associated with animal welfare, dropping the issue beneath minority rights and issues like global social well-being. The largest difference we find is with animal welfare, where there is a 9-point gap between the genders. But that issue is quite marginal. While men are more interested in commercial rights, it too remains a subsidiary issue. Overall, the basic ordering of the general categories of social, economic and political issues differ little by gender.



Age

There are a significant number of material differences when we examine the relationship between age and issue preferences. We do this in two ways.

First, we can look at the simple relationship between age and preferences. Figure 12 presents the correlations between age and category preferences. Significant effects are shown in red (correlation above ± 0.05 in magnitude).



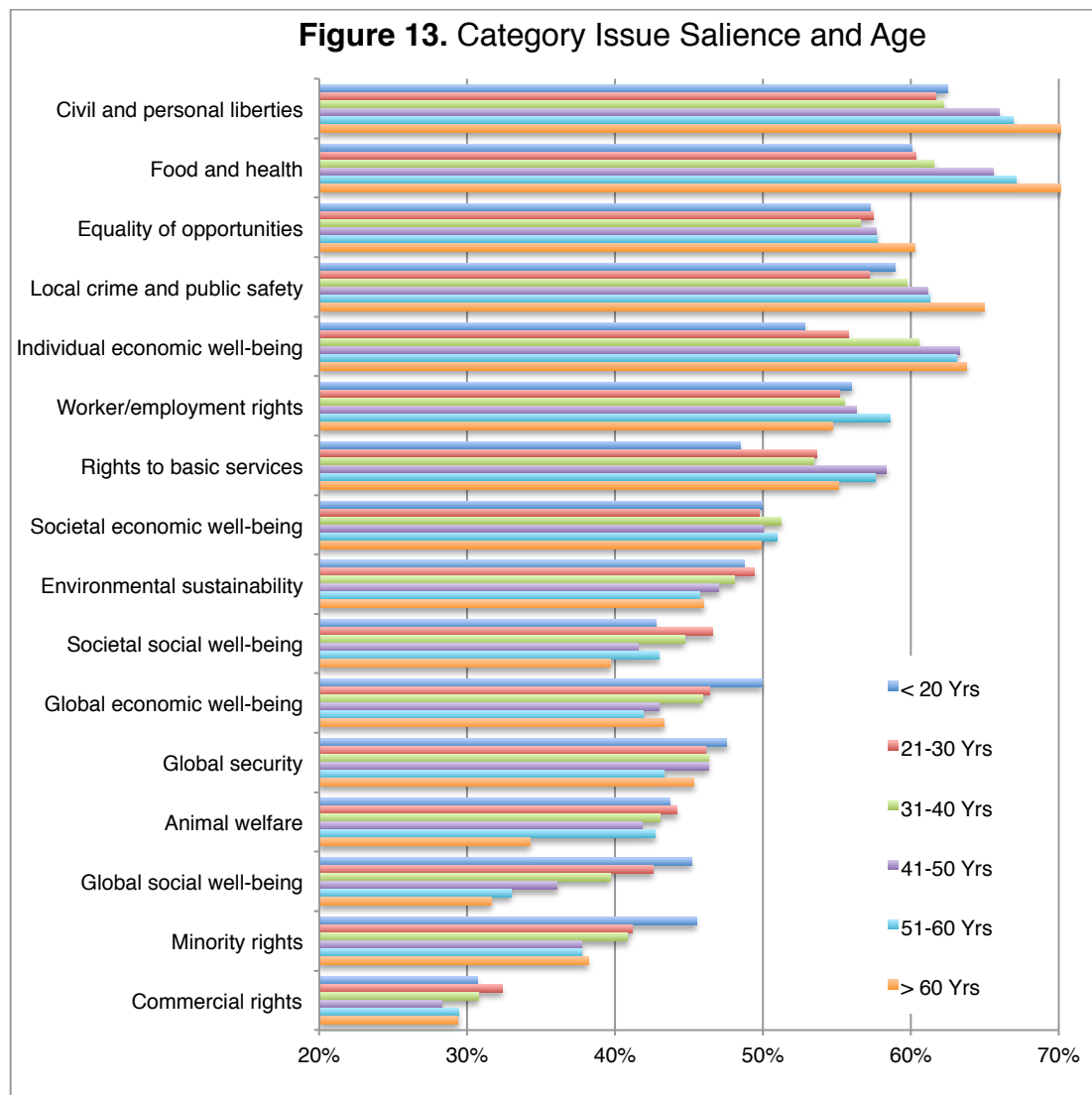
We see in this figure that six issue categories are positively related to age. These are the very top concerns covering civil and personal rights, food and health, personal economic well-being, crime and safety, equality of opportunity, and access to basic services. Six issues are negatively related to age; meaning that they are more likely to be of concern to younger people. These issues include the environment, animal welfare, minority rights, social issues at national and international levels, and global economic concerns. Interestingly, the pattern reveals that young people are more concerned about issues that are of less concern to their elders and the general population. They are more likely to focus on general social and international issues and the rights of those outside of the mainstream.

Second, we break the survey population into groups that represent 10-year age blocks to examine if there are any specific age groupings that stand out. This is presented in Figure 13.

What we see here is the changing issue preferences of some age groups shifting their overall priorities. Different priorities for an issue drives trade-offs affecting the position of competing issues. For instance, older respondents'

stronger preferences for some of the top issues at the expense of others sees food and health edging into first place for middle aged Americans. Local safety issues move into top three for Americans in retirement, ahead of personal financial issues.

Freedom from personal discrimination is an issue category that varies depending on the age group examined. It jumps ahead of individual economic well-being for youth, dropping again for Americans in middle age. Rights to basic services cease to be salient at all for respondents under 20 years of age, and then jumps ahead of worker rights and discrimination for respondents aged in their 40s.

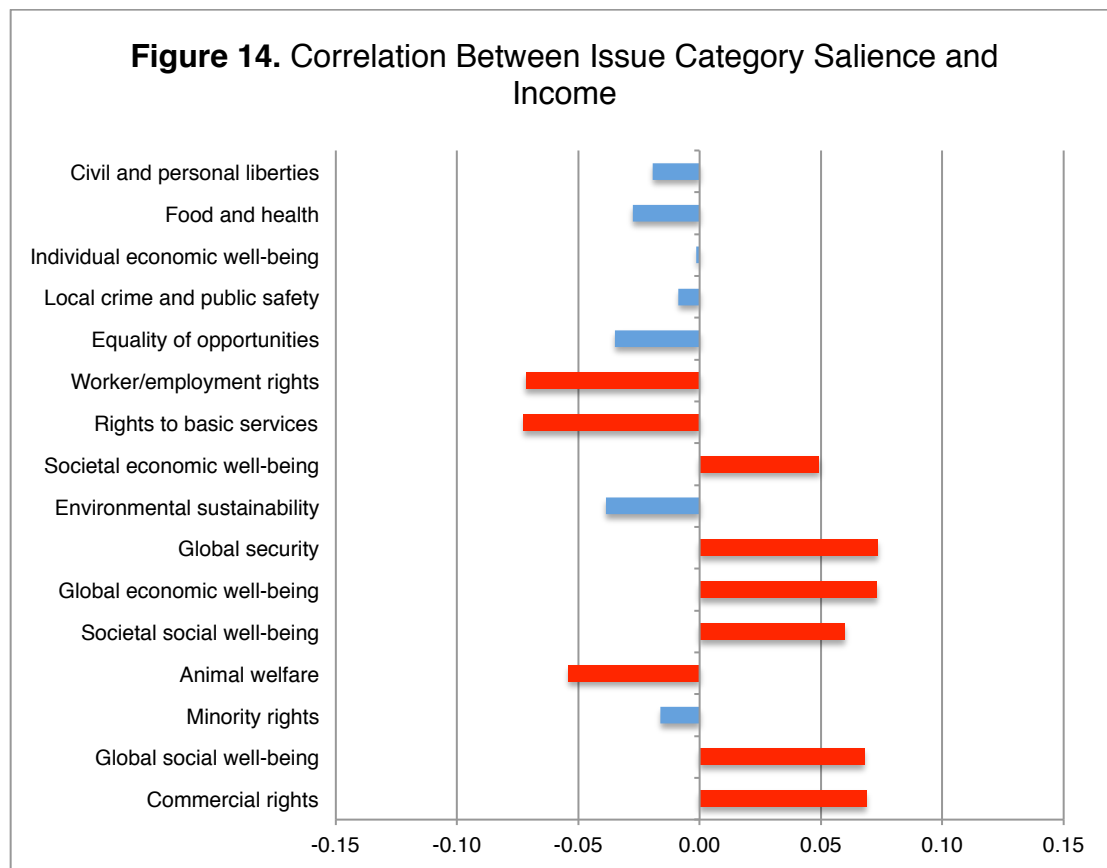


Worker rights issues vary slightly in importance with age. For the general study population it ranks sixth. However, for late career stage respondents it moves up into the top five of issue concerns. The implication is that the issue's salience is higher for Americans preparing to leave the labor force.

Household Income

As with our examination of the relationship between age and social, economic and political preferences, we can investigate the influence of income in two ways.

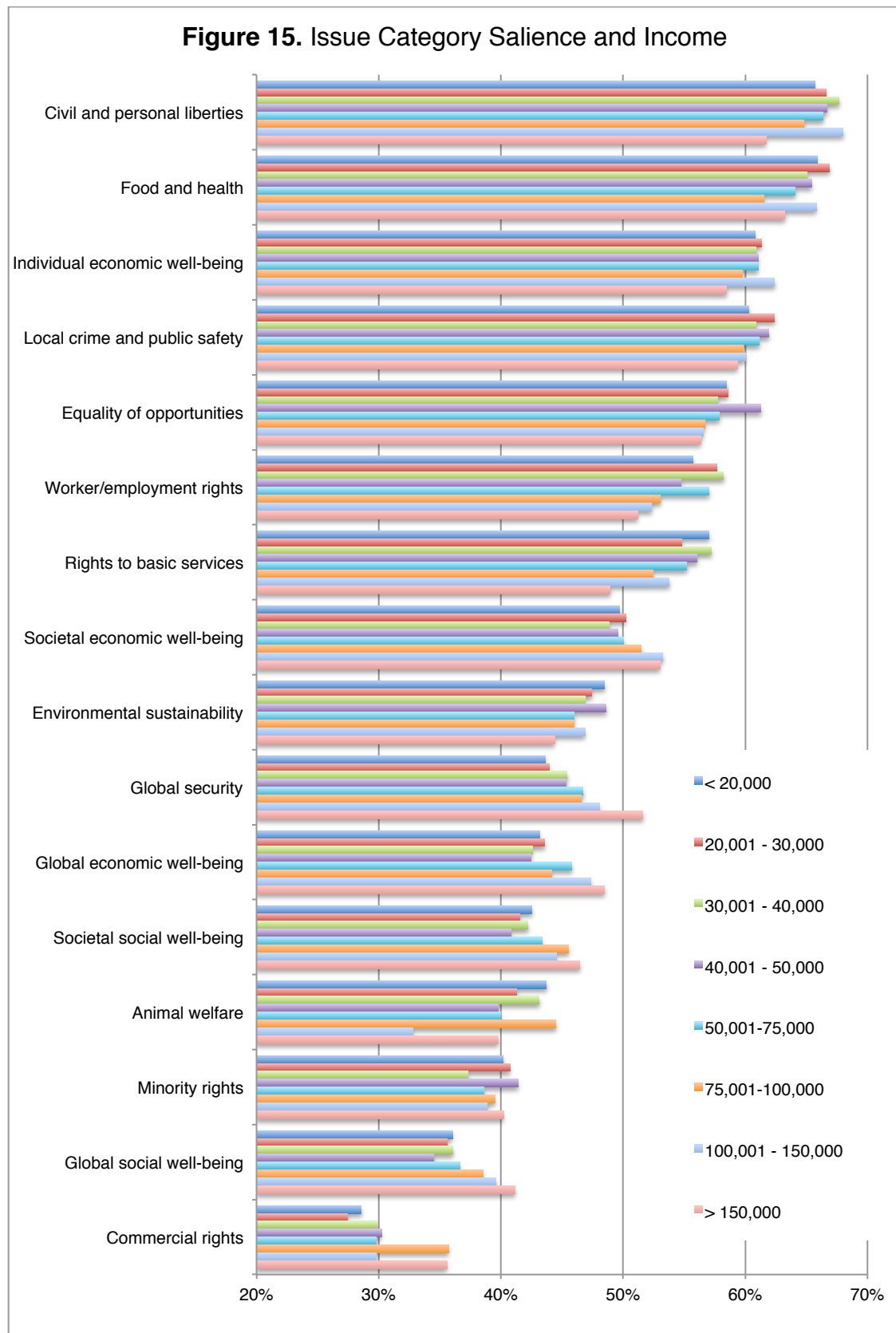
First, we can examine the correlations between income and issue category preferences. Significant relationships with income are indicated in Figure 14 (correlations are significant when beyond ± 0.05). We find a general trend towards increased wealth and stronger preferences across most the general population's issue curve. Household income is related negatively to increases in the importance of two out of the top seven categories and positively to five of the bottom eight issues. Overall, we see a pattern in line (but opposite from) that for age. Generally, the correlations reveal that higher income is related positively with greater salience for issues that are less important to the population in general. A single out case is the negative relationship between animal welfare and income.



Next, if we examine differences in category preferences based on income by looking at income ranges, we see a slight polarisation occurring between high-income and low-income. This is given in Figure 15.

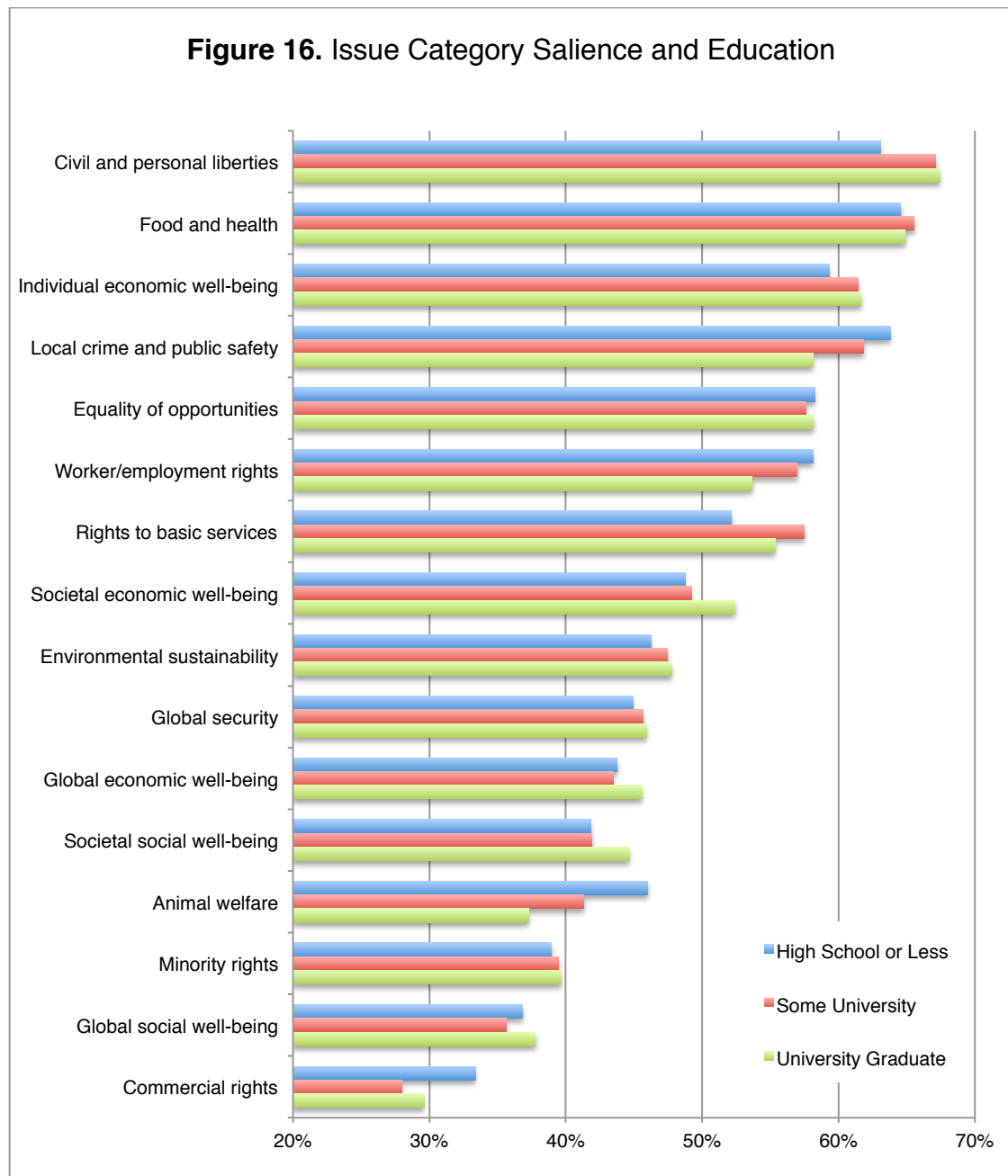
One issue that is very revealing is worker/employment rights. The differences between those with incomes below \$40,000 and those with incomes above \$70,000 – with worker/employment rights mattering materially to the former group and not to the latter – is what drives the correlation seen in Figure 13. In

addition we see a very clear pattern relating to global security, where there is a monotonic relationship between that issue's importance and income.



Education

To some extent education impacts on what issues matter to Americans, but the overall effect is minimal. Those with a university education are slightly more concerned about civil and personal liberties, rights to basic services, societal economic well-being, and commercial rights. Those with no university education are more concerned about crime and safety, worker/employment rights, animal welfare. However, overall the material effects are only really seen at the extremes and there is less that separates Americans on this dimension than one would immediately find compelling.



Religiosity

The study collected an extensive battery of information about the individual's religious practices and beliefs. For simplicity, we focus on one question only: the extent to which the individual believed in god or a higher power. Study participants were queried about their belief in a god on a scale from "absolutely do not believe in the existence of a higher power" to "absolutely certain in their belief as to a higher power's existence".

This information was first analysed by looking at the correlation between the degree of belief in a higher authority and social, economic and political preferences. The issue category correlations with religious belief are given in Figure 17. They reveal that those with stronger beliefs are more likely to give higher salience to individual economic well-being, commercial rights, food and health, and crime and public safety and give lower salience to many of things that one would assume those with more religious proclivities would espouse, such as global and local societal well-being. Another way to interpret this is that the more agnostic or atheistic a respondent the more they put value on social well-being (either locally or globally) and the environment and the less they are concerned about their own economic circumstances.

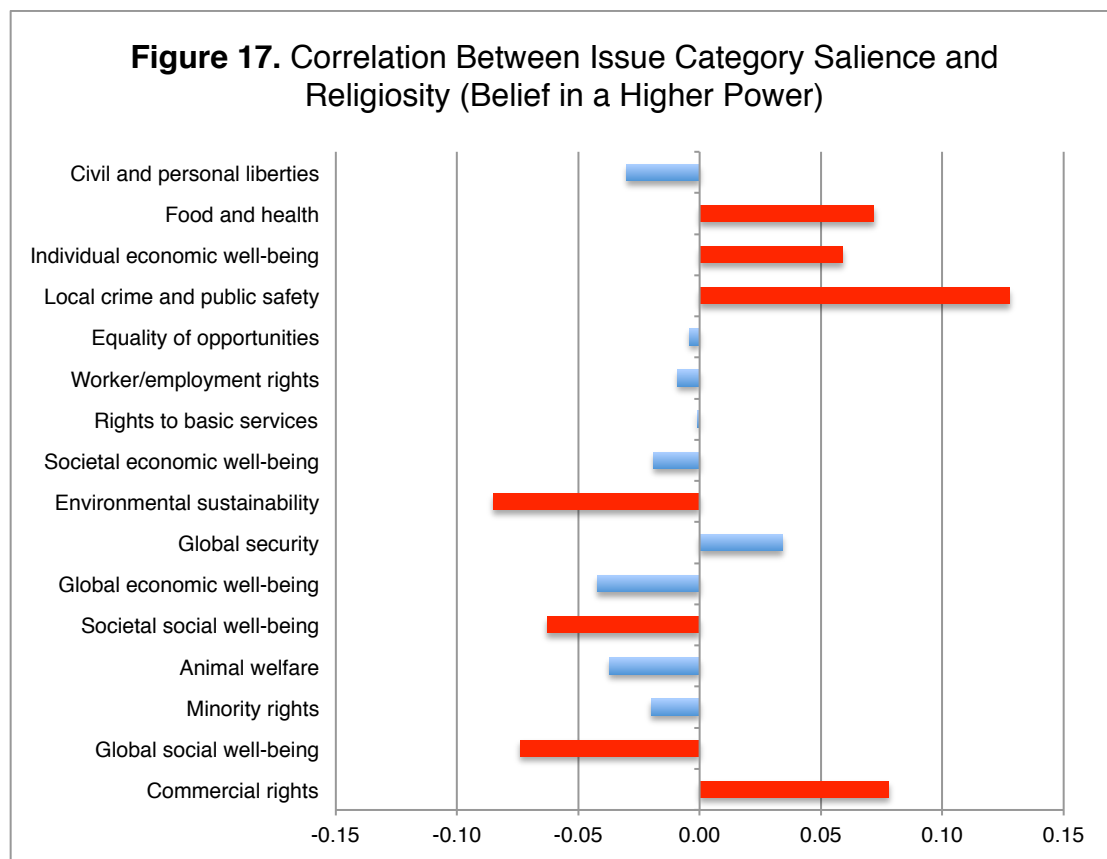


Figure 18 looks at the responses at each level in the scale. These results confirm the correlations just discussed, with strong believers generally being less concerned about humanitarian issues than non-believers. Atheists put much less emphasis on things like crime and personal safety and more emphasis on environmental sustainability. Ironically, non-believers

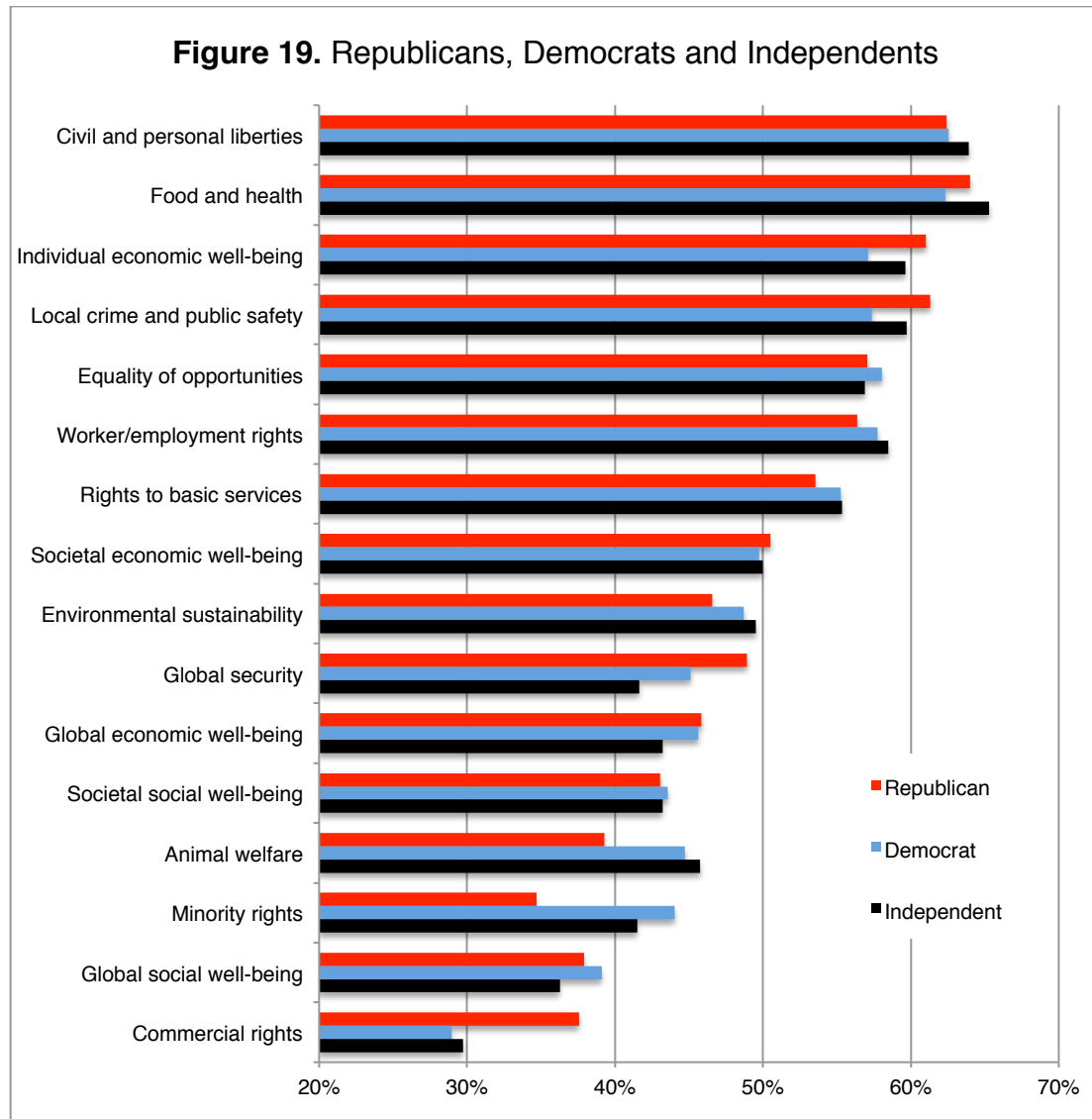
demonstrate greater concern for their fellow citizens, putting social well-being ahead of all global issues and minority rights ahead of animals.

Figure 18. Issue Category Salience and Belief in a Higher Power



Political Beliefs

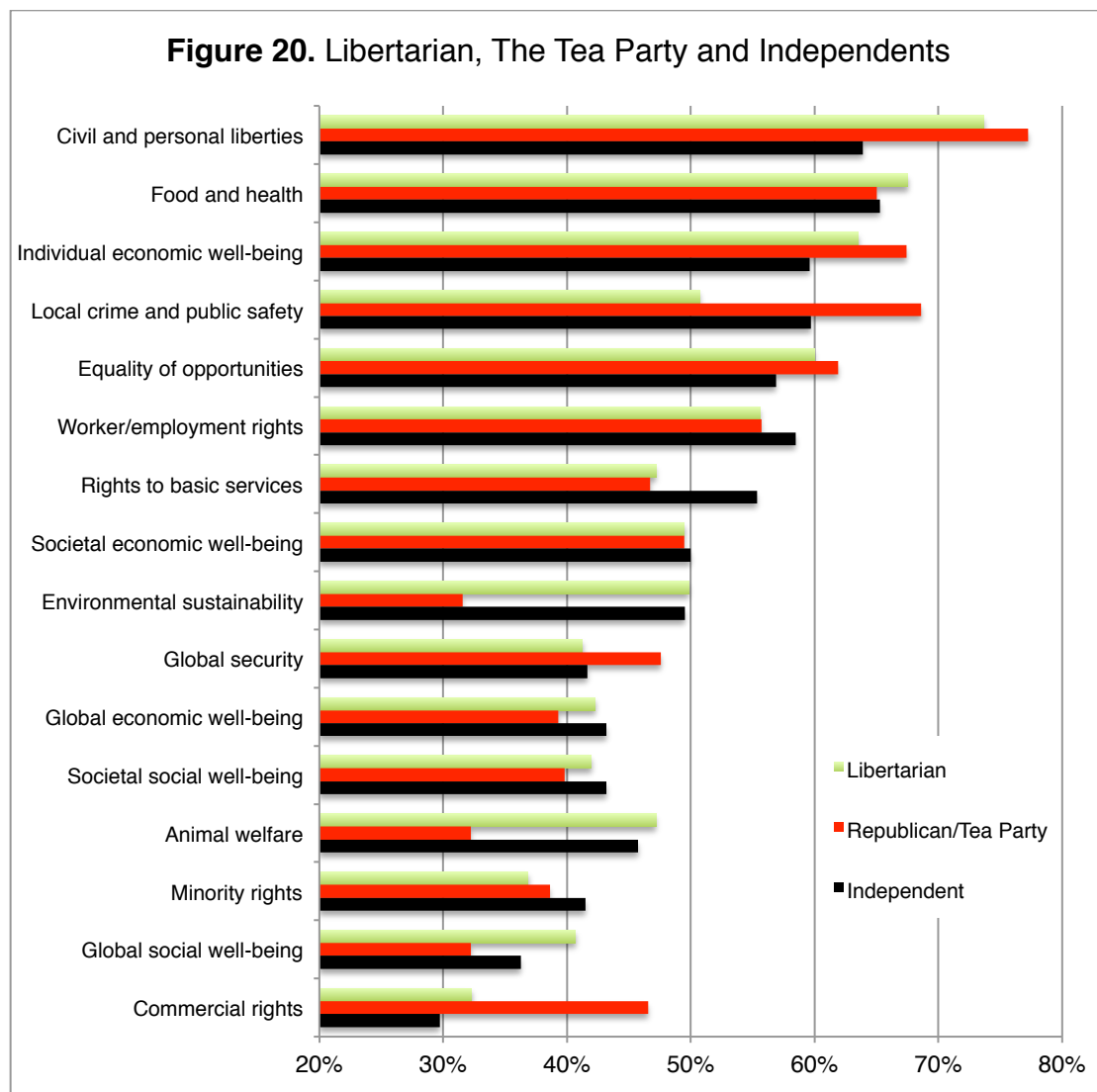
The study collected an extensive battery of information about Americans' political beliefs and activities. For simplicity, we focus on one question only: Which political party best aligns with their political beliefs? This allows us to look at the most extreme case where individuals view themselves in line with a specific and organized political agenda. However, by definition, this leaves out independents, which are a substantial swathe of the American voting population. Only a third of the population is aligned with one of the major parties.



The first set of comparisons is given in Figure 19, which looks at the preferences of those associating themselves with the two major political parties versus none at all (independents). The largest group of respondents who do align with a political party affiliate with the Democratic Party. At one level Democrats and Republicans do not differ on many major issues; civil and personal liberties, food and health, equality of opportunities, and so on do not reveal much difference for these groups. Where we see material differences are in some pretty clear party dividers – Republican affiliated voters are much

more concerned about crime and public safety and individual economic well-being. We also see material differences in issues of less salience to the general population. Republicans put more emphasis on commercial rights and global security. Democrats put more emphasis on minorities and animal welfare. Overall, independents are somewhat in between these extremes with the exception of global security, where they express much less concern.

If we look at some more extreme positioning we find some interesting results. Figure 20 compares the Tea Party supporters with Libertarians and Independents. While not a national political party, Tea Party supporters tend to endorse extreme Republican candidates. Comprising only 1% of the population, this small group is overrepresented in its share of political media coverage. Libertarians are more free market and personal rights orientated. However the similarity in the groups is that they are generally associated with niche issues.



On nearly every issue Tea Party affiliates stand out. They strongly support civil and personal liberties, crime and public safety, and individual economic well-being. They are much more likely to support commercial rights and

global security and downplay the environment, animal welfare and global social issues.

Libertarians are more mainstream. While being strong advocates of civil and personal liberties and much less concerned about crime and public safety, they are surprisingly similar to the median Independent voter.

Happiness

There is considerable discussion in the economics and politics literature about the role of happiness to economic and political development. This has expanded to the point that next to Gross National Product there are measures of Gross National Happiness. To capture whether such a measure is truly relevant we included it in our examination of social, economic and political values. Again, we do this by examining the general tendency and then the specifics of the extremes of the scale.

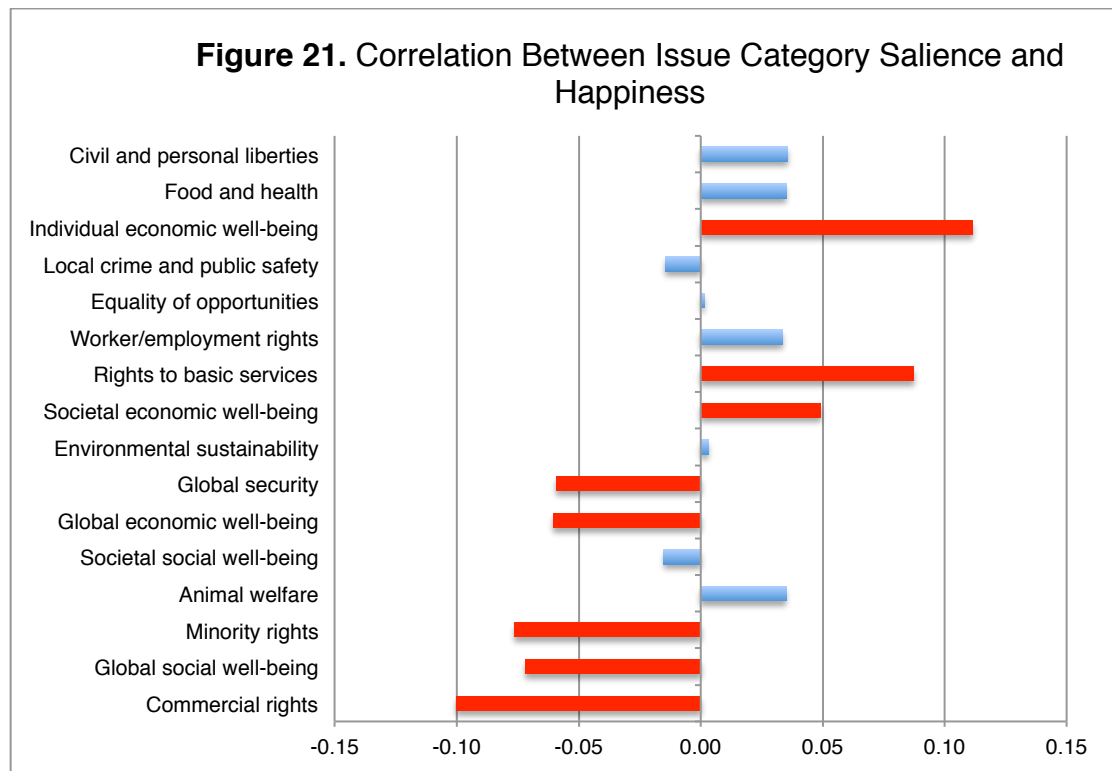
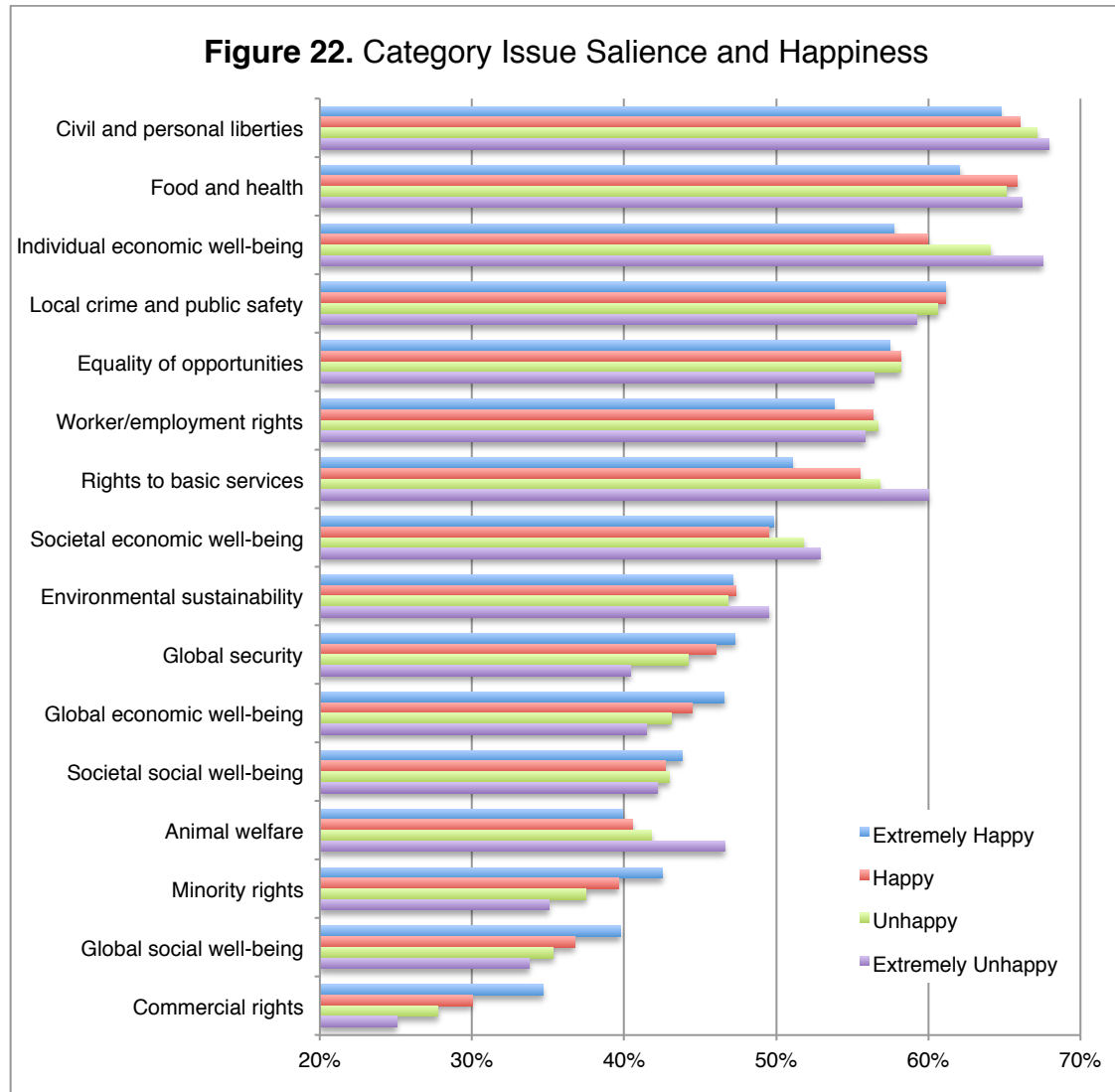


Figure 21 provides the correlations between happiness and salience of the issue categories. Remembering that a lower happiness score is ‘better’ the correlations have to be read in reverse (significant effects are in red). Hence, there is a positive relationship (negative correlation) between happiness and the salience of global social and economic issues, minority rights and also commercial concerns. Those individual who are less happy give more salience to factors such as their own individual economic well-being and that of society as well as the rights to basic services.

When we look at the individual scale responses we see that some differences emerge at the two extreme ends of the scale (Figure 22). Extremely happy people and happy people in the study give marginally more salience to lower

tier issues – commercial rights, minority rights and global economic and social well-being. Extremely unhappy people differ from the rest of the population in putting more emphasis on individual economic well-being and rights to basic services. Individuals with stronger concerns about animal welfare and the environment are also likely to be less happy.

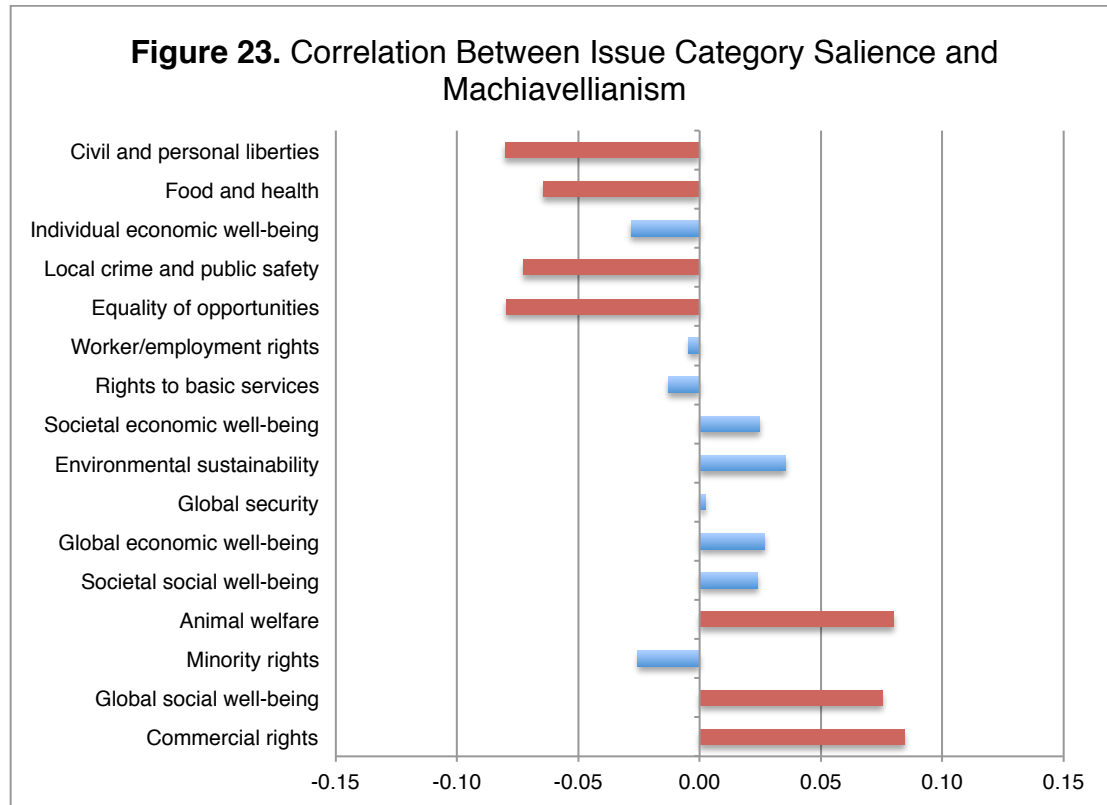


Ethical Disposition

The ethical disposition of the studied population was measured with the Christie and Geis Machiavellianism scale. As noted earlier, a low score has historically been associated with individuals who are more trusting of others, take into consideration the impact of their behavior on others and are generally more altruistic. A higher score represents a greater predisposition for Machiavellianism; that is, the tendency to be manipulative and deceptive. A neutral population score on the scale is 60. By this measure the American population is slightly lower on average (mean = 54, median = 55)

The results in Figure 23 show the category preferences based on any correlation with salience of the social, economic and political issue categories. Overall, a correlation of ± 0.05 is sufficient for a significant relationship.

Those with higher Machiavellianism scores are more likely to give higher salience to animal welfare, global social well-being and commercial rights. Those with lower Machiavellianism scores put more emphasis on civil and personal liberties, food and health, crime and safety and equality of opportunities.



Also, potentially interesting is that those individuals with higher Machiavellianism scores are less likely to donate to a CSO (correlation = -0.220), less likely to volunteer (correlation = -0.163) and also likely to give to fewer causes when they do donate (correlation = -0.198).

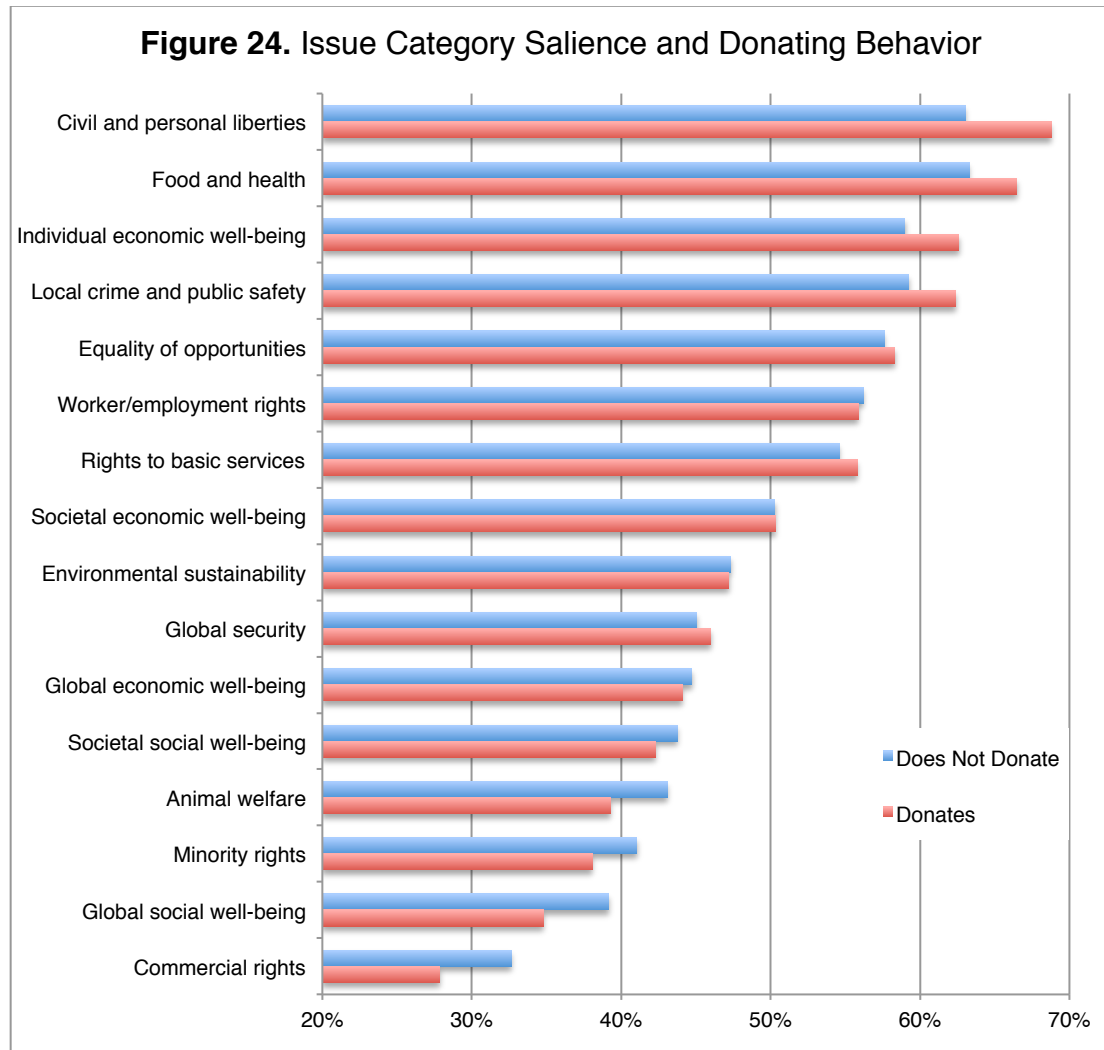
Involvement in Civil Society

The issues that matter to Americans are important to civil society organizations and political parties that rely on the support of private individuals. A slight majority of study participants are involved with CSOs by donating money and about a third give their time through volunteering.

As noted earlier, most donations were collected by religious organizations, with strong showings also by health and medical institutes, children’s welfare and health and animal welfare groups. These causes do not necessarily translate into specific issues (except for health). Yet, many CSO supporters, and the actively religious, like to think they are their values and behavior differentiates them from the general population. However, we find that the overall profile of issue categories does not differ from the population norm when one compares those donating and those not donating. As shown in Figure 24, those donating are slightly stronger in their preferences for the things that the population aligns toward (e.g., the top five issue categories)

and slightly weaker on those issues that the population is less inclined toward (e.g., the bottom five issue categories).

Also, there is no evidence that financial support for a cause translates into greater salience for the cause underlying that CSO. For example, Americans give reasonably strong financial support to animal welfare groups, yet animal welfare is not the most salient of issues to them.



Volunteers comprise a significant minority in our study. The greatest number of volunteers dedicates their time to places of worship followed by educational institutions. This pattern is quite consistent across all the countries in our study. For the small group of volunteers seen in this study, their issues preference profile does not display any material differences from the non-volunteers nor from the general population. Again there is no evidence for any relationship between supporting a cause via human capital, and changes to the issues that matter.

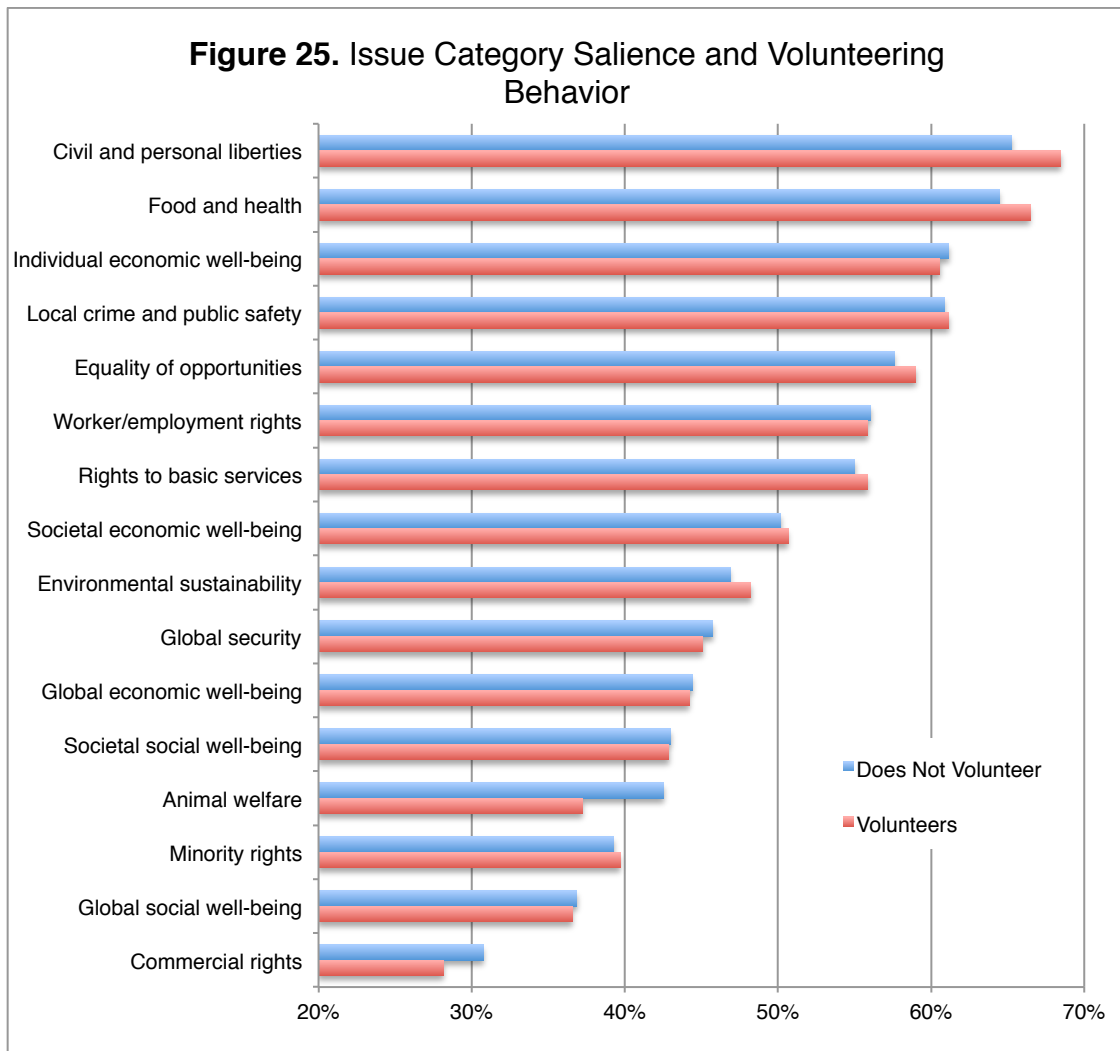


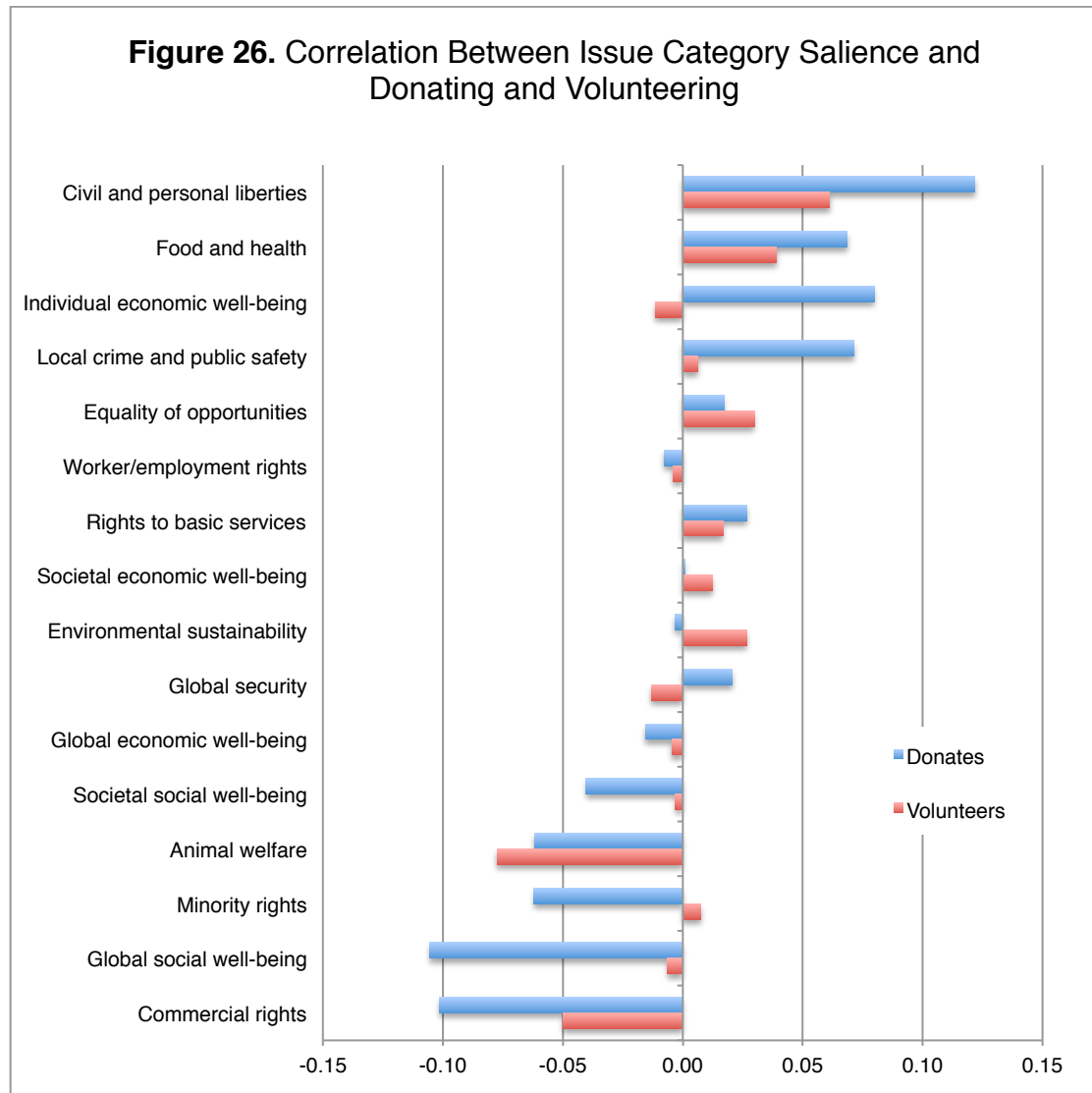
Figure 26 presents an overview of the relationship between the act of donating or volunteering and issue category preferences. The figure presents the correlation between donors and non-donors and volunteers and non-volunteers and the salience of the issue categories. The cut-off for a significant effect is a correlation of ± 0.05 (for clarity this is not shown in red as was the case in the prior correlation graphs).

What we see is that those with more concerns about personal rights – the topmost concern for the entire population – are more likely to support civil society via both donations and volunteering. Americans who donate and volunteer are less interested in animal welfare or commercial rights. There are no further correlations between issue salience volunteering. Donating is positively related to concerns about the personal financial well-being as well as local crime and personal safety, and is negatively related to concerns about issues at the opposite extreme. The general tendency merely indicates civil society supporters feel more strongly about the issues at each end of the American issues spectrum

Overall, these results reveal that those donating and volunteering have different preferences; but primarily at the margin and most likely influenced by

factors that are only weakly related to the causes to which they donate or for which they volunteer.

Figure 26. Correlation Between Issue Category Salience and Donating and Volunteering



5. What Matters at the Micro Level?

We uncover greater detail about what matters to the population across a large number of specific, yet wide ranging issues by examining the trade-offs respondents make between sub-category issues.

Study participants made a series of trade-offs within the 113 total sub-issues, allowing us to produce a relative ordering of precise issues underlying the categories. The results indicate how individuals value distinct issues within the general, umbrella categories of social, economic and political concerns we have already discussed. In addition, the results indicate how people's concern for specific issues stack up against relatively mundane matters (such as schooling, food, healthcare, schooling and working conditions) and less immediate concerns (including third world debt or poverty, slavery and human trafficking). For simplicity our discussion here will address the issues at the top and bottom of the assessment. All 113 sub-issues are listed in Appendix 1 and Appendix 3 contains all the scores.

Overall, the top categories of the general issues profile covered in section 3 above also appear in the most salient sub issues, and we see much more detail of what drives preferences for certain classes of issue. For example, the most salient category, civil and personal liberties is high overall because of primary concerns about six of the category's sub issues: rights to free speech, life, liberty, fair trial, religious freedom and freedom from harm. The second most salient category overall, food and health is important because it contains the most important issue over all – clean water – and another four critical issues: mental illness, infant mortality, abuse of drugs and alcohol, and the right to choose/abortion. Individual economic well-being is in the top five of the overall issue profile, yet it has only a single issue in the top 25 sub issues – cost of daily living is the number two sub-issue for Americans. The fourth highest issue category, local crime and public safety, is critical for many different reasons – i.e., protection from violent crime, child sexual exploitation and protection from terrorism at home. Global economic well-being is not salient at the category level but it is represented by a single sub-issue in the top 25: stability of the global financial system. All-in-all we see a multifaceted logic for why specific categories dominate.

Table 3: Top Sub-Issues of Salience to Americans

Sub-Issue	Rank	Category
Clean Water and Sanitation	1	Food & Health
Cost of Daily Living	2	Individual Economic Well-being
Economic Growth	3	Societal Economic Well-being
Protection from Violent Crime	4	Local Crime & Public Safety
Right of Free Speech	5	Civil & Personal Liberties
Child Pornography & Sexual Exploitation	6	Local Crime & Public Safety
Right to Life	7	Civil & Personal Liberties
Right of Liberty	8	Civil & Personal Liberties
Freedom from Harm	9	Civil & Personal Liberties
Legal Rights	10	Civil & Personal Liberties
Disabilities	11	Equality of Opportunities
Right of Access to Food	12	Rights to Basic Services
Age: Elderly	13	Equality of Opportunities
Mental Illness	14	Food & Health
Right to a Safe Work Environment	15	Worker/Employment Rights
Alcoholism and Drug Abuse	16	Food & Health
Right to Religious Freedom	17	Civil & Personal Liberties
Protection of Children in the Labor Force	18	Worker/Employment Rights
Infant Mortality	19	Food & Health
Right to Retirement Benefits	20	Worker/Employment Rights
Right to Choose/Abortion	21	Food & Health
Stability of Financial System	22	Global Economic Well-being
Right to a Minimum Wage	23	Worker/Employment Rights
Protection from Terrorism at Home	24	Local Crime & Public Safety
Right of Access to Healthcare, Medicines	25	Rights to Basic Services

A similar effect is seen when we examine the bottom 25 sub-issues, presented in Table 4. We find that the least salient of the general preference categories of issues (given in section 3) predominate in the bottom 25 sub-issues. This is not surprising. Commercial rights are the bottom of the general issues categories profile and all five commercial rights sub issues end up at the bottom of the 113 sub issues. Issues affecting the well-being of society, minority rights and animal welfare concerns also end up in the bottom 25, as do global issues relating to security and global social and economic well-being. These issues are categorically less salient for Americans overall.

Table 4: Bottom Sub-Issues of Salience to Americans

Sub-Issue	Rank	Category
Free Trade Policy	89	Global Economic Well-being
Social Isolation	90	Societal Social Well-being
Personal Pollution	91	Environmental Sustainability
Unilateral Military Action	92	Global Security
Right to Cultural Expression in Public	93	Minority Rights
Protection of Endangered Species	94	Animal Welfare
Global Criminal Syndicates	95	Global Security
Public Transport	96	Societal Social Well-being
Income Inequality	97	Societal Economic Well-being
Physical Property Rights	98	Commercial Rights
Balance of Payments/Trade Deficits	99	Societal Economic Well-being
Right to Benefits of Last Resort	100	Rights to Basic Services
Right to Strike	101	Worker/Employment Rights
Third-World Poverty	102	Global Social Well-being
Population Growth	103	Global Social Well-being
Humane Farming	104	Animal Welfare
Right to Speak a Foreign Language	105	Minority Rights
Third World Debt	106	Global Economic Well-being
Freedom to start/own a business	107	Commercial Rights
Freedom from Animal Testing	108	Animal Welfare
Right of Secession/Separation	109	Minority Rights
Freedom to Trade	110	Commercial Rights
Intellectual Property Rights	111	Commercial Rights
Protection Against Over-Hunting/Fishing	112	Animal Welfare
Right of Commercial Domain	113	Commercial Rights

International Comparison of Americans' Interests

We next compare what matters to American citizens with those of countries that have analogous demographics and broadly similar societies, political systems and economies. Data collected from Germany, Australia and the United Kingdom shows that preferences are generally consistent across these populations.

Americans' preferences are in strong alignment with these international counterparts on the most salient issues. Nine out of the top ten American sub issues are top ten for at least one of these peer countries. Right to a fair trial is in the US top ten but not nearly so high for peer nations. However, the most critical concerns for Americans, including clean water, cost of daily living, and many aspects of personal rights and safety all resonate right across the citizenry of these other developed Western nations.

There are only two sub issues to turn up in the US top 25 that are not ranked as highly by any of these other countries. The sub issues with greatest salience only for Americans are religious freedom and the stability of financial system. We will need to observe how these issues perform in our next survey

to see if these differences are temporal, potential responses to a regional mood, or if the differences persist and indicate something unique about the American experience.

Table 5: Top 25 Sub-Issues Across Four Nations

Rank	United States	Germany	United Kingdom	Australia
1	Clean Water and Sanitation	Right to Life	Cost of Daily Living	Clean Water and Sanitation
2	Cost of Daily Living	Right of Liberty	Clean Water and Sanitation	Protection from Violent Crime
3	Economic Growth	Clean Water and Sanitation	Child Pornography & Sexual Exploitation	Cost of Daily Living
4	Protection from Violent Crime	Freedom from Harm	Protection from Violent Crime	Child Pornography & Sexual Exploitation
5	Right of Free Speech	Right of Access to Food	Economic Growth	Right of Access to Healthcare, Medicines
6	Child Pornography & Sexual Exploitation	Right of Free Speech	Right of Access to Food	Right of Access to Food
7	Right to Life	Child Pornography & Sexual Exploitation	Right to Life	Mental Illness
8	Right of Liberty	Quality Schooling	Right of Access to Healthcare, Medicines	Alcoholism and Drug Abuse
9	Freedom from Harm	Economic Growth	Disabilities	Disabilities
10	Legal Rights	Disabilities	Age: Elderly	Age: Elderly
11	Disabilities	Age: Elderly	Mental Illness	Economic Growth
12	Right of Access to Food	Right of Access to Healthcare, Medicines	Freedom from Harm	Freedom from Harm
13	Age: Elderly	Right to Retirement Benefits	Right to a Safe Work Environment	Right to Life
14	Mental Illness	Age: Youth	Right to Minimum Standard of Living	Right to a Safe Work Environment
15	Right to a Safe Work Environment	Protection from Violent Crime	Infant Mortality	Suicide
16	Alcoholism and Drug Abuse	Cost of Daily Living	Life Expectancy	Right of Free Speech
17	Right to Religious Freedom	Right to Retirement at a Pre-specified Age	Right to a Minimum Wage	Infant Mortality
18	Protection of Children in the Labor Force	Right of Identity	Protection of Children in the Labor Force	Legal Rights
19	Infant Mortality	Right to a Minimum Wage	Right of Free Speech	Protection from Terrorism at Home
20	Right to Retirement Benefits	Right to Minimum Standard of Living	Poverty	Right to Choose/Abortion
21	Right to Choose/Abortion	Deforestation and Habitat Destruction	Protection from Terrorism at Home	Right to a Minimum Wage
22	Stability of Financial System	Protection of Children in the Labor Force	Right of Liberty	Right of Liberty
23	Right to a Minimum Wage	Mental Illness	Alcoholism and Drug Abuse	Obesity
24	Protection from Terrorism at Home	Infant Mortality	Energy Prices	Deforestation and Habitat Destruction
25	Right of Access to Healthcare, Medicines	Peace (Freedom from Conflict)	Deforestation and Habitat Destruction	Energy Prices

Table 6: Bottom 25 Sub-Issues Across Four Nations

Rank	United States	Germany	United Kingdom	Australia
89	Free Trade Policy	Religion (Equality of Opportunities)	Third World Debt	Personal Pollution (Global Social)
90	Social Isolation	Inflation	Population Growth (Global Social)	Ancillary Pollution
91	Personal Pollution	Income Inequality	Income Inequality	Global Criminal Syndicates
92	Unilateral Military Action	Population Growth (Global Economic)	Right to Form/Join a Labor Union	Government Budget Deficit
93	Right to Cultural Expression in Public	Ancillary Pollution	Public Transport	Right to Engage in Cultural Practices
94	Protection of Endangered Species	Right to Cultural Expression in Public	Personal Pollution	Third World Debt
95	Global Criminal Syndicates	Population Growth (Global Social)	Unilateral Military Action	Population Growth (Global Social)
96	Public Transport	Right to Form/Join a Labor Union	Global Criminal Syndicates	Free Trade Policy
97	Income Inequality	Third World Debt	Ancillary Pollution	Humane Farming
98	Physical property rights	Unilateral Military Action	Protection of Endangered Species	Right to Form/Join a Labor Union
99	Balance of Payments/ Trade Deficits	Public Transport	Free Trade Policy	Right to Benefits of Last Resort
100	Right to Benefits of Last Resort	Freedom from Animal Testing	Humane Farming	Balance of Payments/Trade Deficits
101	Right to Strike	Free Trade Policy	Right to Benefits of Last Resort	Income Inequality
102	Third-World Poverty	Personal Pollution	Balance of Payments/Trade Deficits	Physical property rights
103	Population Growth (Global Social)	Government Budget Deficit	Right to Cultural Expression in Public	Right to Cultural Expression in Public
104	Humane Farming	Balance of Payments/ Trade Deficits	Right to Strike	Protection Against Over-Hunting/Fishing
105	Right to Speak a Foreign Language	Right to Strike	Right to Speak a Foreign Language	Unilateral Military Action
106	Third World Debt	Protection Against Over-Hunting/Fishing	Freedom from Animal Testing	Right to Speak a Foreign Language
107	Freedom to start/own a business	Right of Secession/Separation	Right of Secession/ Separation	Freedom from Animal Testing
108	Freedom from Animal Testing	Interest Rates	Protection Against Over-Hunting/ Fishing	Right to Strike
109	Right of Secession/ Separation	Physical property rights	Freedom to start/own a business	Freedom to start/own a business
110	Freedom to trade	Right of commercial domain	Physical property rights	Freedom to trade
111	Intellectual property rights	Intellectual property rights	Freedom to trade	Right of Secession/Separation
112	Protection Against Over-Hunting/ Fishing	Freedom to trade	Intellectual property rights	Intellectual property rights
113	Right of commercial domain	Freedom to start/ own a business	Right of commercial domain	Right of commercial domain

We next compare the sub issues that are the top and bottom 25 concerns for each national population. The data in Table 5 and Table 6 demonstrate that many of the same categories end up in the top and bottom categories as rated by the populations of all the nations studied. It also reveals some agreement between countries. Australians and UK citizens agree on the salience of many issues. Americans and Germans put freedom of speech and personal liberty in their top ten, much higher than Australia or the UK, whose citizens do not rate civil liberties quite as significant. What is unique to these other countries is explored further in each country's report.

People from a range of developed nations find it easy to agree on what types of issues are least salient to their lives. Citizens of the UK, Germany, Australia and the US are unanimous in having little regard for issues associated with commerce and ownership. All these issues, known collectively as commercial rights, are categorically unimportant when compared with all the other concerns that figure in people's lives. It is not that these commercial issues only relate to large corporations; if they did we could interpret the results as indicating respondents find these rights as remote to their lives. Every respondent from these wealthy nations would enjoy some form of physical property rights and yet this issue is relegated to the bottom by all of them.

Americans are unique out of the four nations in not having a strongly formulated position on environmental concerns. There are no environmental issues in the US top 25, while deforestation and loss of habitat ranks in the top 25 for Germans, Australians and those in the UK. Equally, each of these nations puts in the bottom 25 two environmental matters concerning pollution. Americans put only one. It is as if environmental sustainability has not registered on the American consciousness with the result that it is not consistently traded off in the mix of issues. Instead it gets traded randomly or not at all, and so ends up in the middle of the great mix of 113 issues, mattering neither highly enough to be salient nor being consistently ruled out.

Americans rate animal welfare as a concern when it comes to donating, but in trading off issues by evaluating each issue's materiality to their lives, animal rights issues lose out. Americans are on a par with people in the UK in putting four animal welfare issues at the bottom of their lists; Australians put three and Germans only two.

6. The Overall Picture: America as a Conservative Society

The results in this report provide a short overview of a complex and intriguing inquiry into the salience of key social, economic and political issues to members of American society. In creating this report our goal was to provide a less stereotyped and more nuanced assessment and one that was less likely to be influenced by the way in which individuals respond to opinion polls.

What we see in these results is a picture of a society that is concerned with local issues that influence its members' lives. Although issues of global concern get a lot of press coverage, there is no indication that they resonate sufficiently to remove the salience of key, local, economic and social concerns from American beliefs and values.

That said, it is not the case that American society is conservative in the most extreme characterisation of that stereotype. People in the US are deeply concerned about the impact of local social issues, and give a high degree of salience to issues of health, public safety, civil liberties, equal opportunities and access to specific types of basic services, particularly health and medical services. Where a more conservative aspect of the US population is seen, is in its downplaying of issues that are more 'socially democratic'; namely workplace and employment rights, social subsidies and the protection of minority rights. Equally, the conservatism of the American populace reveals no preference for corporatism or commercial rights. Indeed, commercial rights are the issues emphatically of least importance to Americans

When we examine our results for Americans in contrast with the results of other populations, we find some interesting facts. First, there is a remarkable degree of stability in our findings. Although specific issues move up and down a bit here and there, the overall picture of American society is not that different from that of Australia, Germany or the UK. However, it does reveal that there is a common denominator that drives most social, economic and political preferences that CSOs, policy makers and political parties would be foolish to ignore. Local and primary issues dominate. Issues relating to the natural environment, global matters, animals, minorities and commerce are less important.

Where we see a big difference between the American population and Germany, Australia and the UK is in the relevance of religion. Religious freedom is one of only two issues that are important to Americans and no other national population currently profiled in our study. Religion drives most support for civil society organisations. What our results do reveal is that atheists have a firmer belief in their fellow citizens than those who look to a higher power. What we do not know is whether local humanitarian CSOs can harness this interest into support. Our findings indicate that American giving is connected to solidarity with faith and congregation, and in no way connected to any true affiliation with the CSO cause. This poses a definite challenge to CSOs as well as to policy makers or any group wanting to appeal to Americans. It is a conundrum for brand marketing.

For a more societal perspective, our results show that while America is a modern demographic society, one that empowers the individual, and with separation of church and state, the American consciousness is heavily influenced by communal worship. The strongest aspects of giving and volunteering are related not so much to the link between the cause and the preferences of the people involved with the cause, but with the link between a church and its congregation. This arises most clearly in the case of an individual's religious affiliation of the CSOs with which they become involved. This is potentially disheartening to many CSOs where there is a belief that it is the cause that matters to the individual donating or volunteering. The main finding is that this is probably something of a myth. CSOs expend great amounts of time and effort on marketing that appeal to hearts and minds, to engage supporters with their cause, with a view to increasing support. This strategy is unlikely to increase support across the population at large.

Finally, there is a desire at times to want to characterise individuals based upon their demographics or life circumstances. We find that this is not reliable in trying to understand an individual's social, economic and political preferences. Indeed, with our methodology we see that there are not many ways of discriminating amongst individuals based on such obvious factors as gender, income, education and so on. What seems to matter is something more deeply embedded in the individual that shows up in other ways – such as in their political alignment or religious beliefs.

Political platforms can be based on a small number of emotive issues. Hence, it is instructive to see how an individual's political alignment relates to their preferences when we present them with a fuller inventory of the issues that confront citizens. The majority of Americans is not aligned politically with any of the dominant political parties and are generally dissatisfied with the political situation. This is a fact that is not distinctive to the US context as Germans, Australians and UK citizens are similar in the level of political dissatisfaction (although they are more likely to align with a political party). The strongest and most distinctive political group in our sample are those who indicate an alignment with the Tea Party. Unlike the US, such extreme viewpoints are normally reserved for left-leaning parties in Australia (Greens) and Germany (Greens and Linke/Left).

This report was an overview only and much more can be gleaned by attempting to understand not just the findings here but from the results from the other countries where this investigation is operating. However, this simple summary aims to provide a provocative look at American society in a new way.

Appendix 1: Categories and Sub-Category Items in the Social, Political and Economic Values Inventory

The inventory includes 16 categories of issues that individually contain up to 12 sub-category issue items. The total number of sub-category issue items is 113. The categories and items were extensively pre-tested and meant to be inclusive of major issues that would be relevant across a range of countries based on their economic and social development. Hence, it is expected that specific items would not necessarily be relevant for individuals in all countries. However, they are included so as to make cross-cultural comparisons meaningful.

- **Civil and Personal Liberties**—includes issues associated with individual rights and freedom. These include:
 - Right to Life
 - Right of Free Speech/Opinion/Expression (inc. freedom of the press)
 - Right of Association (freedom of assembly and association)
 - Right of Liberty (freedom from arrest or detention except under authority of law)
 - Right to Vote in Free and Fair Elections
 - Right to Religious Freedom (freedom of thought, conscience and religion)
 - Right of Freedom from Harm and from Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Punishments
 - Legal Rights (the right to a fair trial by a competent and independent court)
 - Right to a Nationality (and not have it removed arbitrarily)
 - Right of Identity (e.g., the right to have a legal ‘existence’)
 - Freedom of Movement within and across Borders
 - Marital Rights (equal rights between married couples and the right to choose one’s spouse)
- **Equality of Opportunities**—consists of freedom from discrimination based on a variety of criteria such as:
 - Gender
 - Age (both young and old)
 - Sexual Orientation
 - Marital Status
 - Disabilities
 - Racial/Ethnic Background
 - Religion
- **Commercial Rights**—focuses on issues associated with commerce and ownership and includes:
 - Physical Property Rights (freedom to enjoy lawfully acquired property)
 - Intellectual Property Rights (right of ownership of creation of labor; e.g., materials created, etc.)
 - Freedom to Trade (right to make contracts between entities)
 - Right of Commercial Domain (right to locate business operations in country of your choosing)
 - Freedom to Start/Own a Business
- **Worker/Employment Rights**—includes those rights and freedoms of workers exclusive of those covered by normal commercial rights. These include:
 - Freedom to Engage in a Trade, Profession or Occupation
 - Right to Form/Join a Labor Union, ie the right of collective bargaining
 - Right to Strike, i.e., freedom to withdraw labor
 - Right to a Safe Work Environment e.g., OSHA
 - Right to Retirement at a Pre-specified Age

- Right to Retirement Benefits ie. safety guarantees to a pension
- Protection of Children in the Labor Force
- Right to a Minimum Wage
- Right to Out-of-Work Benefits
- **Rights to Basic Services**—addresses access to basic services and include the rights to:
 - Right to Minimum Standard of Living, e.g. clothing, housing
 - Right to Benefits of Last Resort, e.g., welfare, dole
 - Right of Access to Food
 - Right of Access to Healthcare, Medicines
 - Right of Access to Basic Education
- **Animal Welfare**—consists of issues dealing with the treatment of animals and preservation of animal species. It includes both rights of an individual animal and protection of a species.
 - Freedom from Animal Testing
 - Freedom from Animal Cruelty
 - Humane Farming
 - Protection of Endangered Species
 - Protection Against Over-Hunting/Fishing
- **Environmental Sustainability**—focuses on issues associated with the protection of the natural environment. It includes issues relating to:
 - Recycling of Materials, Use of Recycled Materials and Product Disposability
 - Industrial Pollution: air, water, soil
 - Ancillary Pollution; e.g., chemical runoff from farming, mining
 - Personal Pollution; e.g., automobile, wood burning, outdoor grills
 - Biodegradability of Materials and Products
 - Alternative Energy Generation; e.g., solar, wind, water
 - Climate Change
 - Loss of Biodiversity
 - Deforestation and Habitat Destruction
- **Minority Rights**—deals with rights and protection of minority groups within a society and include:
 - Right to Cultural Preservation
 - Right to Cultural Expression in Public
 - Right to Engage in Cultural Practices
 - Right of Secession/Separation
 - Right to Speak a Foreign Language
- **Local Crime and Public Safety**—relate to issues associated with local societal crime and safety and it contains:
 - Safety of Personal Property
 - Protection from Violent Crime
 - Freedom from Harassment
 - Protection from Terrorism at Home
 - Child Pornography & Sexual Exploitation
 - Human Slavery & People Smuggling
 - Protection from Bribery and Corruption
 - Right to Private Protection; Self Defense

- **Food and Health**—deals with major health issues that affect the society and include:
 - AIDS/HIV Infection
 - Obesity
 - Alcoholism and Drug Abuse
 - Teenage Pregnancy
 - Right to Choose/Abortion
 - Family Planning
 - Suicide
 - Mental Illness
 - Infant Mortality
 - Life Expectancy
 - Genetically Modified Foods
 - Clean Water and Sanitation

- **Individual Economic Well-being**—focuses on economic issues that affect the individual and their family. These contain issues such as:
 - Cost of Daily Living (food, clothing and daily expenses)
 - Freedom from Arbitrary and Excessive Taxation
 - Housing Affordability
 - Interest Rates
 - Inflation

- **Societal Economic Well-being**—involves economic issues at the country (societal) level that may affect the individual and their family, but do so less directly. Such issues include:
 - Economic Growth
 - Unemployment (general)
 - Poverty
 - Energy Prices
 - Stability of Currency
 - Government Budget Deficit
 - Balance of Payments/Trade Deficits

- **Societal Social Well-being**—deals with social issues at the country (societal) level that may affect the individual and their family. These issues include:
 - Quality Schooling
 - Immigration
 - Public Transport (quality and investment)
 - Income Inequality
 - Youth Inactivity and Unemployment
 - Social Isolation (Esp adult & elderly)

- **Global Economic Well-being**—focuses on economic issues at the global level that can affect the individual and society. It contains issues such as:
 - Population Growth
 - Free Trade Policy
 - Third World Debt
 - Depletion of Energy/Resources
 - Global Economic Growth
 - Stability of Financial System

- **Global Social Well-being**—considers issues of social well-being at the global level, abstracting from the economic issues given earlier. It includes concerns about:
 - Income Inequality
 - Third-World Poverty
 - Population Growth
 - Diseases (epidemics)
 - Peace (freedom from conflicts)
- **Global Security**—includes issues associated with security at the global level and involves:
 - Religious Extremism
 - Global Terrorism
 - Nuclear and Biological Weapons Proliferation
 - Global Criminal Syndicates
 - Unilateral Military Action
 - Genocide/Ethnic Cleansing

Appendix 2: Structure of the Best-Worst Task

Best-Worst tasks operate by determining a relative ordering of items for each individual. This is superior to both Likert-based scale methods (eg, responding on a 1-5 scale) and ranking methods but for different reasons.

In the case of Likert scales there are serious issues of what are known as response styles (how people use the scale) and common method problems. In the case of emotive social issues, like those studied here, individuals tend to rate everything as important, making their marginal preferences impossible to understand. When examining individuals across countries, there are potential problems with how individuals in different countries use the scales. In the case of ranking tasks, individuals are good at ranking extremes but cannot effectively distinguish between mid range items when the list becomes even moderately long. This is particularly relevant here, as there are many issues to be examined and we would expect individuals to differ considerably.

Best-Worst tasks reduce the burden on the respondent by having them: (a) examine only small sets of items in experimentally designed blocks and (b) asks them only to respond with the “best” (most important) and “worst” (least important) in the block. From this we are able to estimate both the relative importance of each item in the set of items considered as well as determining how sure the individual is about their assessment. In addition, this type of task reduces the common method and response style problems because, (1) all individuals are using exactly the same discrete choice measure (an item is either best or worst and this choice is the same for everyone) – hence the scale is the same for everyone – and (2) it is impossible to say everything is important since the task forces a trade-off. As will be noted below, we also account for when individuals don’t want to make a trade-off.

In the tasks here, individuals first examined the sixteen general categories. They then evaluated the sub-items within each category. Finally, they were asked to evaluate category sub-items against each other. The nature of the experimental approach allows us to determine the importance of the categories, the importance of sub-issues in a category, and the importance of sub-issues across categories.

The task asked individuals for three pieces of information when presented with a block of items:

- (1) Select the **one issue** among the four that is **least important to you in the conduct of your life**
- (2) Select the **one issue** that is **most important to you in the conduct of your life and**
- (3) Considering the group of issues, are **all, none or some of them** important in the sense that they materially matter to you in the conduct of your life. By this we mean that you give thought to all, some or none of the issues on a regular basis.

Below is an example of how the task looked to individuals when examining the 16 general categories and a screenshot of the actual task. For the 'within' and 'between' category queries, the structure of the task is the same but the block sizes would vary (below the block is a mixture of 4 of the 16 categories), as would the number of blocks individuals are asked to evaluate.

Question no.	Which issue matters LEAST to you?	Sets of issues for you to consider	Which issues matters MOST to you?	Are all, some or none of these "important"?
1	<input type="checkbox"/> Only one issue selected → ✓ <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Minority Rights Food and Health Animal Welfare Global Security	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> ✓ ← Only one issue selected <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> All <input type="checkbox"/> Some <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None

Section A: Views on General Categories of Economic and Social Issues

All questions are required / Click issues to view explanation. You will not be able to proceed until all questions are answered.

Question No.	Which issue matters LEAST to you?	Sets of issues for you to consider	Which issues matters MOST to you?	Are all, some or none of these "important"?
1	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	Equality of Opportunities Rights to Basic Services Minority Rights Global Economic Well-Being	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> All <input type="radio"/> Some <input type="radio"/> None
2	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	Civil and Personal Liberties Rights to Basic Services Animal Welfare Environmental Sustainability	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> All <input type="radio"/> Some <input type="radio"/> None
3	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	Rights to Basic Services Local Crime and Public Safety Societal Economic Well-Being Global Security	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> All <input type="radio"/> Some <input type="radio"/> None
4	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	Worker/Employment Rights Rights to Basic Services Individual Economic Well-Being Global Social Well-Being	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> All <input type="radio"/> Some <input type="radio"/> None

Appendix 3: Tabular Presentation of a Selection of the Data in the Report

Table III.1 Basic Demographics

Gender (Male)	44.00%
Age (Mean)	45.64 Yrs
Income (Household)	\$53,398
Home Mortgage or Owned	54.97%
Single	25.26%
Married or Widowed	49.70%
Children (Number)	1.17
US Citizen	98.00%

Table III.2 Donating and Volunteering Activity

	Percent of People Donating	Average Amount Donated	Percent of People Volunteering
Place of Worship	30%	\$229.78	16%
Religious Organizations	22%	\$55.25	4%
Health/Medical Institutes	18%	\$24.88	2%
Children's Health Care Organizations	16%	\$19.95	1%
Animal Welfare Organizations	15%	\$22.42	3%
Educational Institutions	12%	\$27.39	9%
Homeless Shelters/Poverty Relief (Local)	10%	\$13.48	3%
Political Parties	7%	\$9.98	3%
Environmental Groups	7%	\$12.13	3%
Children's Welfare Organizations (Non-Medical)	6%	\$13.25	1%
Intl Medical Relief Organizations	6%	\$8.48	1%
Museums and Arts Organizations	5%	\$11.72	1%
General Philanthropy (Not covered elsewhere)	4%	\$7.81	1%
Human Rights Groups	3%	\$4.39	1%
Intl Poverty Relief Organizations	3%	\$4.41	0%
Disabilities & Aged Care Organizations	3%	\$3.81	1%
Family Planning Groups	3%	\$2.91	0%
Civil Rights Organizations	2%	\$2.53	1%
Voting Rights Groups	1%	\$3.20	1%

Table III.3 Overall Category Importance

Category	Importance
Civil and personal liberties	66.16%
Food and health	65.02%
Individual economic well-being	60.95%
Local crime and public safety	60.94%
Equality of opportunities	57.99%
Worker/employment rights	56.00%
Rights to basic services	55.26%
Societal economic well-being	50.31%
Environmental sustainability	47.25%
Global security	45.55%
Global economic well-being	44.36%
Societal social well-being	42.94%
Animal welfare	41.00%
Minority rights	39.40%
Global social well-being	36.77%
Commercial rights	30.02%

Table III.4 Sub Category Issue Importance

Rank	Sub Category Issue	Importance
1	Clean Water and Sanitation (Food & Health)	47.53%
2	Cost of Daily Living (Individual Economic Well-being)	47.20%
3	Economic Growth (Societal Economic Well-being)	45.20%
4	Protection from Violent Crime (Crime & Public Safety)	40.04%
5	Right of Free Speech (Civil Liberties)	39.68%
6	Child Pornography & Sexual Exploitation (Crime & Public Safety)	38.36%
7	Right to Life (Civil Liberties)	38.35%
8	Right of Liberty (Civil Liberties)	37.74%
9	Freedom from Harm (Civil Liberties)	37.53%
10	Legal Rights (Civil Liberties)	37.22%
11	Disabilities (Equality of Opportunity)	36.71%
12	Right of Access to Food (Rights to Basic Services)	35.97%
13	Age: Elderly (Equality of Opportunity)	35.64%
14	Mental Illness (Food & Health)	34.98%
15	Right to a Safe Work Environment (Worker/Employment Rights)	34.70%
16	Alcoholism and Drug Abuse (Food & Health)	34.58%
17	Right to Religious Freedom (Civil Liberties)	34.47%
18	Protection of Children in the Labor Force (Worker/Employment Rights)	34.39%
19	Infant Mortality (Food & Health)	33.45%
20	Right to Retirement Benefits (Worker/Employment Rights)	33.23%
21	Right to Choose/Abortion (Food & Health)	32.32%
22	Stability of Financial System (Global Economic Well-being)	32.13%
23	Right to a Minimum Wage (Worker/Employment Rights)	32.04%
24	Protection from Terrorism at Home (Crime & Public Safety)	31.83%
25	Right of Access to Healthcare, Medicines (Rights to Basic Services)	31.58%
26	Life Expectancy (Food & Health)	31.49%
27	Unemployment (Societal Economic Well-being)	30.68%
28	Right of Identity (Civil Liberties)	30.58%
29	AIDS/HIV Infection (Food & Health)	30.45%
30	Freedom from Arbitrary and Excessive Taxation (Individual Economic Well-being)	30.43%
31	Deforestation and Habitat Destruction (Environmental Sustainability)	29.74%
32	Suicide (Food & Health)	29.28%
33	Housing Affordability (Individual Economic Well-being)	29.22%
34	Poverty (Societal Economic Well-being)	29.17%
35	Human Slavery & People Smuggling (Crime & Public Safety)	29.16%
35	Teenage Pregnancy (Food & Health)	29.16%
37	Quality Schooling (Societal Social Well-being)	28.99%
38	Freedom to Engage in a Trade, Profession or Occupation (Worker/Employment Rights)	28.97%
39	Obesity (Food & Health)	28.96%
40	Depletion of Energy/Resources (Global Economic Well-being)	28.85%
41	Industrial Pollution (Environmental Sustainability)	28.74%
42	Safety of Personal Property	28.40%
43	Right to Private Protection (Crime & Public Safety)	28.26%
44	Global Terrorism (Global Security)	28.17%
45	Religion (Equality of Opportunity)	28.05%
46	Family Planning (Food & Health)	27.91%
47	Nuclear and Biological Weapons Proliferation (Global Security)	27.57%
48	Racial/Ethnic Background (Equality of Opportunity)	27.50%

Rank	Sub Category Issue	Importance
49	Gender (Equality of Opportunity)	27.48%
50	Right to Minimum Standard of Living (Rights to Basic Services)	27.00%
51	Age: Youth (Equality of Opportunity)	26.66%
52	Right to Out-of-Work Benefits (Worker/Employment Rights)	26.35%
53	Alternative Energy Generation (Environmental Sustainability)	26.20%
54	Energy Prices (Societal Economic Well-being)	25.84%
55	Inflation (Individual Economic Well-being)	25.20%
56	Genetically Modified Foods (Food & Health)	24.70%
57	Freedom of Movement (Civil Liberties)	24.65%
57	Right to Vote (Civil Liberties)	24.65%
59	Right of Access to Basic Education (Rights to Basic Services)	24.32%
60	Income Inequality (Global Social Well-being)	24.11%
61	Marital Rights (Civil Liberties)	23.98%
61	Right to Retirement at a Pre-specified Age (Worker/Employment Rights)	23.98%
63	Right of Association (Civil Liberties)	23.90%
64	Marital Status (Equality of Opportunity)	23.75%
65	Recycling of Materials (Environmental Sustainability)	23.50%
66	Right to a Nationality (Civil Liberties)	23.42%
67	Global Economic Growth (Global Economic Well-being)	23.33%
68	Genocide/Ethnic Cleansing (Global Security)	23.09%
69	Stability of Currency (Societal Economic Well-being)	22.92%
70	Government Budget Deficit (Societal Economic Well-being)	22.85%
71	Peace (Freedom from Conflict) (Global Social Well-being)	22.39%
72	Sexual Orientation (Equality of Opportunity)	22.20%
73	Freedom from Harassment (Crime & Public Safety)	22.18%
74	Youth Inactivity and Unemployment (Societal Social Well-being)	22.05%
75	Biodegradability of Materials and Products (Environmental Sustainability)	21.71%
76	Freedom from Animal Cruelty (Animal Welfare)	20.99%
77	Climate Change (Environmental Sustainability)	20.94%
78	Diseases & Epidemics (Global Social Well-being)	20.90%
79	Right to Engage in Cultural Practices (Minority Rights)	20.64%
80	Right to Cultural Preservation (Minority Rights)	20.12%
81	Immigration (Societal Social Well-being)	18.91%
82	Protection from Bribery and Corruption (Crime & Public Safety)	18.39%
83	Loss of Biodiversity (Environmental Sustainability)	18.27%
84	Religious Extremism (Global Security)	17.91%
85	Interest Rates (Individual Economic Well-being)	17.63%
86	Population Growth (Global Economic Well-being)	17.48%
87	Right to Form/Join a Labor Union (Worker/Employment Rights)	17.25%
88	Ancillary Pollution (Environmental Sustainability)	16.65%
89	Free Trade Policy (Global Economic Well-being)	16.12%
90	Social Isolation (Societal Social Well-being)	15.72%
91	Personal Pollution (Environmental Sustainability)	15.34%
92	Unilateral Military Action (Global Security)	15.33%
93	Right to Cultural Expression in Public (Minority Rights)	15.25%
94	Protection of Endangered Species (Animal Welfare)	15.15%
95	Global Criminal Syndicates (Global Security)	15.05%
96	Public Transport (Societal Social Well-being)	14.45%
97	Income Inequality (Societal Social Well-being)	14.26%
98	Physical Property Rights (Commercial Rights)	13.95%

Rank	Sub Category Issue	Importance
99	Balance of Payments/Trade Deficits (Societal Economic Well-being)	13.88%
100	Right to Benefits of Last Resort (Rights to Basic Services)	13.57%
101	Right to Strike (Worker/Employment Rights)	13.48%
102	Third-World Poverty (Global Social Well-being)	13.18%
103	Population Growth (Global Social Well-being)	12.54%
104	Humane Farming (Animal Welfare)	12.48%
105	Right to Speak a Foreign Language (Minority Rights)	11.94%
106	Third World Debt (Global Economic Well-being)	11.71%
107	Freedom to Start/Own a Business (Commercial Rights)	11.62%
108	Freedom from Animal Testing (Animal Welfare)	11.56%
109	Right of Secession/Separation (Minority Rights)	10.76%
110	Freedom to Trade (Commercial Rights)	9.83%
111	Intellectual Property Rights (Commercial Rights)	9.62%
112	Protection Against Over-Hunting/Fishing (Animal Welfare)	9.23%
113	Right of Commercial Domain (Commercial Rights)	5.84%