## Offcase

### T

#### A topical affirmative would defend that the right to strike is an essential characteristic of a just government.

#### The indefinite singular subject “a just government” means the topic is not about one or even a majority of governments but the principles inherent to a just government as a concept.

Leslie et al. 9

Sarah-Jane Leslie (Department of Philosophy, Princeton University), Sangeet Khemlani (Department of Psychology, Princeton University), Sandeep Prasada (Department of Psychology, Hunter College), and Sam Glucksberg (Department of Psychology, Princeton University). “Conceptual and linguistic distinctions between singular and plural generics.” Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society. Volume 31. 2009. JDN. https://www.princeton.edu/~sjleslie/CogSci2009-singulars.pdf

We are currently conducting a series of experiments to test these predictions, and we report the first two experiments of the series here. These two experiments are concerned with the distribution of acceptability of Leslie’s categories across different syntactic forms. Generics in English come in three distinct syntactic forms. (1)-(3) below exemplify these three forms:

(1) Tigers are striped

(2) A tiger is striped

(3) The tiger is striped

These three different forms of generics are known as bare plural (BP) generics, indefinite singular (IS) generics, and definite singular (DS) generics respectively. Bare plural generics have received the most attention, and are also the main focus of Prasada’s and Leslie’s work.

Linguists and philosophers have noted that some statements that are perfectly acceptable in bare plural form seem a little odd in definite or indefinite singular form (Lawler, 1973; Burton-Roberts, 1977; Carlson, 1977; Krifka et al 1995). The three sentences in the triple (1)–(3) above all sound perfectly natural to our ears, but this is not so for the triples (4)–(6) and (7)-(9) on their generic interpretations:

(4) Barns are red

(5) ?A barn is red

(6) ?The barn is red

(7) Sharks attack bathers

(8) ?A shark attacks bathers

(9) ?The shark attacks bathers

While the BP generics (4) and (7) sound perfectly natural, the IS and DS versions seem somewhat unnatural. One is tempted to interpret them as saying something about a particular barn or a particular shark, rather than saying something about barns and sharks in general. Prasada and Dillingham (2009) found that people generally did not like statistical items in IS form and Prasada and Dillingham (2006) report an unpublished experiment that found this to be the case for the DS form.

The IS form is of the most theoretical interest to us, because **it is generally agreed among linguists** and philosophers of language that the IS is felicitous only when the relation between the subject and the predicate is in some sense “necessary”, **“essential” or “inherent”** (Lawler, 1973). We believe that the correct way to cash out this intuition in psychological terms is to understand the IS form as ‘selecting’ only those generalized properties that are characteristic of the kind – that is, only those connections that are principled (Prasada, in press; Leslie, in preparation). Thus it is of significant theoretical interest to learn whether people accept minority characteristics in IS form, since this would suggest that the connection between kinds and these less prevalent properties should nonetheless be counted as principled. The DS form is, unfortunately, poorly understood, so it is difficult to draw strong theoretical conclusions from a study of it. We hope, though, that the data we present here concerning the DS will contribute to a better future understanding of this elusive form.

We predicted that we would confirm Prasada and Dillingham’s finding that principled/non-minority characteristic generics fare well in IS and DS forms, and that statistical/majority generics would do less well. We further predicted that Leslie’s minority characteristic generics would be judged to be acceptable in both IS and DS forms, while the striking property generics would not. Since previous work (Khemlani, Leslie, Glucksberg, & Rubio-Fernandez, 2007; Leslie, Khemlani, & Glucksberg, submitted) has found that people agree to striking and majority BP generics less often than they agree to characteristic generics, our studies were designed to compare people’s rating of BP generics to their ratings of IS generics (Experiment 1) and DS generics (Experiment 2), so as to control for the possibility of globally lower ratings for striking and majority generics.

Experiment 1: Bare plural vs. indefinite singulars

We asked a sample of 25 volunteers on the Internet to judge how natural it was for bare plural and indefinite singular statements to be understood as generic assertions.

Method Design. We presented the four different types of predicates, as described above, one statement at a time. We also presented statements that were unequivocally incompatible with generic interpretations, e.g., ‘A kangaroo was hopping in my backyard,’ but instead tended to receive a specific interpretation. Statements appeared in either bare plural form (‘Xs are Ys’) or indefinite singular form (‘An X is a Y’), generating a 5 (predicate-type: characteristic, majority, principled, striking, and specific) x 2 (statement-type: bare plural vs. indefinite singular) repeated measures design.

Participants. 25 volunteers participated in the study over the Internet through Amazon’s Mechanical Turk system for human interface tasks. All spoke English as their first language and none had participated in experiments concerning generics before. Procedure and Materials. Participants were asked to judge how natural it was to use each of the ten different types of assertions to generally characterize the kind they referred to. For a given assertion such as ‘A lion roars’, participants were given the prompt: ‘How natural would it be to use this sentence to characterize lions in general?’ They took the study over the Internet using an experiment interface written in Ajax, and registered their response by selecting from a 7- point Likert scale (+3 = very natural, 0 = neutral, -3 = very unnatural). They received 10 items of each type of predication; half were presented in bare plural form and half in indefinite singular form. They also received 5 practice trials to familiarize themselves with the scale. Each participant received the items in a different random order. Results and Discussion As a manipulation check, we included statements that were intuitively not natural ways to express genericity such as ‘squirrels are in my backyard’ (bare plural form) or ‘a squirrel is in my backyard’ (indefinite singular form). Participants responded as expected, and rated specific statements as natural on only 20% of trials (see Table 1). The forms of the sentences did not yield differential responses; participants judged bare plural specific statements as naturally expressing a generic only 21% of the time and indefinite singular statements as doing so 20% of the time (Wilcoxon test, z = .45, p = .66). In general, bare plurals received higher naturalness ratings than did indefinite singulars. Principled generics were rated higher than were characteristic generics, with majority and striking predicate types rated even lower. These differences were assessed via a 5 x 2 within-subjects ANOVA, which yielded a significant main effect of predication type, F(4, 100) = 87.17, p < .0001, a significant main effect of statement type, F(1, 24) = 6.77, p < .05, and a significant interaction, F(4, 100) = 4.25, p < .005. Mean ratings of generic naturalness express a continuous measure that does not take into consideration the semantic values of the points on the scale, i.e., naturalness, neutrality, and unnaturalness. Table 1: Mean ratings of generic naturalness as a function of statement and predicate type in Experiment 1. Statement type Predicate type Bare plural Indefinite singular Principled 2.46 2.14 Characteristic 1.93 1.72 Majority 0.58 -0.22 Striking 0.28 -0.24 Specific -1.38 -1.15 That is, it may be meaningful that participants yield more natural than neutral responses for certain predications. To examine such patterns, we analyzed participants’ responses categorically. Points on the Likert scale were collapsed such that -3 to -1 denoted responses in which participants believed the assertion was not naturally used to characterize the category in general; point 0 on the scale denoted the case in which the participants could not tell whether the assertion was naturally a generic or not; and points +1 to +3 on the scale denoted the case in which participants believed that Figure 1. The distribution of responses in Experiment 1 as a function of predicate type and statement type. the assertion could take on a generic interpretation. The distributions of the categorical responses as a function of statement and predication types are shown in Figure 1. We then made comparisons across pairs of responses to determine whether a certain statement and predicate type yielded a different pattern of responses than another by comparing the differences between naturalness responses and unnaturalness responses for pairs of interest. Principled and characteristic predications. Participants judged principled (e.g., ‘tigers have stripes’) and characteristic (e.g., ‘ducks lay eggs’) statements as naturally expressing a generic on 94% and 87% of trials, respectively (Wilcoxon test, z = 2.27, p < .05). Principled statements were judged marginally more natural as generics when they were in bare plural form than when they were in indefinite singular form (97% vs. 91%, Wilcoxon test, z = 1.80, p = .07). Characteristic statements were not reliably judged more natural in bare plural form than in indefinite singular form (88% vs. 83%, Wilcoxon test, z = 1.58, p = .11). Naturalness judgments on principled and characteristic statements were not reliably sensitive to sentential form, and these statements were judged as natural on the preponderance of trials. Majority and striking predications. Majority and striking predications were judged as naturally expressing a generic on 47% and 46% of trials respectively (Wilcoxon test, z = .47, p = .64). Majority statements were judged as more natural in bare plural form than in indefinite singular form (59% vs. 34%, Wilcoxon test, z = 3.25, p < .005). Likewise, striking statements yielded a similar pattern of responses; they were judged more natural in bare plural form, but the difference between the two sentential forms was marginal (51% vs. 41%, Wilcoxon test, z = 1.81, p = .07). As Figure 1 shows, participants tended to rate majority and striking statements as naturally expressing a generic on most trials when the statements appeared as bare plurals (59% and 51% respectively), but did not do so when the statements appeared as indefinite singulars (34% and 41% respectively).

These data suggest that **principled** and characteristic generic assertions tend to be rated as naturally expressing generalizations irrespective of statement type, i.e., as bare plurals or as **indefinite singulars.** In contrast, majority predications tended to be rated as less natural, but with the bare plural form rated as significantly more natural than the indefinite singular. Finally, striking predications were also rated as less natural than principled and characteristic predications in general, with a marginal preference for the BP form over the IS form. These findings support our predictions, including our hypothesis that the difference between how the striking items were rated in BP vs. IS form would be less than the difference for the majority items perhaps because striking generics are accepted only if the corresponding disposition is characteristic of the kind (Leslie, 2007, 2008; Prasada, in press).

#### Vote neg for precision. The neg interp is the one with the best explanatory power for why the topic has precisely the wording that it does. The indefinite singular is used because it’s the form of generalization most directly tied to essential characteristics and “just” was used to signify which characteristic we care about.

#### By contrast, the aff interp can’t explain why if the topic is about plans it isn’t worded as “At least one government…” or “There is a government…” which would mean the same as the aff’s interp but less ambiguously. Nor can they explain why the topic uses a vague word like “just” if the point was to demarcate a specific set of states for the aff to choose from.

#### Precision is a ceiling, not a floor. You should vote for the most intuitive and straightforward reading, not just any one that is minimally plausible, because the fundamental function of the topic is to keep everyone on the exact same page when coordinating research expectations, and that breaks down if each person has their own pet interp they think is most pragmatic.

#### Second is Limits. There are at least dozens of “just” governments and no clear standards for which ones count, making the number of affs both massive and ill-defined. The neg interp reciprocally limits both sides to core topic principles, which also solves PICs because the topic is not about any particular countries, so country PICs don’t negate.

#### Fourth is the TVA double-bind—Either the aff thinks their country is a representative example in which case it could still be used under the neg interp to prove a general rule, OR the fact it isn’t proves the impact of T because the aff will choose atypical countries to sidestep neg generics

#### Drop the debater on T—the damage was done and I can’t regive the 1NC after a 1AR shift. Use competing interps; it avoids arbitrariness and judge intervention.

**And even if specifying a just government was topical, the U.S is not a just government.**

#### The US has never been a just government - it has always been minority rule by the white wealthy men.

Landis 18 (Michael Todd Landis Michael Todd Landis is an assistant professor of history at Tarleton State University and author of "Northern Men with Southern Loyalties: The Democratic Party and the Sectional Crisis."), “The United States isn’t a democracy — and was never intended to be” Washington Post, 11/6/2018, DOA 9/18/2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2018/11/06/united-states-isnt-democracy-and-was-never-intended-be/>

While voters will go to the polls on Tuesday and celebrate democracy in action, the sad truth is that the United States has never really been a functioning democracy. Since the founding of the nation, a minority of wealthy white men has always ruled, using legal and extralegal strategies to deny representation to women, people of color, immigrants, poor people and indigenous Americans. What we forget, and must confront, is that this was by design. Explicit restrictions on popular voting were written into the Constitution and are still being used today, though in far less obvious ways. From its inception in the hallowed halls of the Pennsylvania State House in 1787, the United States was intended to be a very limited democracy. The only part of the federal government elected by the people was the House of Representatives, yet even that chamber was skewed in favor of a minority because of the infamous Three-Fifths Clause of the Constitution. The Three-Fifths Clause boosted representation of white Southerners (who were in the decided minority in the new nation) by allowing them to count every three out of five enslaved people toward the overall population of their states, thereby affording them more representation. Slaves, of course, were not legally recognized as people and had no rights whatsoever, yet they were counted as such to give enslavers a political advantage. A dock worker in Bridgeport, Conn., with zero slaves, for instance, would count as only one person in the census, but a Maryland enslaver with five slaves would count as four. This was only the start of how the system was rigged. The president of the United States would be selected by an electoral college, not chosen by popular vote. Electors were also based on representation, which, because of the Three-Fifths Clause, again favored the slave states. So it wasn’t a surprise that 13 of the first 15 presidents (with the single-term exceptions of the Adamses) were either enslavers or proslavery. The enslaver minority ruled the nation with an iron fist. Their politicians created gerrymandering to rig elections, slaughtered indigenous Americans by the tens of thousands, annexed Texas in 1845, invaded Mexico in 1846, spread slavery across the continent and silenced the growing anti-slavery majority through congressional “gag rules” and censorship of mail and press. Though many states extended suffrage to propertyless white men in the 1820s and 1830s, it was expressly denied to blacks, women and natives. It took a bloody civil war and the deaths of more than 800,000 Americans to get rid of the Three-Fifths Clause and break the rule of the enslaver minority. During Reconstruction, Congress tried to change the rules, passing the 14th and 15th amendments to the Constitution in an attempt to give black men the right to vote and to take the United States a step closer to being an actual representative democracy. For a brief moment, it worked. Beginning in 1868, freedmen voted in huge numbers, often achieving more than 90 percent turnout at the polls. They voted for the South’s first black officials and public servants, as well as white Republicans vowing to reconstruct the South and fight for black rights. Dramatic changes to Southern society included the region’s first public schools, economic development, removal of property qualifications for voting and the elimination of harsh “Black Codes” aimed at restricting and criminalizing black life. The United States’ experiment with interracial democracy, however, was short-lived. The majority of white Southerners found other ways to assert their minority rule. They launched a wave of terrorism and mass murder with the goal of preventing black voting and overthrowing the new Reconstruction governments in their states. Any man, black or white, who dared vote Republican risked being lynched, tortured or assaulted, or all three. Homes were burned, families murdered and public officials assassinated, all in the name of “Redemption” (the biblical term used by white Southerners to describe the violent overthrow of Reconstruction). Even in the face of organized, uniformed terrorist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan, black men continued to exercise the franchise in impressive numbers well into the 1870s. Nevertheless, one by one, Southern states were “redeemed,” white supremacy was reinstated, and blacks were re-enslaved. By 1877, an era of “Second Slavery” had begun, and gerrymandering, poll taxes, literacy tests and white-supremacist terrorism guaranteed that most blacks would be denied a political voice. It was not until 1964 that the federal government (led by a now-liberal Democratic Party) passed civil rights legislation ending segregation and discrimination in public places. And in 1965, Congress passed the landmark Voting Rights Act aimed at eliminating all state-level obstacles to the franchise. But white supremacy reared its head anew. A “War on Drugs” disenfranchised black men once again, this time through felony convictions. Entire communities were declared war zones, and millions of people of color were arrested, convicted and stripped of their rights. Policymakers were explicit about their racial motives and desire to surreptitiously thwart democracy. President Richard Nixon "emphasized that you have to face the fact that the whole problem is really the blacks,” said Republican official H.R. Haldeman. “The key is to devise a system that recognizes this while not appearing to.” Top Nixon aide John Ehrlichman was more blunt about the War on Drugs: “We could arrest their leaders, raid their homes, break up their meetings, and vilify them night after night on the evening news. Did we know we were lying about the drugs? Of course we did.” By imprisoning and marginalizing people of color, the conservative white minority could not only reassert their racial hegemony but also maintain their political domination. The War on Drugs, which is still being waged today, has effectively disenfranchised millions of Americans. It, along with other attacks on democracy today, reveal how new and old tactics have emerged to promote minority rule: voter ID laws, purging voter rolls, arresting and deporting newly arrived Americans and gerrymandering congressional districts to deny certain groups representation. Moreover, white-supremacist terrorism has also resumed. In an eerie echo of Reconstruction, voters favoring racial equality and democratic reforms are being attacked in the media, assaulted in the streets and murdered in cold blood. Today, as we face the ballot box once more, significant portions of the U.S. population are unable to vote, and the United States continues to fall short of the democracy its people purport it to be.

## Case

### AT Inequality: 1NC

#### No impact to inequality and they can’t solve

Schrager, 16 -- economist, senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute,

[Allison, contributing editor at City Journal, a columnist at Bloomberg Opinion "Does income inequality hurt economic growth?," Quartz, 12-16-16, <https://qz.com/836927/is-income-inequality-always-a-bad-thing/>, accessed 6-29-21]

Income inequality is on the rise. Many economists and analysts take it as given that inequality does economic harm. But for something that has become conventional wisdom, there is surprisingly little evidence to make a definitive case that income inequality is bad for the economy. First, the facts: Income inequality has worsened significantly in both the US and UK since the 1980s. In macroeconomic terms, this was hardly a period of great stagnation. But could it have been even better if incomes were distributed more equally? For their part, researchers from the IMF believe that income inequality is bad for the economy, and published a series of papers to prove it. Most rely on data from poor countries, while others use smaller samples of richer countries to identify a correlation between inequality and growth. But these regressions don’t include factors that could have caused the increase in inequality; the exclusion of these factors makes it hard to establish causality between inequality and growth. There just isn’t any conclusive evidence on what inequality means for long-term growth. But there are several theories why it’s bad for the economy. Reduced spending power Poorer people spend more of their income, so if they get less of the pie that implies lower consumption and a weaker economy. (Put another way, the savings rate rises, since richer people save more of their incomes.) This argument takes a static view of the economy—savings are what provide the foundation for long-term economic growth, not spending. Also, it is at odds with the fact that the recent deterioration in income equality accompanied a fall in the savings rate. Lower social mobility A more compelling argument is that inequality undermines meritocracy, so the most talented don’t rise to the top. Instead, the children of the elite remain in positions of power, and the economy grows less innovative and productive as a result. Inequality may also discourage people from putting in effort to climbing the ladder, undermining work and effort. This may all be true, but it is hard to prove with data. As income inequality rose in the last few decades, statistics also showed the odds of moving up the economic class ladder stayed the same. Political instability Up until recently, people who worried about inequality argued it would concentrate power to the hands of the elites. But if a large enough share of the population feels left behind by economic forces, they will vote in anti-establishment, populist policies that could harm growth—not just for the elites, but for everyone. That may explain, to some extent, the Trump and Brexit victories; although the economic implications of those votes remain murky, there are plausible scenarios in which the poor are hurt hardest by rising inflation, lower growth, and protectionist policies. It is hard to know if the resentment of voters choosing to rebuke the status quo is related to rising inequality, stagnating incomes, or some combination of the two (among other non-economic factors). Some economists have developed a theoretical model that suggests people feel a natural aversion to inequality. What to do about it Assuming that inequality is a problem, how to address it? Progressives argue for more redistribution from rich to poor. But how this money is delivered and spent is crucial. Some share of the discontent isn’t purely economic, but social in nature. More money alone may not address those grievances, or promote labor mobility and greater community connections. A new book by Stanford historian Walter Scheidel (pdf) comes to a rather striking conclusion about the most successful ways to reduce inequality: “war, revolution, state failure and pestilence acted as the main equalizers of income and wealth both in the distant and the more recent past,” he writes. “We must ask whether fiscal policies that seek to curtail inequality are likely to succeed in the absence of these destructive forces, and what this suggests for the future of global inequality.” Less destructively, economist Tyler Cowen (pdf, p. 248) believes that business-friendly policies like reducing licensing regulations, promoting charter schools, and relaxing zoning rules would remove friction and boost income-generating opportunities for everyone, especially the poor. But these take a more classically liberal, free-market approach. If a by-product of rising inequality is support for protectionist politics, there is little chance that these sorts of policies will see the light of day.

#### AND- trends go neg

Strain, 20 -- economist at the American Enterprise Institute

[Michael R., "The American Dream Is Alive and Well," NYTimes, 5-18-20, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/18/opinion/inequality-american-dream.html>, accessed 7-22-21]

Imagine you could wave a magic wand and double the incomes of the bottom 20 percent of Americans. Would you do it? I imagine your answer is yes.

Now, suppose that in order to increase the incomes of people at the bottom by a factor of two, you had no choice but to increase the incomes of the top 20 percent by a factor of 2.5. Would you still wave the wand? If so, you may be less concerned about inequality than you think.

Inequality is the gap between people at the top and those at the bottom. Over the past decade, the national debate is mostly concerned with inequality of income, but other inequalities — in consumption and wealth, for example — are also frequently discussed. I think the magnitude of attention the top-bottom gap receives is misplaced, in part because of the thought experiment we discussed above.

Many people, myself included, would wave the wand in the second scenario because they would want to increase incomes of those at the bottom. In doing so, they would also be increasing inequality, because incomes at the top would increase by more than those at the bottom. But for those of us who care more about the absolute condition of those at the bottom than about the size of the rich-poor gap, waving the wand is the right choice to make.

Indeed, the size of the income gap — income inequality — is not high on my list of economic and social challenges facing the United States. Of course, the most immediate concern is the coronavirus pandemic and the economic policy and public health responses to it. But the longer-term trend in inequality is not nearly as important to economic prosperity and the health of society as some other critical problems. Those include the relatively slow rate of productivity growth the U.S. has experienced for many years, challenges in imparting education and skills to all Americans, the long-term decline in male employment and reduced economic dynamism, to name a few. And they include the absolute condition of low-income Americans, regardless of the size of the gap between them and households at the top.

Am I unusual in this regard? Do Americans really care as much about inequality as the attention by media and liberal politicians suggest? It may seem absurd to ask that question, but bear with me. During the 1990s, the income gap between households at the top and those at the bottom increased substantially. Inequality of market income — which includes labor, business and capital income — increased by 8 percent from 1991 to 2000, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office. The top-bottom gap in household income after taxes and government transfers increased by 11 percent. And yet income inequality received relatively little attention at that time.

Compare that period to the decade from 2007 to 2016 — the most recent period with budget office income data — when the attention inequality received exploded. Over this period, the rich-poor gap in market income grew by less than 2 percent. Inequality of post-tax-and-transfer income — the most comprehensive measure of the flow of resources available to households — actually fell by 7 percent. So as concern about inequality was exploding, measured inequality growth was stagnant or falling.

What could explain this? There’s a lot going on here, of course. But I would argue that part of the answer must be that inflation-adjusted wages for typical workers grew 44 percent more in the 1990s than in the 10 years beginning in 2007. It may be that concern about inequality is driven more by how people are faring in the labor market than the actual size of the rich-poor gap.

The last few years have witnessed much discussion about whether inequality suggests that capitalism itself is broken. Given that income inequality has been stagnant or declining over the most recent decade, the timing of that conversation is odd. Moreover, as of January — the month before the coronavirus pandemic began dealing a crippling blow to the economy — weekly earnings for workers in the bottom 10 percent were growing faster than those at the median, the unemployment rate for workers without a high-school diploma was further below its long-term average than the rate for college graduates, and the rewards from economic growth were flowing to vulnerable workers, including those with disabilities and criminal backgrounds.

The pandemic has changed this, of course. The economy is shrinking at a devastating rate, unemployment is soaring, and small businesses are in peril. But as they have shown time and again, American workers are resilient and are accustomed to facing — and overcoming — economic challenges.

Over the past three decades, despite three recessions, including the Great Recession, inflation-adjusted average wages for nonsupervisory workers increased by one-third. From 1990 to 2016, Congressional Budget Office data show that the median household saw inflation-adjusted market income increase by 21 percent, while post-tax-and-transfer income grew by 44 percent. Households in the bottom 20 percent saw that measure of income grow by two-thirds during this period. These numbers reflect significant increases in purchasing power for typical workers and households.

The American dream that our children will do better than ourselves is alive and well. Using the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, a data set that tracks families over time and across generations, I calculate that inflation-adjusted household income for three-quarters of people in their 40s today is higher than their parents’ income when their parents were of similar age. Eighty-six percent of people raised in the bottom 20 percent have higher household incomes than their parents did. Around eight in 10 men in their 40s today who were raised in the bottom 20 percent earn more money in the job market than their fathers did at a similar age.

This pandemic crisis will inflict tremendous economic suffering on millions, and its lingering effects will be with us for years. But history suggests that over the long term, the upward march of economic progress for workers and households will continue. Capitalism isn’t broken. The game isn’t rigged. Hard work does pay off. Workers do enjoy the fruits of their labor.

This is not a call for complacency. Even before the pandemic, it was obvious that the United States needs better policy to advance economic opportunity for low-income and working-class households. As I said earlier, the size of the rich-poor gap is not high on my list of concerns. But don’t be confused — we need to do more to help workers at and near the bottom.

Increasing federal earnings subsidies for low-income households — like the earned-income tax credit — would help to fight poverty and increase work force participation. Building skills through better education and work-based learning programs, like apprenticeships, can help workers to command higher wages in the labor market. Reforming unemployment insurance to offer re-employment bonuses this spring and summer in states that lift lockdown orders could help people hit by the pandemic to get back to work. These are just three examples among the many ideas that should be discussed.

These policies would reduce inequality. But that’s a side effect, not the goal. The goal is to help more people earn their own success, realize their potential — and live flourishing lives.

### Demo uq

#### Global democratization is high now – only a risk they flip it – other reports use incomplete metrics

Renat Kuenzi 18, University of Bern, head of the editorial dept @ Swiss Info, citing Bruno Kaufmann, Chairman of the Democracy Council and Election Commission, "Is global democracy in decline or development?", SWI swissinfo.ch, https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/directdemocracy/democracy-index-2017\_is-global-democracy-in-decline-or-development-/43896598

The Economist magazine’s Democracy Index 2017 sees “free speech under attack” and global democracy in “disturbing retreat”, but swissinfo.ch’s global democracy correspondent Bruno Kaufmann calls the findings into question. More than half the countries compared by British magazine Economistexternal link saw their democracy ratings drop last year – 89 out of 167 countries. The report, published last month, says that only 5% of the global population lived in “true democracies” in 2017, while nearly a third of the population was under authoritarian rule. The authors see “the biggest decline in years”. Switzerland is still among the top ten in the democracy rankings, but dropped from eighth to ninth position. Leading the table is Norway, followed by Iceland, Sweden, New Zealand, Denmark, Ireland, Canada and Australia. Switzerland shares its position with Finland, while Chad, Syria and North Korea are bottom of the list. Financial transparency “Switzerland continues to struggle when it comes to transparent rules on the financing of political parties,” says Kaufmann. “Efforts inside and outside parliament to tackle the issue are regularly dismissed as unnecessary. This undermines democracy.” Scandinavian countries are miles ahead of Switzerland with its opaque system, he adds. Kaufmann also says Switzerland lags behind in the political integration of foreign residents. “The Nordic countries are more progressive about granting participatory rights.” Narrow scope The comparison is based on 60 indicators and five categories: electoral process and pluralism; civil liberties; the functioning of government; political participation; and political culture. Kaufmann does not criticize the applied criteria as such, but argues that they are too few and the scope too narrow. “They only list voter turnout in elections and membership figures of trade unions under the category political participation. But it leaves out possibilities of direct democracy and citizens’ participation in a Swiss-style democracy with initiatives and referendums,” says Kaufmann. This explains why Nordic countries have such high scores, according to Kaufmann, who lives in Sweden and has dual Swiss-Swedish nationality. This is despite the fact that Swedes are among the citizens who hardly ever have a direct say in political decision making processes, he points out. Local democracy Kaufmann says the comparison is done only at the level of nation states. Possibilities and developments at a regional and local level, where it is often easier for citizens to play an active part, are not considered in the index. He points to the Global State of Democracies report published last September by the Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), an organisation of 30 countries including Switzerland. “Globally democracies are astonishingly resilient, according to the IDEA report,” says Kaufmann. “Participatory rights have even become stronger at a local and regional level over the past few years.” He says the research project Varieties in Democracy (V-DEM), which used no less than 400 democracy indicators, confirms this. Kaufmann says he can’t turn a blind eye to the pressure on democracies, including Turkey. “But in-depth analyses such as the reports by IDEA and V-DEM have found progress in the development of democracy. It’s out of place to speak of a ‘disturbing retreat of global democracy’”.

### Inequality UQ

#### Best recent empirics prove income inequality is stable now—their studies ignore risk premiums

Simmons 17

Lee Simmons (contributor for the Stanford Graduate School of Business; citing Hanno Lustig, professor of finance at Stanford Graduate School of Business). “Is Capitalism Bad for Workers?” Stanford Graduate School of Business. 7 June 2017. JDN. https://www.gsb.stanford.edu/insights/capitalism-bad-workers

But Hanno Lustig thought there might be more to it. A professor of finance at Stanford Graduate School of Business, he was used to thinking in terms of risk/return tradeoffs, and he knew that the amount of risk faced by firms had risen over the same period. If (as you’d expect) workers are more risk-averse than investors, he wondered, might that fact be contributing to the shift in income shares?

To find out, Lustig, along with Barney Hartman-Glaseropen in new window of UCLA and Mindy Zhangopen in new window of the University of Texas at Austin, built a theoretical model of the economy that incorporated business risk. When they set it in motion, the model yielded a surprising prediction: If risk was indeed a key factor, labor’s share of income at the average firm should have gone up, even as the aggregate share declined.

When the researchers analyzed **real-world data,** they were astonished to discover that **the prediction was correct.** “This is a very unexpected result,” Lustig says. “Nobody has approached this question on the level of the individual firm before. But if you look at the typical public company, **labor’s share** actually **has increased over time.”**

The Value of a Steady Paycheck

All companies face some economy-wide risk from business cycles and things like energy price shocks. But that’s a tiny fraction of the uncertainty that firms are exposed to, Lustig says. “Most of the risk is particular to a company or an industry.” It could be anything, like a supply problem or a new entrant or a competing innovation, that cuts into their margins. “Firm-specific risk is huge, and there’s much more of it now than there used to be.”

So at any given company, no one knows in advance how much money will actually be available to divvy up between investors and employees each year. But the suppliers of capital are much better able to cope with that uncertainty. “Equity owners have an advantage in bearing risk,” he says. “They can diversify by holding a portfolio of stocks. Labor income is usually tied to the performance of a single company.”

As a result, he says, “you’d expect **workers** to **trade off some** of their **earning potential for income security**” — a tacit understanding that their pay will remain constant even if the company’s fortunes decline. Of course, fixed wages and salaries are precisely what we see, and take for granted, in the real world. But there’s no reason it has to be that way.

“You can think of it as if companies are providing insurance to their employees,” Lustig says, with the insurance “premium” being implicitly deducted from each paycheck. “There’s a ton of evidence that firms really do try to insulate their employees from the ups and downs of business. And it makes sense.”

What happens, then, when firm-specific risk increases over time? “The insurance premiums go up,” Lustig says. And that shows up as stagnant wages that fail to keep pace with productivity. Multiply that across the entire economy, and labor’s share of national income shrinks.

But it doesn’t necessarily mean workers are worse off. “It looks like they’re being taken to the cleaners,” he says. “But remember, they benefit by being protected from market forces.” In a way, that income insurance is part of an employee’s compensation package, and it rises in value when the company’s prospects become more uncertain.

“I’m sympathetic to a lot of things Piketty says,” Lustig adds. “But he ignores all this idiosyncratic risk, and I think that’s too simplistic. At a minimum, this tells us **we need to be cautious in linking** the declining **labor share to rising inequality.**”

### 1nc turn

#### I will explicitly concede the civil war impact. I’m just going to straight turn it. Their internal link evidence is literally a buzzfeed article with zero quals. Here’s 15 surprising facts about income inequality that might shock you!

#### Moderate levels of inequality create a credible threat of insurrection, which guarantees elite compliance with democratic norms. That’s key to spreading and maintaining democracy broadly.

Christian Houle 14, PhD, University of Rochester, political science professor @ MSU, winner of the 2011 Kellogg/Notre Dame Award for best paper in comparative politics presented at the MPSA convention, “Inequality, Economic Development, and Democratization”, https://christianhoule.files.wordpress.com/2014/06/houle-inequality-economic-development-and-democratization2.pdf

Second, as suggested by inequality theories, inequality may foster democratization if the masses are able to create a credible revolutionary threat; a path to democracy I refer to as the ’distributive conflict’ route. Inequality can only lead to democracy through this path when two conditions are met. First, inequality can only affect democratization if the state is sufficiently developed to be eventually used to do at least some income/wealth redistribution (see Soifer 2013). Since very poor countries typically lack the capacity to redistribute (see Ravallion 2010), inequality should bear little relationship to democratization among the poorest autocracies. Transitions do occur in such countries but should be driven by mechanisms other than those described by inequality and modernization theories (e.g., pressure from external actors), and happen at all inequality levels. Second, the masses can only pose a credible revolutionary threat if the state does not dispose of a coercive apparatus sufficiently strong to easily repress them. However, the capacity of the state to repress/coopt largely depends on development. In fact, Kennedy (2010) and Miller (2012) explain the weakness of the effect of development on democratization by arguing that development has an additional effect, unforseen by modernization theorist: it increases the capacity of the ruling elites to retain power through coercion. In rich autocracies, inequality is thus unlikely to foster democratization through distributive conflicts. Middle income dictatorships, for their part, should be more likely than richer ones to follow the distributive conflict path to democracy – because states are weaker – but less likely to follow the modernization path – because the masses are poorer. In sum, autocracies that are rich and equal democratize through the modernization mechanisms, while unequal countries at middle levels of development democratize through distributive conflicts. I test the effect of inequality on the probability of democratization at different levels of development using a sample containing up to 123 authoritarian regimes between 1960 and 2006, which accounts for nearly all autocracies during that period. I find evidence consistent with my hypothesis: in poor autocracies inequality has no discernable effect; in middle income countries it fosters democratization; and in rich ones it harms democratization. The results are robust, among other things, to specifications that account for endogeneity and country-specific unobserved factors.

#### Especially true in wealthy countries

Ben Ansell 15, PhD, Professor of Comparative Democratic Institutions @ Nuffield College, “Inequality and Democratic Survival”, https://ostromworkshop.indiana.edu/pdf/seriespapers/2016s\_c/Samuelspaper.pdf

In this section we review what we call “redistributivist” theories of democratic survival. These approaches all formalize Dahl’s (1971) intuition that democracy survives when the costs of repression exceed the costs of toleration. To do so they focus on whether the elite will defend or seek to destroy democracy, given different levels of national income and different levels of economic inequality. Redistributivist models make the following assumptions: the incumbent elite pay no taxes under autocracy, but the median voter sets the tax rate under democracy. Given this the key issue for democracy’s viability is where the tax burden falls and who benefits from redistribution. Przeworski offered a redistributivist explanation for why, all else equal, democracy should be unstable in poor countries but impregnable in wealthy ones. He starts with Lipset’s (1963, 51) offhand comment that, “If there is enough wealth in the country so that it does make too much difference whether some redistribution takes place, it is easier to accept the idea that it does not matter greatly which side is in power. But if loss of office means serious losses for major groups, they will seek to retain office by any means available.” Formalizing this argument, Przeworski assumes that democratic electoral competition occurs between two parties - Right and Left, representing rich and poor - and that following Meltzer and Richard (1981), redistribution involves a proportional tax on everyone’s income and a uniform redistributive transfer to all voters. This logically means that under democracy the rich pay more in taxes than they receive in return. While Party R would prefer to pay no taxes, it must offer some redistribution to win over the median voter in a free and fair election. Party L prefers a higher tax rate than R, but cannot propose one so high that it would win the election but then spark a coup against the regime by R. The key question concerns the feasible set of redistributive schemes under which both L and R would respect the results of the election. Since democracy imposes redistributive costs on the elite, this boils down to the question of whether those costs are greater than the risks of attempting a coup. After all, coups can destroy lives and property - and they can fail, which might result in even greater loss of position and power to R. Likewise, the poor know that imposing high taxes risks pushing the elite into a situation where democracy seems more costly than the potential losses of a coup, and so temper their demands. This mutual wariness limits the potential extent of distribution under democracy. Przeworski (2008) reasons that democratic survival is therefore a function of the set of feasible redistribution schemes, which grows with national per capita income (2005, 260).1 Following Lipset, in poor societies the consequence of redistributive conflict is more severe for the elite, simply because there is so little to fight over–that is, any loss is a severe loss (Przeworski 2008). In poor societies the elite are therefore more likely to risk a coup, since democracy may impose higher costs than even a failed coup attempt (Gould and Maggio 2007; Przeworski 2006). In contrast, in a rich society the wealthy are more willing to tolerate democracy because the stakes are lower. As country-wealth increases, the poor demand less redistribution (relative to aggregate country wealth), meaning the elite would retain their economic status even given a relatively higher tax rate, and given the potentially high costs of a failed coup. In a wealthier society, elites can reconcile themselves to democracy and the redistribution that comes with it.