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Post-modern Conservatism as a New Form of Political Conservatism and Ethnic Prejudice in the USA

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Master's in Psychology of Intercultural Relations

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Department of Psychology

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Resumo

Recentemente, o mundo tem vindo a testemunhar eventos políticos com surpresa e confusão pelas pessoas. Exemplos são o surgimento de teorias da conspiração que ganharam milhares de seguidores e consequente mobilização de grupos pelas redes sociais, resultando na invasão do Capitólio, acontecimento subsequente à eleição de Trump nos EUA. Esta sucessão de eventos deixou as pessoas perplexas, levando à questão - O que causa tais comportamentos?

M. McManus sugere que estes fenómenos são uma evidência do conservadorismo pós-moderno. Contudo, verifica-se a ausência de pesquisas relativamente ao conservadorismo pós-moderno no ramo literário da psicologia. Portanto, o corrente estudo conceptualiza e operacionaliza o conservadorismo pós-moderno avaliando a relação com o preconceito étnico nos EUA e as potenciais variáveis de mediação relevantes. O estudo 1 foi um estudo exploratório sugestivo da definição de conservadorismo pós-moderno no seguimento da análise temática conduzida numa entrevista realizada com M. McManus. O estudo 2 examinou a relação entre o conservadorismo pós-moderno e o preconceito étnico, assim como o narcisismo coletivo e da nostalgia coletiva numa amostra de 200 residentes norte-americanos.

Os resultados, numa forma genérica, corroboraram que o conservadorismo pós-moderno é preditivo do preconceito étnico, acima de medidores tradicionais de conservadorismo político. Além disso, a nostalgia coletiva, não o narcisismo coletivo, verificou uma fonte de mediação significativa na associação entre conservadorismo pós-moderno e formas indiretas de medição de preconceito étnico. Os resultados apontam para algumas particularidades do conservadorismo pós-moderno na previsão do preconceito étnico, sendo ainda discutidos dentro do contexto da suscetibilidade da crença em falsas informações.

Palavras-Chave: conservadorismo pós-moderno, preconceito étnico, nostalgia colectiva

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Abstract

Over the past years, the world has witnessed major political events that left people surprised and confused. Some examples are the conspiracy theories that gained a lot of following and the mobilization occurring through social media that led to the storming of the Capitol following the election of D. Trump in the USA. This chain of events has baffled people and led to the question – what causes such behaviors?

Political scientist Dr. McManus suggests that these phenomena are evidence of post-modern conservatism in action. However, there is almost no research about postmodern conservatism in the psychological literature. Therefore, the present study attempts to conceptualize and operationalize post-modern conservatism and assess its relationship with ethnic prejudice in the USA as well as potentially relevant mediating variables. Study 1 was an exploratory study that proposed a definition of post-modern conservatism following a thematic analysis conducted on an interview with Dr. McManus. Study 2 examined the relationship between post-modern conservatism and ethnic prejudice as well as collective narcissism and collective nostalgia in the sample of 200 US residents.

The findings generally corroborate that post-modern conservatism is predictive of ethnic prejudice over and above traditional measures of political conservatism. Furthermore, collective nostalgia, but not collective narcissism, was found to significantly mediate the association between post-modern conservatism and indirect measures of ethnic prejudice. The results point to some specificities of postmodern conservatism in predicting ethnic prejudice and are discussed within the context of susceptibility to believe false information.

Keywords: Post-modern Conservatism, Ethnic Prejudice, Collective Nostalgia

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Introduction

Political trends are ever-changing in the world, resulting in new branches of classic political movements emerging, one of which is post-modern conservatism. Conservatism has always been a constantly changing ideology, as it naturally adapts to society and different world events that shape it. Moreover, classic conservatism is comprised of identity, hierarchy, tradition, and order to this day (Conservatism (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy/Spring 2020 Edition), 2019). However, in contemporary times, it seems to no longer be an ideology that only aims to preserve traditional practices and institutions, but now it has taken on a new form of epistemology regarding what counts as truth and how knowledge is acquired.

This change in the ideology of conservatism may be referred to as a post-modern twist in the political arena, which was marked by several very noticeable events. One of them is the presidential election of Donald Trump in 2016, one of the new wave conservatives according to McManus (personal communication, October 21, 2021). Bleakley (2021) suggested that ever since, the presidential elections are characterized by a general rejection of objective facts. Moreover, this election was further followed by interesting events. First was the ‘pizzagate’ conspiracy that was spread on social media claiming that Hillary Clinton (opponent of Trump in the aforementioned election) and her husband and manager had been operating a child abuse and sex trafficking ring in a pizza parlor in Washington D.C. (Kline, 2017). The spread of such disinformation led to events moving from the online world to the offline world, particularly in the case of ‘pizzagate’, as evidenced by Edgar Maddison Welch showing up at the pizza parlor, armed and in an attempt to free trapped children (Hummel, 2022). After only a year, another conspiracy theory gained publicity which managed to mobilize far more people than the first one. In 2017 the QAnon conspiracy theory emerged, yet again involving Hillary and Bill Clinton amongst other public people. QAnon supporters believe that the world’s media and governments are controlled by a handful of people who are satanic pedophiles and cannibals, while Donald Trump is believed to be working behind the scenes in order to work against these people (Moskalenko & McCauley, 2021). This time, the conspiracy theory of QAnon led to the storming of the Capitol on January 6th 2020, which aimed at regaining the ‘stolen’ presidency of Donald Trump (Moskalenko & McCauley, 2021). The sources of these theories do not provide any ground for the reliability of the information but encouraged people to conduct their own research, which proved to be enough to gain people’s support and belief (Hummel, 2022). Furthermore, this phenomenon is not solely restricted to the

US, which is evident from another event: Brexit. As Daniels James Sharp (2019) states in his article “we still seem hopelessly confused by”. This event was also driven by misinformation and can be marked by the words of Nigel Farage that some parts of Britain are foreign land as emphasized in his anti-immigration campaigns (Sparrow, 2019). What these incidents have in common is that they are driven by individuals and politicians who are politically positioned as conservative. Hence, a crucial question is whether political conservatism has evolved into a new form of conservatism which might help to better understand people’s willingness to engage in political action and narratives that are unfounded.

Dr. Matthew McManus has written books and several articles that tackle the meaning and the way post-modern conservatism functions. McManus (2019) characterizes postmodernism as an ideology first developed by the left, then becoming strongly incorporated into far-right political ideology, with elements of epistemological skepticism. The latter means that people with a conservative attitude tend to believe fake narratives or disinformation which could be explained by this new concept of post-modern conservatism. Additionally, given recent events and how news reporting has changed over the years, with more and more people obtaining their news from social media, it possesses a danger of consuming fake news (Metaxas & Finn, 2017). Furthermore, so called news sources that Metaxas and Finn (2017) referred to as ‘lies in the shape of news articles’ are aimed to confuse and anger voters, and often times this strategy is used by conservatives. Therefore, what makes contemporary conservatives different from their predecessors is this post-modern element, making it crucial to understand the consequence of adhering to post-modern conservatism.

Unfortunately, there is very little research regarding post-modern conservatism, with McManus being the most recent author on the topic in the political sciences. To date, almost no articles about post-modern conservatism are available in the database of Psychology (a search with “postmodern conservat*” in psychinfo yielded only 1 hit). Yet, from what is known from the literature in the political sciences is that it is a somewhat fuzzy concept and it is not entirely clear how to differentiate it from traditional political conservatism. Hence, this study aims to fill this void by conceptualizing and operationalizing post-modern conservatism in order to gain insight whether it has predictive power over and above traditional conservatism when examining intergroup relations such as ethnic prejudice.

1. Literature Review: Study 1

1.1 What is conservatism?

Conservatism is traditionally described as an ideology that resists change and functions upon justifying inequality between people (Jost et al., 2003). It is proposed that not all people are equal, therefore, society requires orders and classes, which leads to conservatives favoring hierarchical social structures (Wilson & Patterson, 1968). The conservative point of view is very well summarized by the idea expressed by Hearnshaw: “unless it is necessary to change it is necessary not to change” (as cited in Wilson and Patterson, 2012, p. 22).

In psychology, conservatism has been conceptualized by Wilson and Patterson (1968), who extracted seven criteria that described an extreme conservative, those being 1. religious fundamentalism, 2. right-wing political orientation, 3. insistence on strict rules and punishments, 4. intolerance of minority groups, 5. preference for conventional art, clothing and institutions, 6. anti-hedonistic outlook, and 7. superstitious resistance to science. In addition, conservatism is considered to be about having the will to hold status quo and maintain the order (Fear, 2020). Also, scholars agree that political conservatism has two dimensions: opposition to equality and resistance to change (Jost et. al., Jędrzejowska-Schiffauer & Schiffauer, 2017; Usslepp et al., 2021). Furthermore, Ditto et al. (2018) adds to definition of political conservatism in psychology referring to it as to a motivated social cognition that manifests itself as resistance to threatening and novel information and is tied to a biased way of thinking.

Conservatism has also been proposed as an important predictor of prejudice. Crawford and Brandt (2019) suggest that examining predictors of prejudice is a goal of social psychology and political conservatism is used as one of these predictors. For example, according to Crawford and Jussim (2017, p. 107) conservatism is related to prejudice against certain groups (e.g., atheists, blacks) and that conservatism predicts the prejudice, which is seen from a series of studies analyzed by Crawford and Jussim (2017). The studies have found that conservatism predicted prejudice against groups perceived as different (Crawford and Jussim, 2017, p. 102) independently from the operationalization of prejudice (measured by political intolerance, feeling thermometer, etc.) in nationally representative community and student samples. Luguri and colleagues (2012) have found that conservatives report higher levels of negative feelings towards ethnic minorities than the liberals and overall have shown increased levels of ethnic prejudice (Anderson & Cheers, 2017; Cowling et al., 2019; Quinton, 2019).

1.2 Operationalization of Political Conservatism

Recently, measures have adopted rather simplistic ways to measure conservatism by commonly using solely one item and asking respondents to identify whether they consider themselves as rather liberal or conservative on the political spectrum. Although one item measures are convenient as they are easy to administer, they raise concerns regarding their reliability in assessing political conservatism as individuals might find it difficult to accurately self-assess their political orientation. This led Everett (2013) to propose a 12-item measure. The scale by Everett (2013) uses a list of 14 words or phrases (i.e., abortion, welfare benefits, tax) that refer to important issues of conservatism and respondents are asked to indicate their stance on these issues indicating how negatively or positively they felt regarding a particular issue, where 0 means very negative and 100 means very positive. However, a major limitation of this measure is its confounding of political orientation with attitudes towards moralized issues (i.e., abortion; see Koleva et al. 2012) and outcomes of political conservatism (attitudes towards immigration, multiculturalism; see Zafirovski & Rodeheaver, 2013).

Alternative measures of traditional conservatism that are also used in psychological studies include personality traits or beliefs in the form of social dominance orientation (SDO) or right-wing authoritarianism scales (RWA) (Everett, 2013) which are considered to be political ideologies that make up political conservatism (Quinton, 2019). This means that RWA is commonly used as a measure that captures resistance to change, while SDO is used to measure support for inequality (White et al., 2019). However, the literature shows inconsistencies regarding the use of RWA and SDO measures. For instance, some studies use these measures as predictors for conservatism instead of operationalization of conservatism. Altemeyer (1998) in his series of studies has found that authoritarianism and SDO predicted conservative beliefs, even independently of one another. For example, Altemeyer (1998) conducted a series of nine studies with students from the Manitoba university in Canada and their parents, where political conservatism was measured by asking about party preference regarding the right-wing populist Reform party of Canada among others. The results showed that respondents favoring the Reform party of Canada scored the highest on RWA, SDO compared to those with a preference for liberal parties. Therefore, Altemeyer (1998) concluded that being politically conservative means being high on both SDO and RWA. Additionally, both measures accounted for over 50 % of variance in prejudice against Black and Indigenous people, Arabs, Latin-Americans, Quebecois, people of Asian ancestry and others,

which was measured with the Manitoba Ethnocentrism Scale (Altemeyer, 1998). Lastly, a study conducted by Charles-Toussaint and Crowson (2010) with 188 state university students from the Southwestern United States suggests that both RWA and SDO are positively related to prejudice against anti-immigration in regard to negative attitudes concerning international students.

Despite the definition of political conservatism as being an ideology that resists change, even the firmest of resistance cannot fully withstand changes in society. As a result, even conservative ideology is observed to be changing and adapting to contemporary world issues. For this reason, it is important to investigate new elements and aspects of political conservatism together with the new labels it has acquired. Therefore, study 1 will investigate a new form of contemporary conservatism that has been suggested in the political sciences, i.e., post-modern conservatism, and will attempt to conceptualize it from a psychological perspective.

1.3 New Forms Conservatism

The changes in political conservatism are very well captured by the beginning of Trumpism, that started with the election of Donald Trump as a president of the USA in 2016. Trump has dismissed the social-democratic program by Bernie Sander's as "unrealistic" and instead offered solutions to the problems for the people, that appealed to the minority of white workers in the US (Post, 2017). McManus (2019a) suggests that Trumpism is an ideology that is appealing to the conservatives and could be seen as a form of post-modern conservatism. However, very little is known about post-modern conservatism from a psychological perspective with only one publication addressing the relationship between postmodern beliefs and voting behaviors as conducted by Hull and Hull (2020). In this study postmodern beliefs were separated into two factors: early postmodernism and current postmodernism. Early postmodern beliefs referred to endorsement of religious tolerance, belief in individual autonomy and LGBTQ rights, while current postmodern beliefs were characterized by being anti-LGBTQ rights, anti-science, and emphasis on the notion of America first (Hull & Hull, 2020). The study suggests that the respondents that voted for Trump and those who identified as conservative held current postmodern beliefs, while voters for Hillary Clinton had higher scores on early postmodern beliefs that were associated with a liberal outlook. However, this study assessed postmodern beliefs and their effects on voting behavior, while the present study sought to investigate post-modern conservatism. Therefore, the scale created by Hull and Hull (2020) for postmodern beliefs had to be expanded including additional aspects that were lacking but necessary for assessing post-modern conservatism.

Generally, early postmodernism is seen as the beginning of postmodernist thought and started in the 1960s (Hull & Hull, 2020). The main difference between early and current postmodernism is that early postmodernism did not have an element of absolute truth, saw truth as relative to individual circumstances and considered it to be debatable (Hanlon, 2018). Furthermore, the early form of postmodernism was associated with intellectuals that supported the left, with the right seeing the notions raised by these intellectuals as a threat (Hanlon, 2018). Current postmodernism turned the tables and while formerly it was a threat to the right, now it is a threat to the left, especially in the association with Trump, who brought the idea of white men being the oppressed group in today's society to the public while disregarding the verifiability of the truth and calling all information available on social media whether it was correct or not as "fake news" (Hanlon, 2018; Hull & Hull, 2020). Therefore, more clarity is needed to better understand post-modern conservatism and its psychological manifestation, which motivated study 1, in order to better define the concept and better understand how to operationalize it.

2. Study 1: Case Study

2.1 Participants

Study 1 was a case study with the purpose to better understand the conceptualization and psychological manifestation of the term post-modern conservatism. The study was undertaken by interviewing political scientist Matthew McManus, a course director in the department of sociology and lecturer at the University of Calgary, and currently visiting assistant professor of politics at Whitman College. He completed his doctoral studies in socio-legal studies. McManus is also the most recent author of books about post-modern conservatism: *The Rise of Post-modern Conservatism Neoliberalism, Post-modern Culture and Reactionary Politics* and *What is Post-modern Conservatism: The Essays on Our Hugely Tremendous Times*. In these books, the author introduces the concept of post-modern conservatism, how conservatism has changed over time in the political landscape and provides a theoretical overview of post-modern conservatism in Western countries.

2.2 Materials

The interview was based on a semi-structured interview guideline containing seven main questions which were followed by probing questions. Braun and Clarke (2013) state that a semi-structured interview employs a set of questions that have been created prior to the interview, which do not necessarily have to be followed word by word. It means that the sequence or exact wording of the questions might not be followed. The interview consisted of open-ended questions that aimed to explore the concept of post-modern conservatism and followed up by questions about how post-modern conservatism manifests itself, see Annex A.

2.3 Procedure

Dr. McManus was contacted as an expert on the topic and gave his consent for the session to be recorded for transcription purposes. The interview was conducted via Zoom on October 21st 2021 and its duration was 1 hour and 5 minutes. The aim of the study was briefly explained and the questions were then posed. Next, the author was asked open-ended questions regarding post-modern conservatism. The interview was transcribed using Otter.ai software. A thematic analysis was performed with a unit of analysis consisting of a short phrase or a sentence informing the research question at hand. An inductive approach was used for this purpose, meaning that the conceptualization of post-modern conservatism was entirely informed by the themes that emerged from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

2.4 Results and Discussion

A total of five main themes were extracted that describe post-modern conservatism. A second coder, unfamiliar with the research topic, was asked to assist with analyzing the themes. Calculated interrater reliability was $\kappa = 0.65$, which can be considered satisfying (McHugh, 2012). Moreover, discrepancies were further discussed and resolved within the research team. The main identified themes were: (1) Against universalism/liberalism, (2) Restoration of national identity, (3) Loss of traditional power hierarchies, (4) Belief in alternative facts, and (5) Dealing with a chaotic world. The themes are presented below, ordered by frequency of codes. Theme 1 was coded 17 times, theme 2 – 14, theme 3 and theme 4 – 11 codes each, and lastly theme 5 had 1 code. Even though, theme 5 had only one code it does not make it less central theme for post-modern conservatism and is seen as an antecedent of post-modern conservatism.

Theme 1: Against Universalism/Liberalism

The first theme *Against universalism and/or liberalism* refers to the post-modern conservatism tendency to reject worldviews and ideals of universalism and/or liberalism. This is similar to Schwartz' (2007) conceptualization of the general universalism value type which includes social justice, equality values, and prioritizing the welfare of members outside the in-group. Liberalism, on the other hand, is related to forms of political participation that are more direct and advocate for equal rights for all racial and cultural groups (Knutsen, 1990). McManus states in the present interview that:

“postmodern conservatives do not like this kind of universalistic ethos, and they connect it with this kind of globalization, a globalized outlook, that all people are equal and that everyone should be entitled to certain kind of benefits regardless of where they come from, even if they consider them as not belonging to the state or to the nation”.

Furthermore, according to McManus, post-modern conservatives argue that even the last vestiges of universalism that are found in, for example, British conservatism should be eliminated because the horizons of meaning must be located within one's traditional identity. Consequently, four subthemes were found to be related to this overarching theme:

(a) *against the inclusion of minorities*, which is encouraged by different progressive and liberal groups that advocate for the inclusion of women, LGBTQ individuals, ethnic and racial minorities, i.e., groups that have been historically marginalized by privileged groups. This is perceived as a threat to post-modern conservatives' traditional identity, and therefore they engage

in similar kind of identity politics as the liberals, yet with the aim to promote their traditional identity which is exclusive.

McManus explains,

So you think about advocacy on the part of different identity groups in countries by progressive and liberal groups, women, LGBTQ individuals, ethnic and racial minorities. And there's this notion that an emphasis on identity in this part and the kind of politics of identity is not just distinctively postmodern. But distinctly leftist in orientation writes about demands for inclusion, by identity groups that have historically been marginalized by predominant discourses if you want to use the Foucauldian term, right. But what I'm pointing out is that the postmodern culture doesn't just have to generate those kinds of identitarian movements, it can also generate right-wing identitarian movement. Right-wing fans of identity politics that are just as fixated on the preservation of identity groups that they associate with other counterparts on the left but articulate those demands in very different kind of fashions. Because where you see left-wing identity politics movements on behalf of women, trans individuals, racial minorities, demanding inclusion and political power, where they've always historically been denied it.

(b) *All are equal and deserve the same rights*, which supports the idea of universalism and its claim that all people deserve to be treated equally which is not supported by post-modern conservatives:

Universalism, by its very nature, implies that we have to treat people to a certain degree at least equally. Your concerns are equal to mine, somebody who's in Africa, his concerns are equal to somebody who's in my nation, etc. Conservatives do not like this. Or post-modern conservatives do not like this kind of universalistic ethos, and they connect it with this kind of globalization, a globalized outlook, that all people are equal and that everyone should be entitled to certain kind of benefits regardless of where they come from, even if they consider them as not belonging to the state or to the nation.

(c) *Globalization/Westernization* refers to pushing globalizing policies at the expense of those who have been traditionally in power and who are seen as the legitimate rulers of the state. Hence, globalization and westernization pose a threat to traditional identity and power hierarchies:

Post-modern conservatism is the latest expression of this capacity to mutate in response to what they take to be the most important threat right now, which is the spread of this kind of enlightenment liberal ideals through globalization and international institutions.

(d) *Reaction to the left*, manifests itself in negative attitudes towards liberals and a rejection of liberal values. There is a conviction that left-wing movements, which seek the inclusion of minorities, should be opposed to due to their 'damage' to social stability and society at large.

McManus states:

This idea that uppity left-wing movements and property liberal movements are demanding inclusion for these groups, they have never really had power before, at least they haven't until very recently. And these kinds of demands are undermining society, social stability, and frankly, our sense of how the world is. And once anxieties about these kinds of movements reaches a certain threshold, you can start to see the counter reactions that are described in the book starting to come to the floor, usually, interestingly enough, adopting a lot of the same rhetoric as the political left that they tend to juxtapose themselves against, but by again, advocating for very different kind of political purposes.

Theme 2: Restoration of National Identity

According to the interviewee, post-modern conservatism puts an exceptional focus on national identity as a locus of meaning. As a result, it is very important for post-modern conservatives to maintain national traditions and restore national identity and social power, which may take the form of endorsing right-wing politics. This position is illustrated by this thought of McManus: “<...> there's much more of an emphasis again [...] on national identity as the sole horizon within which people should make sense of their lives”. In addition, out-groups are seen as not trustworthy and as a threat to this national identity. The theme *restoration of national identity* describes how post-modern conservatives react to perceived identity threats and has six subthemes:

(a) *Identity as guidance*, namely traditional identity is seen as guidance:

Once you have a postmodern culture, though, I think that there are two things that are the primary catalyst for the emergence of a kind of post-modern conservative movement. One is a deep anxiety about traditional identity and the associated hierarchies that one would affiliate with it, and this belief that they are under attack by some universalizing or rationalizing global force, whether that be Europeanisation as pushed by the EU, cosmopolitanism, as pushed by the United Nations or liberal elite institutions in the United States.

(b) *National traditions*, meaning that identity is maintained by upholding traditional values:

Whereas post-modern conservatives, tend to argue that we need to even get rid of these last vestiges of universalism that you found in British conservatism, and locate horizons of meaning exclusively within traditional identity, without any kind of reference to a sublimated horizon beyond tradition at all.

(c) *Trust in national in-group*, which is the only group that can be trusted:

[...] people from Mexico, people from the Middle East, are these people that they considered undeserving, unworthy and dangerous.

(d) *Preservation of identity* is very important for post-modern conservatives. Seeking new identities is perceived as too frightening. Therefore, they tend to lean on the known and already

established right-wing politics and support the advancement of their traditional identity by engaging in identity politics which ultimately serves to preserve their group identity:

But what I'm pointing out is that the postmodern culture doesn't just have to generate those kinds of identitarian movements, it can also generate right-wing identitarian movements, right, right-wing fans of identity politics that are just as fixated on the preservation of identity groups that they associate with other counterparts on the left but articulate those demands in very different kind of fashions.

(e) *Nationalistic elites* who are those that can be trusted with the power to control the country and who are seen as legitimately owning such power:

And of course, you saw the same thing in the United Kingdom by this notion that Brussels again, is responsible for pushing this kind of globalized agenda, we need to take back control and give the country back to the people who legitimately should own it, which are these kind of conservative, nationalistic elites.

(f) *National identity*, which is very important to post-modern conservatives because it provides meaning and guiding principles for what is right or wrong. McManus explains:

This fixation on identity, usually national identity, but not exclusively, as a locus of meaning. And as a kind of basis for framing our epistemic and moral outlooks, right? You didn't necessarily see that in all earlier variants of conservatism, or at least it wasn't expressed in the same way.

Theme 3: Loss of Traditional Power Hierarchies

The third theme *loss of traditional power hierarchies* reveals that post-modern conservatives have lost privileges that used to belong to them, and they are actively seeking to restore these privileges. McManus states that post-modern conservatives have a feeling that they have lost privileges associated with their majority's social identity and therefore their sense of superiority, power, and entitlement due to the universalism/liberalism and globalization movements. An example thereof is that the theme *loss of traditional power hierarchies* can be seen in post-modern conservatives are not supportive of feminism, however rather support traditional gender roles and seek to maintain patriarchal tendencies. Generally, they aim to regain control of their country, which should belong to its people, of whom they consider themselves to be the representatives. This theme consists of three subthemes that are as follow:

(a) *Loss of privileges/victimization*, which means that post-modern conservatives have lost their traditional privileges and feelings of superiority and live in the fear of continuous loss of their

privileges, therefore control, dominance, and power should be restored to the prior historical owners thereof, as they perceive they deserve it:

This kind of opens us up to the argument that, frankly, we need to be consistent, but that's by allowing in many immigrants, allowing people to have an opportunity to just become American if they want. And we don't want to do that, because it's decreasing the privilege of the people, the privileges, and the status of the people who live here by endorsing these kinds of big "L" liberal values, opening society up to immigration, allowing more social mobility for groups that have traditionally been marginalized, we want none of that.

(b) *Traditional gender roles*, resisting the change in gender roles and keeping the patriarchal tendencies alive with a complete rejection of feminism:

And a lot of what they're eager for is for that to be restored, right? To gain back this sense of stability, identity, and superiority that comes from traditional gender roles and are often attracted again to outlets that are anti-feminist for this reason, or at least are critical of feminism. And some of the more extreme versions will just advocate a wholesale rejection of the feminist movement going back at least to the 1950s, and a restoration of quasi-traditional gender roles for that reason.

(c) *Loss of identity*, as they perceive it is as having been taken away from post-modern conservatives due to globalization. There is a loss of traditional privileges, control of the country that should belong only to its people, which are those who come from the blood and soil of their state. McManus explains,

What you see with right-wing identity politics in the postmodern moment, is demand for a restoration of identities, who once upon a time were in charge to what post-modern conservatives believed to be their proper place, which is back on the head of the totem pole.

Theme 4: Belief in Alternative Facts

The fourth theme, *belief in alternative facts*, shows how flexible truth and reality is in post-modern conservatism. It is acceptable for post-modern conservatives to stretch out the facts to fit their narrative in order to get a sense of stability. Many times, alternative facts are needed to fill in the void that is created when rejecting science, epistemological claims, and having skeptical dispositions. This theme has four subthemes:

(a) *Skepticism towards rationalist epistemologies*, which means that post-modern conservatives are not only skeptical towards rationalist epistemologies but are also likely to completely reject them, as rationalist epistemologies advocate that people, regardless of the social groups they belong to, are not that different. McManus states:

Somebody in Africa is not all that different from somebody living in Canada. So, there is really no reason for us to draw artificial divides between who is worthy of moral worth. [...]

post-modern conservatives, in particular, are really keen to emphasize this idea that we need to make these kinds of discriminations.

(b) *Rejection of science* includes the opposition of claims that speak on behalf of science and progress. If they do not support the skeptical disposition of post-modern conservatives in justifying their stance on a matter, they are rejected:

And the way they give us a kind of very overtly postmodern twist, as to expressing relentless skepticism of rationalizing epistemologies. Things that claim to be speaking on behalf of science, on behalf of progress on behalf of consistency.

(c) *Blaming foreigners* is one of the consequences of belief in alternative facts where scapegoats are identified to be held accountable for when peoples' lives, livelihoods and economy is threatened:

And they mobilize this level of support on exactly the basis that I was talking about, right? Resistance to scientific leads deep resistance to the redistribution policies pushed by the Social Democratic Party here and Justin Trudeau, and a deep animosity that this was somehow brought about by some mysterious way they never specified by foreigners and allowing in too many people. And you saw iterations of this kind of thing happen all across many countries.

(d) *Alternative facts provide sense of stability* which according to McManus is a dispositional characteristic of post-modern conservatives as they tend to fit different facts of a situation into what they consider to be a meaningful narrative that provides a sense of stability to their worldview. As McManus says:

Kellyanne Conway made a comment about how it is that regular news media had their facts. And she had, and the President had alternative facts. Now, this was just kind of a tipping point for me where I thought like, well, that's a very odd comment to make, and this notion of alternative facts. And so what I started to do was return to looking at many of the classics in the conservative tradition, to figure out how it is that a unique kind of epistemology could emerge within a kind of conservative movement that would frame things in this way.

Theme 5: Dealing with a Chaotic World

The last defining theme of post-modern conservatism is *dealing with a chaotic world*. This feeling of loss over traditional power structures, of a national identity, and national traditions left post-modern conservatives feeling that the world is falling apart into disorder, and demands the left-wing are making to both social stability and society as a whole. Therefore, post-modern conservatives believe that stability and structure can only be rebuilt by falling back to traditional identity. McManus says,

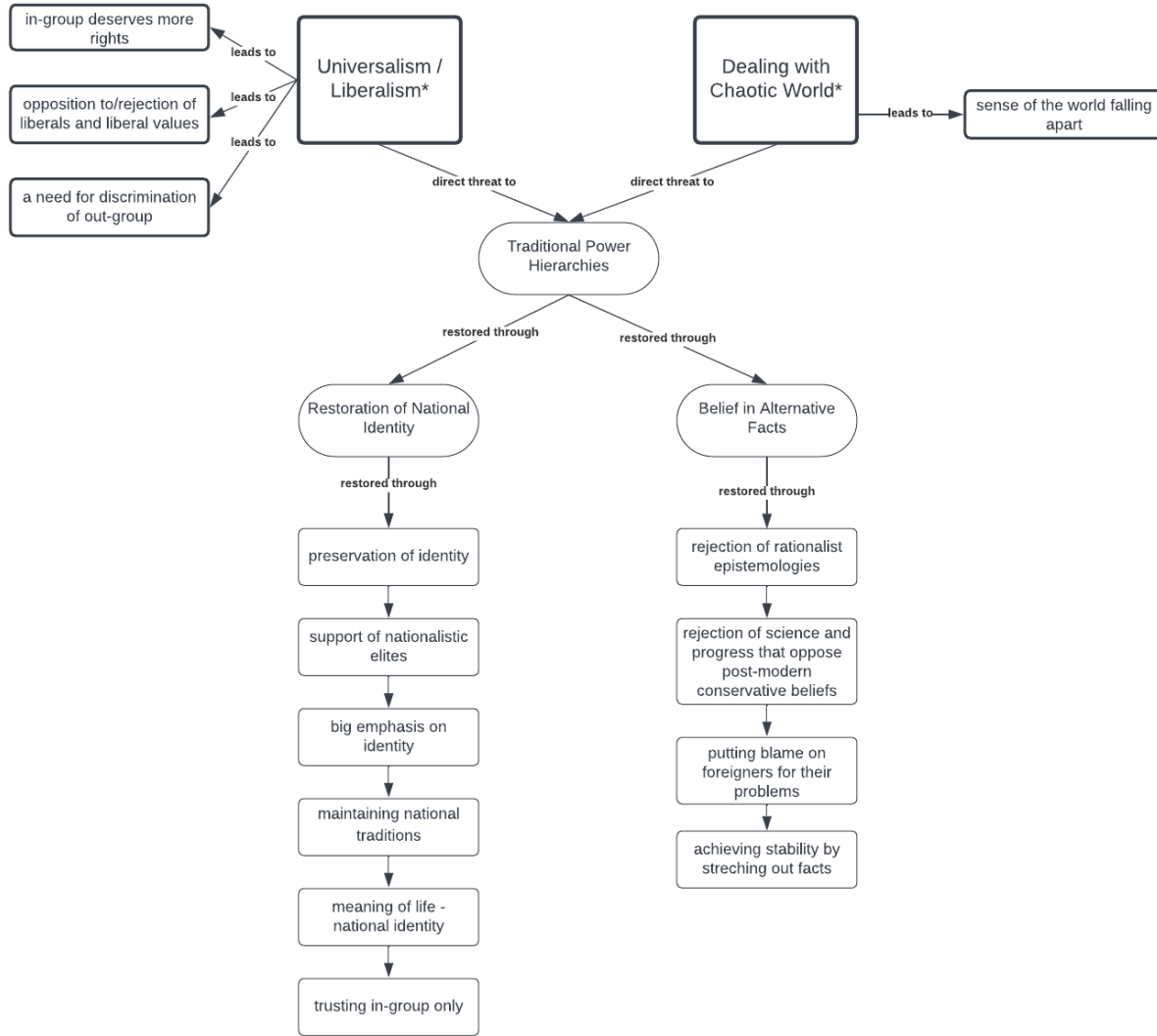
But what you find with conservatism, or post-modern conservatism in particular, is that they tend to fit the different facts of a situation into what they consider to be a meaningful narrative that provides a sense of stability to their worldview, because one of the dispositional things that's characteristic of post-modern conservatism, is this belief that the world is falling apart falling into disorder. And the reason it's falling into disorder is because traditional standards associated with privileging certain groups in society are falling away.

2.5 Conclusion: Post-modern Conservatism Definition

After the data collection for Study 1 and conducting a thorough thematic analysis it was possible to provide a definition of post-modern conservatism. Post-modern conservatism is a political belief system that appeals to people who feel that they have lost their privileges, power, and influence in society due to the liberalism, universalism, and globalization movements which has granted more rights to social minorities that have historically been marginalized. This change in society is seen as a zero-sum game where granting more rights to minorities is seen as a threat to one's own rights, traditions, and identity. As a result, post-modern conservatives try to restore what they believe they have lost by using their own facts to fit the narrative, which are not necessarily scientifically supported and carry an exaggerated fixation on national identity and traditions.

As shown in *Figure 1*, the themes are closely interrelated. This is also evident from the quotations that have been analyzed. Universalism/liberalism and the need to deal with a chaotic world poses a direct threat to traditional power hierarchies, which is one of the central themes of post-modern conservatism. Therefore, it is expected that post-modern conservatives will act through *restoration of national identity* by maintaining national traditions, showing support for nationalistic elites, trusting only their in-group and through *belief in alternative facts*, by stretching out facts in order to fit their narrative and rejecting science and rationalist epistemologies to restore traditional power hierarchies.

Figure 1. Conceptual Map of Post-modern Conservatism



Note. Universalim/Liberalism and Dealing with Chaotic world are antecedents of Post-modern Conservatism.

3. Literature Review: Study 2

3.1 Post-modern conservatism

The term “post-modern conservatism” was first developed by Peter Lawler and further developed by Matthew McManus. Post-modern conservatism concerns right-wing politics that oppose multiculturalism, reject social and political change and liberal open-mindedness (McManus, 2019b). Furthermore, post-modern conservatism is characterized as a reactionary support for the social hierarchy (McManus, 2019a, p.115). At a first glance it might seem that post-modern conservatism is not much different from traditional conservatism as both share opposition to any social or economic change, are against minority groups and favor hierarchical structures in the society. However, postmodern culture has brought some more changes that affected conservatism (Sharp, 2019).

Based on the results from Study 1, it can be concluded that the most distinctive characteristics of post-modern conservatism that make it somewhat different from traditional conservatism are lack of self-coherence, social identity becoming a locus of meaning, tendency to appeal to irrationalist sources and a strong longing for power and privileges that individuals perceive to have been taken away from them (see also Halliwell & Morley, 2008; McManus, 2019a; Sharp, 2019). The lack of self-coherence is very evident in Trump’s rhetoric, the most famous post-modern conservative, who would announce contradictory information in a mere matter of days. Moreover, post-modern conservatives adopt a pastiche identity that is built upon older identities, which creates a feeling of having lost privileges and power, meanwhile blaming foreigners, pluralism and social change for this loss as they have contaminated the society that once was pure (McManus 2019b). For this reason, restoring the old social structures and rebuilding society the way it once was for post-modern conservatives is seen as an ultimate goal and it creates a feeling of nostalgia for the way the world was before (McManus, 2019b). Lastly, their appeal to disregard rational sources leads to believing in conspiracy theories and false claims and information, as facts are no longer perceived as important as long as they fit the narrative of post-modern conservative agenda (McManus, 2019a).

At first, it may seem that traditional and post-modern conservatisms are not distinctively different and share many key characteristics. However, this twist brought upon the traditional conservatism by postmodern culture has caused changes in the society and politics and requires a new term to describe contemporary conservatism.

3.2 Collective narcissism, post-modern conservatism, and ethnic prejudice

A belief that the group one belongs to is exceptional and not appreciated enough by others is referred to as collective narcissism (Golec de Zavala et al., 2019). Individuals who endorse collective narcissism are found to be hostile, prejudiced, more prone to biased perceptions in the context of intergroup situations and have shown a tendency for conspirational thinking (Golec de Zavala et al. 2019). Moreover, they do not trust any other groups as they perceive them as threatening, and for this reason collective narcissism very well predicts general prejudice. For example, studies that assessed collective narcissism in US-Americans found that they held negative attitudes towards undocumented Latinos (Lyons et al., 2013) and Chinese (Cai & Gries, 2013). Another study, that was carried out in the UK by Golec de Zavala and colleagues (2017) suggests that collective narcissism is as important in predicting political behavior as are social dominance orientation and right-wing authoritarianism. Furthermore, it is also as good if not better of a predictor than SDO and RWA of prejudice against immigrants (Golec de Zavala et al., 2017). Such tendency to conspirational thinking as it could be put in the words of believing in the alternative facts, hostility and lack of trust in out-groups is overlapping with the one of post-modern conservatives (McManus, 2019a). Furthermore, national identity is important for both groups of people – the ones who endorse collective narcissism (Golec de Zavala et al., 2019) and the ones who endorse post-modern conservatism (McManus, 2019a).

Study results by Cichocka and colleagues (2017) have demonstrated that indeed collective narcissism has a different relationship with SDO and RWA, where narcissism was indirectly related to higher prejudice through higher levels of SDO but had the opposite effect through RWA, where lesser levels of RWA were associated to lower prejudice levels (Cichocka et al., 2017). Despite the fact that the studies rarely consider collective narcissism as a mediator, Cichocka and Cislak (2020) proposed an idea that collective narcissism could act as a mediator. Marchlewska and colleagues (2018) in their research has found that collective narcissism in the sample from UK predicted support for Brexit, in the sample from the US – predicted support for Trump and was a predictor for adapting populist views. Collective narcissism was not found to be a mediating factor but rather a predictor. Therefore, Marchlewska and colleagues (2018) address the lack of studies using collective narcissism as a mediator in their work and suggest that collective narcissism could serve as a mediator in the observed relationships between in-group disadvantage and support for Brexit and Trump (Marchlewska et al. 2018). Therefore, collective narcissism was chosen as a mediator

for a present study, expecting that ethnic prejudice will increase through collective narcissism in a relationship with post-modern conservatism.

Post-modern conservatism is very much concerned with social identity, which goes so far as national identity being considered as a locus of meaning for this type conservatives (McManus, 2019a). According to the post-modern conservative agenda, the importance and privilege status of the group must be restored in the society and these two aspects bring us to the concept of collective narcissism, which has overlapping characteristics with contemporary forms of conservatism. Collective narcissism too is based on nationalism, in-group being entitled to privilege, tendency to fall for conspirational thinking, being hostile and prejudiced (Golec de Zavala et al., 2019). Furthermore, the element of nationalism in both phenomena puts post-modern conservatives in a higher probability to translate any kind of loss for their group, even economical losses, since minority groups are being granted the privileges that they historically have always been deprived from (McManus, 2019a), into feeling of loss of identity (Fukuyama, 2019, p. 89). Both, post-modern conservatives and individuals endorsing collective narcissism share the sense of being disrespected in their own land and have a common enemy that has put them into this fragile situation, i.e., minority groups (McManus, 2019a). Moreover, from the previous research that has been discussed in the section 2.3 it is evident that collective narcissism not only has predictive power of ethnic prejudice in relation to traditional conservatism but also works well as a mediator (Cichocka et al., 2017). Therefore, the hypothesis that collective narcissism can serve as a mediator comes from literature on conservative ideology and social identity. For this reason, it is expected that collective narcissism will also have predictive value and will show increased levels of ethnic prejudice in relationship to post-modern conservatism.

3.3 Collective nostalgia as a mediator for the conservatism-prejudice link

Collective nostalgia is commonly defined as affectionate emotion or a sentimental feeling directed towards the past of one's group and idealist view of the groups' features (Lammers & Baldwin, 2020; Wildchut et al., 2014). Lammers and Baldwin (2020) mentions nostalgia as an integral part of conservative politics and that the latter is sometimes referred to as politics of nostalgia. Generally, nostalgia is seen to bring a more positive emotional longing for the past (Sedikides & Wildchut, 2019). However, nostalgia can lead to negative emotions as well, such as feeling that in the past things were better (Dimitriadou et al., 2019). A study by Wohl and colleagues (2020) found that whether collective nostalgia predicts increased or decreased levels of ethnic prejudice solely

depended on the sentiment, i.e., whether one has sentiments for the culturally open American society (lower levels of prejudice in relation to collective nostalgia) or more homogenous society in the past (higher levels of prejudice in relation to collective nostalgia).

Previous research has shown that political conservatism has high predictive value of ethnic prejudice through social dominance orientation and right-wing authoritarianism, two political ideologies that are commonly used to assess conservatism (Everett, 2013). Moreover, Merchlewska et al. (2020) added to the previous research that it also predicts increased levels of ethnic prejudice. Lastly, collective nostalgia, that is considered an integral part of conservative politics (Lammers & Baldwin, 2020) showed empirical evidence for predicting increased ethnic prejudice through social identity that is attached to the group one belongs to and its past, if the sentiment is directed towards homogenous society (Wohl et al., 2020). Hence, it was expected that collective narcissism will mediate the relationship between post-modern conservatism and ethnic prejudice.

The theme of nostalgia is seen in both post-modern conservatism and collective narcissism and is expressed through the element of nationalism. Fukuyama (2019) states that the nationalism is built upon this intense nostalgia referring to the community that once was strong and now this community is divided and confused by pluralist modern society. Furthermore, some scholars claim that nostalgia creates a stronger bond between group members, unifies them, and solidifies shared social identity (Wildchut et al., 2014). Sedikes and Wildchut (2019), Dimitriadou and colleagues (2019), and Wohl and colleagues (2020) have found that collective nostalgia can predict both negative and positive feelings towards ethnic minorities, depending on the sentiment for the past and how one has seen the group they belong to in the past. However, there is a lack of evidence showing whether collective nostalgia could work as a mediator. Nonetheless, it is expected that it will mediate relationship between post-modern conservatism and ethnic prejudice by increasing level of ethnic prejudice due to post-modern conservatives holding a belief that the society used to be better in the past when the marginalized groups were not granted privileges and rights (McManus, 2019a). In the present research we will focus on the negative aspects of nostalgia and how does it work in the collective setting as a mediator between post-modern conservatism and ethnic prejudice.

3.4 Present study and hypotheses

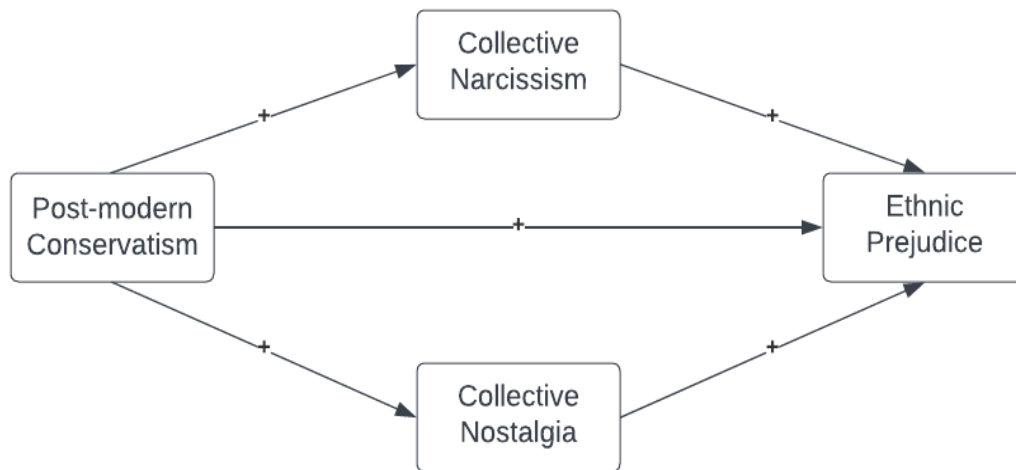
The present study aims to explore a new concept of post-modern conservatism from a psychological perspective and its association with ethnic prejudice in the United States of America.

In particular, it is expected that higher levels of post-modern conservative beliefs will be associated with increased ethnic prejudice and that collective narcissism and collective nostalgia mediate this relationship. Furthermore, the study will control for social dominance orientation and right-wing authoritarianism to investigate whether post-modern conservatism accounts for increased ethnic prejudice beyond measures of traditional conservatism.

The present study contributes to theoretical and empirical value, and it has relevance in the context of current political and societal events. Theoretically, the present research adds to the existing literature on post-modern conservatism and brings the phenomenon from political sciences to psychology, helping to understand the psychological processes behind it and how it affects the levels of ethnic prejudice. Empirically it is a second study after Hull and Hull (2020) that attempts to conceptualize and operationalize post-modern conservatism and a first study that attempts to test whether this phenomenon has implications on ethnic prejudice. Based on the existing literature, a conceptual model (Figure 2) and the hypotheses were formulated.

Figure 2

Conceptual Mediation Model



Hypotheses

H1: Post-modern conservatism will be positively associated with ethnic prejudice.

H2: The relationship between post-modern conservatism and ethnic prejudice will be mediated by collective narcissism (H2a) and collective nostalgia (H2b).

4. Study 2: Correlational Study

4.1.1 Participants

Participants were recruited via the MTurk platform. Of the 209 participants, 2 did not pass the eligibility question as they were not residents in the US and 7 did not complete the survey. Hence, a sample of 200 participants was used for the analysis. The majority of respondents were male ($N=126$, 63 %). The participants' age ranged from 18 to 69 years, with 167 (83.5 %) respondents identifying as White/European American, 12 (6 %) as Black/African American, 7 (3.5 %) as East Asian/East Asian American, 6 (3 %) as American Indian or Alaska Native, 6 (3 %) as Latino/Hispanic American, 5 (2.5 %) as South Asian/South Asian American, and 1 (0.5 %) as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

Slightly more than half of the sample reported that they are living comfortably on their present income ($N = 112$, 56 %), while the other half reported that they are either coping on their present income ($N = 47$, 23.5%), finding it difficult on their present income ($N = 38$, 19%), or finding it very difficult on their present income ($N = 3$, 1.5%). Additionally, more than half of the respondents hold at least an undergraduate degree ($N = 113$, 56.5 %), while 32.6 % hold a graduate degree ($N = 65$), 21.5 % have a high school degree ($N = 21$) and 0.5 % have less than a high school degree ($N = 1$). Furthermore, participants were asked about their political beliefs related to economy (please indicate your political beliefs from left/liberal to right/conservative on issues of the economy, e.g., social welfare, government spending, tax cuts) and social issues (please indicate your political beliefs from left/liberal to right/conservative on social issues, e.g., immigration, same-sex marriage, abortion) where they were asked to self-evaluate their position on a 7-point Likert type scale (1 = liberal, 7 = conservative). On average, respondents tend to hold more conservative beliefs in both areas, i.e., beliefs related to the economy ($Mean = 4.48$, $SD = 1.87$) and beliefs related to social issues ($Mean = 4.15$, $SD = 1.92$).

4.1.2 Measures

The measures of the study are reported below in the order they were presented in the questionnaire. Composite scores were computed by averaging items that reliably assess a construct.

Post-modern conservatism scale. The initial aim was to develop a scale based on all themes obtained from Study 1. However, time constraints and the discovery of a key paper reporting a scale on general postmodern beliefs led to a slight change of plans (see Hull & Hull, 2020). Instead, the conceptual map of Study 1 was used to identify the antecedents of post-modern conservatism

in the form of what post-modern conservatives react to, i.e., universalism/liberalism and an increasingly complex world which is perceived as chaotic. The result is a perceived power struggle, a focus on national identity and an epistemic skepticism. A focus on national identity is also a key characteristic of traditional conservatives which distinguishes them from liberals, as conservatives tend to be more nationalistic (see also, Verkuyten et al., 2022). Furthermore, the epistemic skepticism is a key characteristic of postmodern thought (Derrida; Foucault as cited in Sharp, 2019). Hence, it was decided that the essence of post-modern conservatism is best represented by the themes of *traditional power hierarchies* and *belief in alternative facts*. Seven items out of 24 of Hull & Hull's (2020) scale of postmodern beliefs were used to measure belief in alternative facts. The selected items were the ones that assessed the second factor "reason and the nature of truth" in the original scale because it represented best the theme of *belief in alternative facts* (i.e., 1-*There is no absolute truth; everyone's truth is unique.* 2-*What is a fact today could be shown to be wrong tomorrow.* 3-*Expertise is overrated; pretty much anyone's opinion is as good as anyone else's.* 4-*There is too much emphasis in higher education on logic and rational thinking.* 5-*These days it is hard to tell what news is real and what is fake.* 6-*All events have rational causes, even if we don't understand them fully yet.* 7-*When I have to make an important life decision, I trust my gut (intuition)*). Moreover, seven items from the Zero-Sum Resources measure by Esses et al. (1998) were selected and adapted to the present study to measure the perceived power struggle around *traditional power hierarchies* (the term immigrants was substituted with the term minority groups and the reference group Canadians was substituted with Americans). Since the items of Zero Sum Resources measure were supposed to assess the general belief that the majority group has resources taken away from them by the minority group, only a selected number of items were used for the current study and some items referring to economic resources were dropped (i.e., 1-*Minority groups tend to open up small businesses, which means that there are fewer business opportunities available to ordinary Americans already living here.* 2-*The more power minority groups obtain in the US, the more difficult it is for ordinary Americans already living here.* 3-*Allowing minority groups to decide on political issues means that ordinary Americans already living here have less say in how the country is run.* 4-*More minority groups in positions of power means fewer opportunities for ordinary Americans already living here.* 5-*The more minority groups the US accepts, the harder it is for ordinary Americans already living here to get ahead.* 6-*Minority groups have too much say about political matters.* 7-*Americans already living here may*

no longer have a say in how the country is run because minority groups are trying to take control). Hence, the final post-modern conservatism scale consisted of 14 items (see Appendix B) which were scored on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree).

Collective Narcissism Scale. The collective narcissism scale was comprised of 9 items ($\alpha = 0.88$) that are rated on a seven-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). The original scale developed by Golec de Zavala and colleagues (2009) used a six-point scale. However, for the current study and the sake of consistency with the other scales in the survey, an additional, neutral option was included. The scale was designed to assess respondents' feelings and attitudes towards other groups and the harm they perceive them to cause to the respondents' group.

Collective Nostalgia. A four-item measure ($\alpha = 0.86$) developed by Baldwin and colleagues (Lammers & Baldwin, 2020) was used to assess collective nostalgia. The items asked participants to indicate how nostalgic (i.e., affectionate or sentimental) they feel towards the past, how society was, morals and values society had, the way people were, and how the way social system worked. Items were rated on a five-point scale (1 = not at all, 5 = to a great extent).

Ethnic prejudice measures. Ethnic prejudice was measured in three different ways. First, respondents were asked to indicate how they generally feel about minority groups on a feeling thermometer from 0 to 100, where 0 meant "very negative" and 100 meant "very positive".

Furthermore, they were asked to answer three questions indicating social distance regarding the three minority groups - refugees, Muslims, Hispanic and Latino. The respondents had to answer how they would react if the members of the before-mentioned groups moved to their neighborhood, they had to work with the members of these groups, and if they married into respondents' family on a five - point scale (1 = I would be strongly opposed, 5 = I would definitely be accepting). The items were adapted from Stefaniak and colleagues (2020) by focusing on these three minority groups and showed a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.92 in the present study.

Lastly, ethnic prejudice was measured by presenting two fake news article headings taken from euvdisinfo.eu (a website targeting Russia's Federation ongoing disinformation campaigns that affect the EU). First heading that was remained unchanged: "*Each Muslim family living in France has more than 8 children compared to an average of 1.8 million in non-Muslim families*" and the second heading was adapted to the context of the respondents residence, i.e. 'Germany allowing migration' was substituted with 'Obama's administration': "*After the Obama administration allowed mass migration, its statistics on murder, rape, robbery and hooliganism*

increased by 300-500%". Respondents were asked to indicate how likely they thought these headlines are true on a five-point scale (1 = very unlikely to be true, 5 = very likely to be true), having alpha value of .79. At the end of the survey the respondents were informed about the fact that these headlines were fake.

Right-wing authoritarianism. A very short right-wing authoritarianism scale was used, that was developed by Bizumic and Duckitt (2018) and contains 6 items (i.e., *What our country needs most is discipline, with everyone following our leaders in unity.*) scored on a seven-point scale (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree; $\alpha = 0.60$). It is noteworthy that Cronbach's alpha was somewhat low for this scale but dropping items would not have increased Cronbach's alpha. Therefore, a composite score was computed by averaging the six items, where higher scores indicate greater RWA.

Social dominance orientation scale. The social dominance scale (Aichholzer & Lechner, 2021) used in this study was a four-item measure (i.e., *In setting priorities, we must consider all social minority groups.*) with also a low reliability ($\alpha = .45$). After deleting the item '*The equality of social minority groups should be our goal*' overall alpha of the 3-item scale was .52. Items were rated on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree) and higher scores indicated higher SDO.

Political beliefs. Political beliefs were assessed with two items scored on a 7-point scale (1 = liberal, 7 = conservative): "*Please indicate your political beliefs from left/liberal to right/conservative on issues of the economy (e.g., social welfare, government spending, tax cuts)*", "*Please indicate your political beliefs from left/liberal to right/conservative on social issues (e.g., immigration, same-sex marriage, abortion)*". Higher scores indicate greater political conservatism. Cronbach's alpha for this scale was high ($\alpha = .843$).

In addition, participants were asked five socio-demographic questions: age, gender, ethnicity (*American Indian or Alaska Native; Black/African American; East Asian/East Asian American; Latino/Hispanic American; Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander; South Asian/South Asian American; White European American; Other*), education (*Less than high school; High school or less than bachelor; Undergraduate degree; Graduate degree*) and income (*Living comfortably on present income; Coping on present income; Finding it difficult on present income; Finding it very difficult on present income*).

4.1.3 Procedure

Study 2 was an online survey composed on Qualtrics and posted on Mturk, taking 10-15 minutes to complete. The target group of the study were residents of the US. Each participant was paid 2.00 US dollars for completing the survey and had a unique code at the end of the survey that was provided and used to retrieve a reward on Mturk. A unique code for every participant was generated in order to prevent the same respondent taking the survey multiple times or sharing the reward code with other users.

4.2 Results

4.2.1 Principal Component Analysis

A principal component analysis was performed on the 14 items of the post-modern conservatism scale with varimax rotation. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, $KMO = .92$ ('great' according to Field, 2018) and all KMO values for individual items were greater than 0.5, which is considered to be within an acceptable range (Field, 2018). Two factors had eigenvalues over Kaiser's criterion of 1 and in combination explained 62.21 % of the variance. The items that cluster on the same factor corroborate that one factor represents power struggle in relation to traditional power hierarchies (Factor 1) and the other belief in alternative facts (Factor 2; see Table 1).

Table 1. Summary of principal component analysis results for the post-modern conservatism scale (N=200).

Item	Factor 1 Power struggle	Factor 2 Belief in alternative facts
PMC_1 There is no absolute truth; everyone's truth is unique.	-	.668
PMC_2 What is a fact today could be shown to be wrong tomorrow.	-	.689
PMC_3 Expertise is overrated; pretty much anyone's opinion is as good as anyone else's.	-	.759
PMC_4 There is too much emphasis in higher education on logic and rational thinking.	-	.662
PMC_5 These days it is hard to tell what news is real and what is fake.	-	.612
PMC_6 All events have rational causes, even if we don't understand them fully yet.	-	.502
PMC_7 When I have to make an important life decision, I trust my gut (intuition).	-	.759
ZeSum_1 Minority groups tend to open up small businesses, which means that there are fewer business opportunities available to ordinary Americans already living here.	.724	-

ZeSum_2	The more power minority groups obtain in the US, the more difficult it is for ordinary Americans already living here.	.832	-
ZeSum_3	Allowing minority groups to decide on political issues means that ordinary Americans already living here have less say in how the country is run.	.823	-
ZeSum_4	More minority groups in positions of power means fewer opportunities for ordinary Americans already living here.	.835	-
ZeSum_5	The more minority groups the US accepts, the harder it is for ordinary Americans already living here to get ahead.	.869	-
ZeSum_6	Minority groups have too much say about political matters.	.744	-
ZeSum_7	Americans already living here may no longer have a say in how the country is run because minority groups are trying to take control.	.862	-

Note: Varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalization. Substantial factor loadings on factors 1 and 2 are in bold. Factor loadings of < .30 were suppressed. ZeSum indicates items of Zero Sum, which have evaluated power struggle and PMC post-modern beliefs items that have evaluated belief in alternative facts.

The Cronbach's alpha calculated for the two factors as well as the whole scale was high (traditional power hierarchies: $\alpha = .948$, belief in alternative facts: $\alpha = .87$ whole scale: $\alpha = .93$). Because of the high alpha of the whole scale, the items were averaged into a composite score reflecting beliefs in post-modern conservatism.

4.2.2 Descriptive and Correlational Results

Table 2 shows the means, standard deviations and results of Pearson's correlational analyses. Post-modern conservatism was significantly correlated with all variables, except for the social distance variable.

The first hypothesis predicted that there would be an association between post-modern conservatism and ethnic prejudice. Ethnic prejudice in the current research was represented by 3 variables: the feeling thermometer, social distance, and fake news. For social distance as a prejudice measure the hypothesis was not supported. However, the analysis revealed that there is a statistically significant negative relationship between the post-modern conservatism scale and the feeling thermometer, ($r = -.17, p < .05$) showing that individuals with higher scores on the post-modern conservatism scale scored lower on the feeling thermometer, indicating more negative feelings. A statistically significant positive relationship was found between post-modern conservatism and fake news ($r = .57, p < .001$), meaning that people endorsing post-modern conservative beliefs are more prone to believe fake information about minority groups that are based on stereotypes. Therefore, hypothesis 1 is partially supported.

Table 2. Means, Standard Deviations and Correlations between the Variables Included in the Hypothesized Model.

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. <i>Post-modern Conservatism</i>	4.53	1.15	-										
2. <i>Right-wing authoritarianism</i>	3.91	.91	.418**	-									
3. <i>Collective narcissism</i>	4.48	1.18	.799**	.475**	-								
4. <i>Collective nostalgia</i>	3.64	.97	.646**	.586**	.589**	-							
5. <i>Fake news</i>	3.45	1.16	.577**	.478**	.539**	.631**	-						
6. <i>Social distance</i>	3.76	0.85	-.085	-.473**	-.076	-.136	-.076	-					
7. <i>Political beliefs</i>	4.31	1.76	.290**	.400**	.252**	.354**	.368**	-.045	-				
8. <i>Social dominance orientation</i>	4.28	1.04	.495**	.643**	.444**	.534**	.524**	-.350**	.408**	-			
9. <i>Feeling thermometer for prejudice</i>	66.43	23.41	-.168*	-.252**	-.121	-.035	-.043	.416**	.005	-.287**	-		
10. <i>PMC sub scale: power struggle</i>	4.43	1.51	.913**	.478**	.762**	.644**	.613**	-.187**	.359**	-.638**	-.216**	-	
11. <i>PMC sub scale: scepticism</i>	4.64	1.20	.836**	.219**	.624**	.467**	.367**	.076	.115	-.164*	-.058	.540**	-

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

4.2.3 Hierarchical Regression Analysis

Hierarchical regression analysis was performed with prejudice measures (feeling thermometer, social distance, and fake news) being predicted by post-modern conservatism while controlling for relevant covariates. Hence, three regression models were tested.

Predicting ethnic prejudice as negative feelings

A hierarchical regression was performed using the feeling thermometer scores as the dependent variable. The purpose of this analysis was to test whether post-modern conservatism has incremental predictive validity compared to other variables commonly used to measure conservative political attitudes or conservative ideologies, that are SDO and RWA (White et al., 2019). This regression model consisted of three steps: step 1 allowed for controlling the socio-demographic variables (age, gender, income, and education), step 2 added right-wing authoritarianism (RWA), social dominance orientation (SDO) and conservative political beliefs, and step 3 added post-modern conservatism to the model.

As can be seen in table 3, the socio-demographics were not significantly related to feelings towards minority groups in step 1, while covariates entered in step 2 explained 12 % of variance in ethnic prejudice as measured by the feeling thermometer, mainly because of social dominance orientation ($\beta = -.29, p < .05$) and conservative political beliefs ($\beta = .19, p < .05$) which significantly predicted the criterion variable. This means that increasing social dominance orientation levels predict negative feelings towards minority groups, while higher levels of political conservatism predict positive feelings towards minority groups. In the final model, post-modern conservatism did not significantly predict prejudice after covariates were taken into account. Hence, the results show that post-modern conservatism has no predictive power over and above already existing measures of conservatism in the prediction of ethnic prejudice as measured with the feeling thermometer.

Table 3. Hierarchical Regression with the Feeling Thermometer as Dependent Variable.

Predictor measures	Feeling thermometer								
	Step 1			Step 2			Step 3		
R^2	.01			0.14**			.14**		
	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β
Age	.22	.17	.09	.27	.16	.11	.27	.16	.11
Gender	-3.40	3.45	.07	3.50	3.27	.07	3.40	3.27	.07
Income	-.17	2.07	-.01	-.21	1.97	-.01	-.37	2.00	-.01
Education	.60	2.70	.02	3.05	2.62	.08	3.30	2.66	.09
RWA	—	—	—	-3.95	2.33	-.15	-3.71	2.37	-.14
SDO	—	—	—	-6.42	2.10	-.29*	-6.10	2.20	-.27*
Political beliefs	—	—	—	2.56	1.01	.19*	2.60	1.01	.20*
PMC	—	—	—	—	—	—	-.98	1.63	-.05

Note. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$, Step 1 $\Delta R^2 = .01$, Step 2 $\Delta R^2 = .12^{**}$, Step 3 $\Delta R^2 = .002^{**}$.

Predicting ethnic prejudice in the form of social distance

Next, a hierarchical regression was performed with social distance as the dependent variable with the same steps as the model reported above. As can be seen from table 4, the socio-demographics were not significantly related to social distance, while covariates entered in step 2 explained 28% of variance in ethnic prejudice as measured by the social distance, right-wing authoritarianism ($\beta = -.48, p < .001$), social dominance orientations ($\beta = -.21, p < .001$) and political beliefs ($\beta = .19, p < .001$) all significantly predicted the criterion variable. This means that higher levels of right-wing authoritarianism and social dominance orientation are related to greater social distance towards minority groups (more opposing attitudes), while higher levels of political conservatism are related to less social distance towards minority groups. In the final model, post-modern conservatism ($\beta = .14, p < .05$) significantly and positively predicted social distance after covariates were taken into account. Hence, alike the results for conservative political attitudes, the results show that higher levels of post-modern conservatism are related to more accepting attitudes towards ethnic minorities after taking into account existing measures of conservatism. As a result, the findings are opposite to what was expected and do not support the hypothesis of the study.

Table 4. Hierarchical Regression with the Social Distance as Dependent Variable

Predictor measures	Social distance								
	Step 1			Step 2			Step 3		
R^2	.01			0.27**			.28*		
	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β
Age	.00	.00	.03	.00	.00	.05	.00	.00	.05
Gender	-.12	.13	-.07	-.08	.11	-.04	-.07	.11	-.04
Income	-.06	.08	-.06	-.05	.07	-.05	-.04	.07	-.04
Education	.00	.10	.01	.08	.09	.06	.05	.09	.04
RWA	—	—	—	-.42	.08	-.45***	-.45	.08	-.48***
SDO	—	—	—	-.13	.07	-.16	-.17	.07	-.21***
Political beliefs	—	—	—	.10	.03	.20***	.09	.03	.19***
PMC	—	—	—	—	—	—	.11	.05	.14*

Note: * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$, Step 1 $\Delta R^2 = .01$, Step 2 $\Delta R^2 = .26^{**}$, Step 3 $\Delta R^2 = .01^{**}$.

Predicting ethnic prejudice through acceptance of fake news

Lastly, the same analysis was performed using fake news as the dependent variable. Socio-demographic variables were entered at step 1 and explained 0.8% of variance in ethnic prejudice as belief in fake news. Interestingly, only education ($\beta = .24$, $p < .001$) was positively and significantly related to fake news acceptance meaning that more educated individuals were more susceptible to fake news about minorities. At step 2, RWA ($\beta = .24$, $p < .01$), SDO ($\beta = .26$, $p < .05$) and conservative political beliefs ($\beta = .16$, $p < .01$) emerged all as significant predictors of fake news acceptance showing that individuals who are more right-wing oriented, more conservative in their political beliefs and have higher scores in social dominance orientation were more likely to believe fake news about minorities.

At step 3, postmodern conservatism ($\beta = .36$, $p < .001$) significantly accounted for fake news acceptance after controlling for all other variables confirming the hypothesis that post-modern conservative beliefs render individuals more susceptible to believing in fake news about ethnic minorities.

Altogether, these results confirm that post-modern conservatism predicts ethnic prejudice assessed as social distance and fake news acceptance over and above conventional measures assessing conservative political beliefs. However, only the criterion variable fake news was related to post-modern conservatism in the way it was hypothesized.

Table 5. Hierarchical Regression with the Fake News as Dependent Variable

Predictor measures	Fake news								
	Step 1			Step 2			Step 3		
R^2	.08***			0.37***s*			.46***		
	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β
Age	.00	.00	.03	.00	.00	.05	.00	.00	.05
Gender	.03	.17	.01	-.02	.14	-.01	.10	.13	.00
Income	-.13	.10	-.09	-.06	.08	-.04	-.00	.08	-.00
Education	.45	.13	.24***	.34	.11	.19**	.25	.10	.14*
RWA	—	—	—	.31	.10	.24**	.21	.09	.17*
SDO	—	—	—	.29	.09	.26*	-.17	.09	-.15
Political beliefs	—	—	—	.11	.04	.16**	.09	.04	.14*
PMC	—	—	—	—	—	—	.36	.06	.36***

Note. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$, Step 1 $\Delta R^2 = .08$ ***, Step 2 $\Delta R^2 = .29$ ***, Step 3 $\Delta R^2 = .09$ ***

4.2.4 Mediation Analyses

The second hypothesis predicted that the association between post-modern conservatism and ethnic prejudice is mediated by group-level variable, assessed through collective narcissism and collective nostalgia. It was predicted that greater endorsement of post-modern conservatism is positively related to endorsement of an American identity and feelings of nostalgia for the past which in turn is related to an increased ethnic prejudice.

PROCESS for SPSS version 3.4 was used (Hayes, 2019) for the mediation analysis, with bootstrapping analysis of 10,000 samples. In order to determine if the associations between post-modern conservatism and ethnic prejudice are mediated by collective narcissism and collective nostalgia, 3 models were examined – one for each dependent variable. No significant mediation effect was found in mediation analyses using social distance as the dependent variable (see Table 6). Additionally, collective narcissism did not mediate the relationship between post-modern conservatism and ethnic prejudice. However, the two other dependent variables (the feeling thermometer and belief in fake news) returned statistically significant mediation results for collective nostalgia as a mediator. As can be seen in figure 3, collective nostalgia had a significant indirect effect on the relationship between post-modern conservatism and ethnic prejudice when controlling for the covariates RWA, SDO and political beliefs ($b = .15$, $SE = .04$, 95% *BCa CI* [.069, .246]) and when believing in fake news was used as the dependent variable. Hence, post-modern conservatism was positively related to fake news acceptance which can be explained with collective nostalgia. Therefore, people who were more likely to endorse beliefs of post-modern

conservatism were more likely to believe in fake news related to ethnic prejudice because they were also more nostalgic about their national identity.

Table 6. Model Coefficients for the Process Model

	Collective Narcissism			Collective Nostalgia			Feeling Thermometer			Social Distance			Fake News		
	Coef.	SE	Boot CI	Coef.	SE	Boot CI	Coef.	SE	Boot CI	Coef.	SE	Boot CI	Coef.	SE	Boot CI
RWA	.263	.072	[.120, .406]	.344	.069	[.207, .481]	-7.015	2.474	[-11.896, -2.134]	-.555	.082	[-.718, -.392]	.021	.096	[-.168, .211]
SDO	-.049	.065	[-.179, .080]	.071	.063	[-.053, .196]	-5.932	2.082	[-10.039, -1.826]	-.158	.069	[-.295, -.021]	.190	.080	[.030, .349]
Political Beliefs	-.018	.031	[-.079, .043]	.034	.029	[-.025, 0.93]	2.112	.984	[.170, 4.054]	.085	.032	[.021, .150]	.067	.038	[-.007, .143]
Post-modern conservatism	.760	.049	[.662, .857]	.384	.047	[.290, .477]	-5.213	2.448	[-10.042, -.385]	-.044	.081	[-.206, .117]	.154	.095	[-.033, .341]
Collective Narcissism	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.120	2.254	[-2.326, 6.567]	.136	.075	[-.012, .284]	.113	.087	[-.059, .285]
Collective Nostalgia	-	-	-	-	-	-	7.525	2.350	[2.890, 12.161]	.157	.078	[.002, .312]	.393	.091	[.213, .573]
Constant	.266	.246	[-.219, .751]	.138	.236	[-.327, .604]	93.549	7.765	[78.234, 108.846]	5.237	.262	[4.719, 5.754]	-.261	.301	[-.856, .333]
R ²	.664			.545			.165			.304			.492		
F	96.4			58.5			6.353			14.104			31.158		
	8			2											
	(4, 195)			(4, 195)			(6, 193)			(6, 195)			(6, 193)		

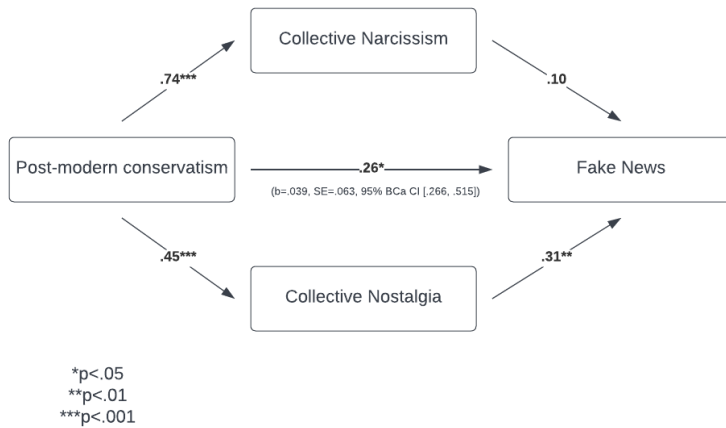
Note. Significant values are in bold.

Table 7. Total, direct and indirect effects of post-modern conservatism on feeling thermometer, social distance, and fake news.

	Feeling thermometer			Social distance			Fake news		
	Boot effect	Boot SE	Bias-correlated & accelerated CI	Boot effect	Boot SE	Bias-correlated & accelerated CI	Boot effect	Boot SE	Bias-correlated & accelerated CI
Total effect of X on Y	-3.410	1.413	[-6.209, -.613]	.119	.052	[.015, .223]	.039	.063	[-.266, .515]
Direct effect of X on Y	-5.213	2.448	[-10.042, -.382]	-.044	.081	[-.206, .117]	.154	.095	[-.033, .341]
Indirect effect of X on Y	2.890	1.204	[.700, 5.410]	.060	.044	[-.020, .153]	.151	.043	[-.071, .245]
through collective nostalgia									
Indirect effect of X on Y	1.611	2.113	[-2.742, 5.612]	.103	.088	[-.083, .263]	.085	.078	[-.053, .256]
through collective narcissism									

Figure 3

Parallel Multiple Mediator Model with Fake News as Outcome Variable. Controlling for RWA, SDO and Political Beliefs.



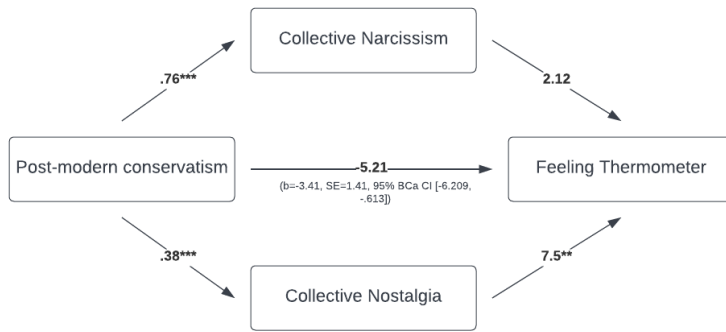
Note. Standardized coefficients are reported. Coefficients in brackets refer to the Total effect.

Lastly, a significant indirect effect of post-modern conservatism through collective nostalgia on ethnic prejudice as the feeling thermometer ($b = 2.89, SE = 1.20, 95\% BCa CI [.700, 5.410]$) was found, as can be seen in figure 4. The results were as hypothesized - greater post-modern conservatism was associated with more negative feelings, which can be explained by nostalgia.

In sum, the results indicate that postmodern conservatism predicts certain kinds of prejudice (negative feelings and acceptance of fake news about minorities) which can be explained with national identity processes related to collective nostalgia, but not collective narcissism.

Figure 4

Parallel Multiple Mediator Model with Prejudice (Feeling Thermometer) as Outcome Variable. Controlling for RWA, SDO and Political Beliefs.



*p<.05
 **p<.01
 ***p<.001

Note. Standardized coefficients are reported. Coefficients in brackets refer to the Total effect.

5. General Discussion

There is no doubt that very interesting changes are taking place in a current political arena on a global scale. From election of Donald Trump in 2016, to other world leaders such as Orban in Hungary, Modi in India, Bolsonaro in Brazil having the main power, one connecting string between these leaders is that they all are classified as post-modern conservatives (McManus, 2021). As a result, an interest in the nature of post-modern conservatism has motivated this research. Does it mean that political conservatism has acquired a new form? For this reason, study 1 aimed at bringing post-modern conservatism into a psychological context by operationalizing and conceptualizing it. A qualitative study was performed, comparing post-modern conservatism to political conservatism identifying main dimensions of the phenomenon and thus concretely defining its content in a psychological context. Post-modern conservatism was found to have two distinctive dimensions (power struggle and belief in alternative facts) and we suggested to define it as a political ideology which is endorsed by people who feel that the group they belong to has been stripped away of its privileges and power that once belonged to it. Additionally, this ideology considers universalism, globalization and liberalism as ultimate threats to their rights, identity, and traditions on the perceived basis of minority groups being granted privileges that they have never had before. After the definition of post-modern conservatism was suggested, we moved on to constructing a scale. Two existing scales have been used to compose a measure for post-modern conservatism: Zero Sum Recourses by Esses and colleagues (1998) and Postmodern Beliefs Scale by Hull & Hull (2020). The measure composed of these two scales had good reliability and is easily adaptable to different cultural contexts.

Since post-modern conservatism stems from political conservatism, it was theorized that it will have a similar relation to collective narcissism and collective nostalgia, therefore acting as a strong predictor (if not even stronger) of ethnic prejudice as political conservatism is. The aim of study 2 was to test this with a correlation data by considering collective narcissism and collective nostalgia as relevant mediators. The relationship found between post-modern conservatism and ethnic prejudice was not always as expected. Post-modern conservative beliefs were not related to ethnic prejudice when taking the form of keeping social distance from them. However, ethnic prejudice as operationalized as belief in fake news related to stereotypes portraying ethnic minorities were positively associated to post-modern conservatism as hypothesized in line with study 1 findings suggesting post-modern conservatives will be likely to believe disinformation.

Moreover, expectation that more negative feelings towards ethnic minorities will be related to higher levels of post-modern conservatism was also supported. Furthermore, the present study found an interesting relationship between traditional conservatives and ethnic prejudice. After controlling for RWA and SDO, it was traditional conservatives who were found to be more accepting of ethnic minorities and not people endorsing more liberal views as the results have shown a positive significant relationship between conservative beliefs and social distance. This means that more conservative individuals expressed more accepting attitudes towards minority groups. Similarly, post-modern conservatism, was negatively associated with negative feelings towards minorities, but when controlled for RWA and SDO it was no longer related to feelings thermometer. One possible explanation for such findings could be that even though conservatives have a higher tendency for general prejudice, new studies show that liberals are found to particularly express more prejudice on the racial and religious ground, that is evident from their rhetoric suggesting potential emergence of political hypocrisy (Banton et al., 2019) while conservatives also hold prejudice against groups that they see as ideologically different (Crawford & Jussim, 2017, p. 102). Furthermore, based on the theory that conservative ideology is concerned with the past and has strong support for tradition, it is possible that effects of the studies could have the results of the opposite direction, because it matters which aspects of the past are salient in the current form of political ideology supported by these individuals (Lammers & Baldwin, 2020). Therefore, expressing a prejudicial outlook towards ethnic minorities in terms of RWA and SDO can be attributed to personality characteristics, as it is holding a conservative outlook per se that results in greater prejudice regarding the outcome variables of negative feelings and social distance.

However, in the case of fake news acceptance, all predictors went to the same, positive direction, and the results were as hypothesized: post-modern conservatism was positively associated with belief in fake news. Moreover, traditional conservatism independently from post-modern conservatism predicted greater acceptance of fake news. In addition, as it is seen from the hierarchical regression analysis ethnic prejudice as acceptance of fake news was the only dependent variable that was related to criterion variable as it was expected, while other types of prejudice decreased.

Out of two hypothesized mediation effects only one was found to yield significant results. While the relationship between post-modern conservatism and ethnic prejudice was not mediated by collective narcissism neither with feeling thermometer, social distance or acceptance of fake

news, collective nostalgia was found to mediate the relationship between post-modern conservatism and feeling thermometer and acceptance of fake news. In both cases collective nostalgia had positive effects on the relationship between independent and dependent variables, increasing ethnic prejudice. Such increase in ethnic prejudice could be explained by the negative sentiment (Wohl et al., 2020) the post-modern conservatives have attached to the ethnic minorities, that are seen as a threat since they are granted privileges they did not have in the past. Since post-modern conservatives want to restore the societal order as it was in the past where they were granted the most privileges, such mediation was expected. This finding also corresponds the Study 1 results suggesting that post-modern conservatives do long for the past and want to restore the society the way it once was.

Furthermore, since post-modern conservatism in the study 1 was defined as an ideology endorsed by people who feel treated unfairly in this society due to more rights given to social minorities, it was expected that people endorsing post-modern conservative beliefs will be prejudiced against minority groups. However, such findings in study 2 were found to be statistically significant only when ethnic prejudice was measured using less obvious measure – fake news articles. Nonetheless, study 1 also found that post-modern conservatives are very likely to believe alternative facts and reject science if it is beneficial for their own cause. This aspect of post-modern conservatism was supported by the study 2, that yielded a very interesting positive and significant relationship between education and acceptance of fake news. More educated individuals were more likely to believe the fake facts that were providing information stereotyping minority groups. Furthermore, the definition of post-modern conservatism of study 1 suggested that post-modern conservatives have different understanding of what is considered the truth and expressed tendency to believe conspiracy theories and false information. The results of the study 2 have shown that respondents who endorsed post-modern conservative beliefs and were more educated were more likely to accept false information as truth. This means that education does not play a role in one's choice to accept questionable or incorrect facts as truth supporting the findings of study 1 regarding new epistemology of conservatism. This suggests that indeed post-modern conservatives are more susceptible to believing alternative information.

To take everything into account, the results suggest that there are changes in the ideology of conservatism especially in relation to believing fake news and ethnic prejudice. The findings suggest that the way people acquire knowledge and decide what is truth as well as the way the

prejudice is being expressed is changing and adapting to the new societal norms upon what is considered acceptable. Therefore, direct measures of ethnic prejudice did not yield hypothesized results of traditional and post-modern conservatism having positive association with ethnic prejudice. However, once the measure of ethnic prejudice was more indirect traditional and post-modern conservatisms remain to show positive association to prejudice and adds to already existing literature that suggest conservative beliefs being associated to greater prejudice against ethnic minorities.

This is the first study that attempted to conceptualize and operationalize post-modern conservatism and which shows that there is a positive connection between post-modern conservative beliefs and ethnic prejudice which is mediated through collective nostalgia. Those holding post-modern conservative beliefs were more likely to believe alternative facts and were more likely to accept information provided as fake news. This understanding of the association between post-modern conservatism and ethnic prejudice might assist in understanding people's susceptibility to widespread fake information, their ability to filter reliable informational sources and how such behavior is influenced by political ideology.

6. Limitations and Future Research

There were two main limitations regarding study 1: firstly, the whole theory of post-modern conservatism and attempts to conceptualize it for the context of psychological phenomena is based only on one author that specialized in political sciences and not psychology. However, this limitation could also be considered as a strength as it became a cross-discipline study and the results of the study 1 were empirically backed up by the study 2. Secondly, after completing a thematic analysis, all but one theme had a reasonable coding frequency – theme 5 ‘Dealing with Chaotic World’ was coded only once in thematic analysis, which might have implications for the results.

There were several limitations regarding study 2: the post-modern conservatism questionnaire was composed of two previously existing questionnaires that assessed two dimensions of the construct. Zero Sum Recourses by Essess and Armstrong (1998) was used to assess the dimension of traditional power hierarchies, while Hull & Hull (2020) scale of postmodern beliefs was used to measure belief in alternative facts. However, after data collection it was noticed that these two dimensions were separated in the questionnaire and placed not together but separately within the survey. Furthermore, the scales of right-wing authoritarianism and social dominance orientation had relatively low reliability for the present study, $\alpha = .60$ and $\alpha = .52$ respectively. Correlation between the dimensions of power struggle and belief in alternative facts of post-modern conservatism scale was also low ($r = .540$). Moreover, collective nostalgia is a sentimental measure that might have different effects on ethnic prejudice depending on the sentiment attached to minority groups (Wohl et al., 2020), which could either increase or decrease prejudice. Therefore, not controlling for the sentiment could have had implications for the results. In addition, social distance and feeling thermometer measures for ethnic prejudice can be considered susceptible to social desirability bias, since the questions are rather straightforward, and the respondents could easily tell what is attempted to be measured. Since it is socially acceptable not to oppose minorities, the answers to these items could be untruthful. However, the third measure of ethnic prejudice in the form of fake news articles headlines was a less explicit measure and returned the hypothesized results. Lastly, the feeling thermometer assessed feelings towards unspecified minority groups by a single item that asked for a general opinion towards minority groups.

7. Future research

For the future research it would be interesting to test the composed post-modern conservatism scale with a larger sample within the US to compare its reliability in measuring phenomena and compare the levels of post-modern conservatism within different states, especially including the states that are the most pro-Trump. Moreover, it would be interesting to make a cross-national comparison, as it is seen that post-modern conservatism is very much avid in countries like Brazil, India, Hungary, and Poland to name a few (McManus, 2019a). It would also be interesting to assess post-modern conservatism in the context of the Russia – Ukraine war and how post-modern conservatism associates with the attitudes towards refugees from the Ukraine and the support of their country. Post-modern conservatism might have implications regarding how people appraise this war, whether they consider it to be just or unjust and to what extent belief in alternative facts does influence the perception of the war from the perspective of Russians. Whether they see this war as justified and consider the information coming in from the West as lies and how do the perspective of Ukrainians and the people that live in neighboring countries from Ukraine differ.

Additionally, implications of a present study could be used for developing policies. Metaxas and Finn (2017) has suggested that the articles presenting false information are used by conservatives as a tool to make the voters confused and angry. The present study adds to these findings that post-modern conservatives are willingly consuming all this false information found on various social media channels and believe the facts even when they are obviously wrong. Even though EU is trying to unmask this disinformation by providing evidence whether the headlines of the news are false or true on their euvsdisinfo.eu webpage, seeing how widespread this issue is on a global scale, more interventions are needed. Tritt and colleagues (2013) have conducted a research that has shown that perception of insecurity and danger, and arousal by negative stimuli contributes to changes in political orientation (adopting more conservative views). Post-modern conservatives too experience the sense of threat to their identity and rights or privileges in the society and feeds their sense of danger and insecurity by overly consuming fake news. This means that as well as political conservatives, post-modern conservatives experience arousal caused by negative stimuli that might be interfering with their thought process and contribute to increasing levels of danger (Tritt et al., 2013). Therefore, policies that introduce prevention for fake news and overflow of negative rhetoric towards certain social groups, such as immigrants or minority groups and offers positive information regarding these groups could prove very useful in reducing the amount of post-modern conservatives.

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Appendices

Appendix A. Interview Guideline and Interview Questions of Study 1

<p>Introduction Key</p> <p>Components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thank you• Your name• Purpose• Confidentiality• Duration• How interview will be conducted• Opportunity for questions	<p>Thank you for agreeing to have a discussion with me on the topic of postmodern conservatism. I'm Meda, and I'm originally from Lithuania but I'm studying my master's at ISCTE, Lisbon and I'm currently pursuing a degree in Psychology of Intercultural Relations. Last winter I accidentally came across one of your books and it really caught my attention as it was talking about something rather new to me – postmodern conservatism. It even inspired me to write my thesis on this topic under the supervision of Melanie Vauclair. My focus is to better understand the phenomenon of modern conservatism from a psychological perspective. Beyond that, I'm interested how it might be related to intergroup issues in society, such as ethnic prejudice. The goal of this discussion is to clearly conceptualize and operationalize postmodern conservatism, so that it is possible to create a questionnaire with items that could measure the extent to which a person is a postmodern conservative.</p> <p>The estimated time for this interview is 2 hours and it will be conducted in the way of asking</p>
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	<p>open-ended questions regarding postmodern conservatism.</p> <p>For the purposes of further analysis this conversation will be recorded. Could you please state whether you agree with that?</p>
<p>Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask factual before opinion • Use probes as needed: • <i>Would you give me an example?</i> • <i>Can you elaborate on that idea?</i> • <i>Would you explain that further?</i> • <i>I'm not sure I understand what you're saying.</i> • <i>Is there anything else?</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I have done some research on postmodern conservatism in the psychological literature and I could not find anything. It seems to me that you invented the term “postmodern conservatism”. Could you briefly tell your story of discovering postmodern conservatism? 2. How would you define postmodern conservatism in a few sentences? 3. In contemporary political psychology, traditional conservatism has been measured in many different ways; very often just by one single item asking participants to rate how liberal or conservative they are. In 2013, a multidimensional scale has been proposed to assess contemporary conservatism by distinguishing between social conservatism (e.g., preservation of moral traditions) and economic conservatism (e.g. concern with the involvement of the government in the economic lives of its citizens). This is assessed with items asking participants about their attitudes

	<p>in regard to concrete contemporary topics such as abortion or welfare benefits (show the scale).</p> <p>What do you think about such an approach? Are there any overlapping themes with postmodern conservatism? What are the differences between a conservative in the traditional sense and a postmodern conservative? Could you describe what the characteristics are of someone who is post-modern conservative? What kinds of beliefs, values, and attitudes does this person have? Is there are profile of a post modern conservative (e.g., male, young, highly identified with one's nation?)?</p> <p>4. Could you tell me a bit more about the key characteristics that distinguish traditional conservatives from post-modern conservatives? Why do we need a new term to describe conservatives? What does this add above and beyond what we already know about conservatives? What exactly is the postmodern element to this type of conservatism? Is postmodern conservatism related to right-wing extremism?</p> <p>5. You mention Poland and Hungary in your book, but not other continental</p>
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	<p>European countries. Do you think that it is likely that postmodern conservatism has reached other EU countries? What about Lithuania?</p> <p>6. What do you think are the antecedents of postmodern conservatism? What are the conditions that give rise to postmodern conservatism? (Possible probing: For example, do you think that perceived threats such as the Covid-19 pandemic gives rise to postmodern conservatism? How do you think Covid-19 facilitated (if it did) the spread of post-modern conservatism outside of the USA?)</p> <p>7. What do you think consequences of postmodern conservatism could be?</p>
<p>Closing Key Components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional comments • Next steps • Thank you 	<p>Thank you once again for taking part in this interview. I'll be analyzing the contents of the conversation in order to conceptualize and operationalize the concept of postmodern conservatism. The goal is to create a measure that would be able to assess postmodern conservatism in person. I would like to ask – could I come back to you once I have the scale ready and get some feedback about it.</p>

Appendix B. Study 2 Questionnaire

Study Information

TITLE OF THE STUDY: Research on the Post-modern Conservative Views

This study is part of a research project taking place at Iscte – Instituto Universitário de Lisboa. The study aims to assess opinions on contemporary issues of people that are currently living in the US. The study is conducted by Meda Vaitonytė (mveae@iscte-iul.pt), who you may contact to clear up any doubts or share comments. Your participation in the study, which is highly valued as it will contribute to the advancement of knowledge in this field of science, consists of an online survey that takes approximately 10 – 15 minutes to complete. There are no expected significant risks associated with participation in the study. Participation in the study is strictly voluntary: you may choose freely whether to participate or not to participate. If you have decided to participate, you may stop your participation at any time, without having to provide any justification. In addition to being voluntary, your participation is also anonymous and confidential. The obtained data are merely intended for statistical processing and none of the answers will be analysed or reported individually. At no point of the study will you be asked to identify yourself. I declare that I have understood the aims of what was proposed to me, as explained by the investigator, that I was given the opportunity to ask any questions about this study and received a clarifying reply to all such questions, and accept participating in the study.

In view of this information, please indicate if you accept participating in the study:

Yes

No

Do you currently live in the USA?

Yes

No

Q1 Post-modern Conservatism

Please read following statements carefully and indicate to what extent you disagree or agree with the statement.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

1. There is no absolute truth; everyone's truth is unique.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. What is a fact today could be shown to be wrong tomorrow.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. Expertise is overrated; pretty much anyone's opinion is as good as anyone else's.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. There is too much emphasis in higher education on logic and rational thinking.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. These days it is hard to tell what news is real and what is fake.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. All events have rational causes, even if we don't understand them fully yet.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. When I have to make an important life decision, I trust my gut (intuition).	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Q2 Social Dominance Scale

Please indicate how much you favor or oppose each idea below by selecting a number from 1 to 7 on the scale below. You can work quickly; your first feeling is generally best.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

1. In setting priorities, we must consider all social minority groups.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. We should not push for equality of social minority groups.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. The equality of social minority groups should be our goal.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4. Superior social groups in society should dominate inferior social minority groups.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
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Q3 Right-wing Authoritarianism

Please indicate your agreement/disagreement with the following statements.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

1. It's great that many young people today are prepared to defy authority.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. What our country needs most is discipline, with everyone following our leaders in unity.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. God's laws about abortion, pornography, and marriage must be strictly followed before it is too late.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. There is nothing wrong with premarital sexual intercourse.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. Our society does NOT need tougher government and stricter laws.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. The facts on crime and the recent public disorders show we have to crack down harder on troublemakers, if we are going preserve law and order.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Q4 Collective Narcissism

Think about your national in-group and indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

1. I wish other groups would more quickly recognize the authority of my group.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. My group deserves special treatment.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. Not many people seem to fully understand the importance of my group.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. I insist upon my group getting the respect that is due to it.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. It really makes me angry when others criticize my group.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. If my group had a major say in the world, the world would be a much better place.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. I do not get upset when people do not notice achievements of my group.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. The true worth of my group is often misunderstood.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. I will never be satisfied until my group gets the recognition it deserves.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Q5 Collective Nostalgia

The following statements are about how you feel toward the past. How nostalgic (i.e., affectionate or sentimental) do you feel for each of the following aspects of the past?

Not at all	Little	Somewhat	To a large extent	To a great extent
1	2	3	4	5

1. The way society was.	1 2 3 4 5
2. Morals and values society had.	1 2 3 4 5
3. The way people were.	1 2 3 4 5
4. The way the social system worked.	1 2 3 4 5

Q6 Zero Sum Recourses

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statements below.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

1. Minority groups tend to open up small businesses, which means that there are fewer business opportunities available to ordinary Americans already living here.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. The more power minority groups obtain in the US, the more difficult it is for ordinary Americans already living here.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. Allowing minority groups to decide on political issues means that ordinary Americans already living here have less say in how the country is run.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. More minority groups in positions of power means fewer opportunities for ordinary Americans already living here.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. The more minority groups the US accepts, the harder it is for ordinary Americans already living here to get ahead.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. Minority groups have too much say about political matters.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

7. Americans already living here may no longer have a say in how the country is run because minority groups are trying to take control.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
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Q7 Fake News

Please read the following headlines which have recently been published in a newspaper and indicate how likely you think it is that this is true.

Very unlikely to be true 1	Somewhat unlikely to be true 2	Undecided 3	Somewhat likely to be true 4	Very likely to be true 5
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1. Each Muslim family living in France has more than 8 children compared to an average of 1.8 million in non-Muslim families.	1 2 3 4 5
2. After the Obama administration allowed mass migration, its statistics on murder, rape, robbery and hooliganism increased by 300-500%.	1 2 3 4 5

Q8 Ethnic Prejudice

Social Distance

Refugees 1	Muslims 2	Hispanic and Latinos 3
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1. Please indicate what would be your reaction to members of three different groups moving to your neighborhood.	1 2 3
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2. Please indicate what would be your reaction to members of three different groups if you had to work with them.	1 2 3
3. Please indicate what would be your reaction to members of three different groups having them marry into your family.	

Attention question

How often do you brush your teeth? Select never to answer the question.

- How often do you brush your teeth?
- Never
- Once every few days
- Everyday
- At least twice per day

Prejudice

How do you feel about minority groups?

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

0 negative 100 very positive

Q10 Socio-demographics

Political beliefs

1. Please indicate your political beliefs from left/liberal to right/conservative on issues of the economy (e.g., social welfare, government spending, tax cuts):	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. Please indicate your political beliefs from left/liberal to right/conservative on social issues (e.g., immigration, same-sex marriage, abortion):	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Which gender do you identify with

- Male
- Female
- Other/do not want to answer

What is your age

How would you define yourself in terms of ethnicity? You can check one or more response boxes.

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Black/African American
- East Asian/East Asian American
- Latino/Hispanic American
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- South Asian/South Asian American
- White/European American
- Other

What is your highest education degree

- Less than high school
- High School (or less than Bachelor)
- Undergraduate degree
- Graduate degree

Which of the following descriptions comes closest to how you feel about your household's income nowadays?

- Living comfortably on present income

- Coping on present income
- Finding it difficult on present income
- Finding it very difficult on present income