What Do Voters Think About the Descriptive Underrepresentation of the Working Class?[*]

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Abstract

Do voters in electoral democracies realize how much better off their leaders are than they are? Do they care that they are so often governed by the privileged? We placed questions that asked about voters' perceptions of the social class makeup of their national legislatures on the 2015 Argentine Panel Election Study, a 2016 YouGov UK survey in Britain, and the 2016 Cooperative Congressional Election Study in the US. In all three countries, voters substantially underestimated the economic gap between politicians and citizens, and even voters who favored significant increases in working-class representation did not think differently about other issues, participate more actively, or vote differently. There appear to be important limits to how much voters know and care about government by the privileged.

In most democracies, politicians tend to be vastly better off than the citizens they represent: they are wealthier, more educated, and less likely to come from working-class jobs (e.g., Best 2007; Best and Cotta 2000; Carnes and Lupu 2015; Matthews 1985).[1]

Scholars have recently started paying renewed attention to this longstanding phenomenon. Some have explored the symbolic consequences of the shortage of politicians from the working class (Arnesen and Peters Forthcoming) and the normative implications of government by affluent professionals (e.g., Mansbridge 2015). Others have focused on the substantive representation of different class interests: just as the shortage of women or racial and ethnic minorities in office seems to affect policy outcomes on issues related to gender and race (e.g., Bratton and Ray 2002; Chattopadhyay and Duflo 2004; Franck and Rainer 2012; Pande 2003; Swers 2002; Thomas 1991), the shortage of working-class politicians—who tend to be more leftist on economic issues in most countries—appears to bias important economic policies like wage supports, taxation, and social welfare towards the more conservative positions typically favored by affluent citizens (Carnes and Lupu 2015; Grose 2013; Griffin and Anewalt-Remsburg 2013; Kraus and Callaghan 2014; O'Grady 2017; Rosset 2013).

Although scholars of democracy are paying renewed attention to the shortage of politicians from the working classes, we know less about what *citizens* in democracies think. Do voters realize how much better off their leaders are than they are? Do they care that they are so often governed by the privileged?

There are good reasons to doubt that they do. Research has long shown that people tend to significantly underestimate the severity of social inequalities, like rising disparities in income

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[1] The online appendix discusses this definition of working class in more detail.

and wealth; perhaps citizens under-estimate inequalities in who governs, too. And even voters who are aware of social inequalities often don't know what to do about them or care enough to take action; perhaps the same is true of voters who recognize that working-class citizens seldom hold office.

In this letter, we report the results of a series of questions about voters' perceptions of the numerical representation of the working class in their national legislatures on the 2015 Argentine Panel Election Study, a 2016 YouGov UK survey, and the 2016 Cooperative Congressional Election Study in the US. Across these varied national contexts, we find strikingly similar results. In all three countries, citizens mistakenly believe that workers are significantly better represented than they really are. Moreover, even respondents who favor significant increases in working-class representation do not tend to think differently about other issues, participate more actively in politics, or vote differently in elections.

These findings highlight a previously undocumented and potentially foundational obstacle to working-class representation, namely, misinformation and apathy on the part of voters. There appear to be important limits to how much voters know about government by the privileged, and how much they care.

Perceptions of Working-Class Representation

To our knowledge, no prior study has ever examined voters' beliefs and opinions about the social class makeup of government. We fielded original survey questions designed to measure public attitudes about the state of working-class representation today and—to gauge how much voters *care*—people's preferences about the ideal level of working-class

representation, as well as their views on related issues, their choices in elections, and their engagement in civic life.

We placed our questions on surveys in Argentina, Great Britain, and the United States, three country that are ideal for several reasons. Like most democracies, all three have long histories of being governed by the privileged. Importantly, however, these three countries differ substantially on other economic and political dimensions that might affect how voters think about the social class makeup of government (see Table A1 in the online appendix). If we find similar results across these three quite different contexts, we can be fairly confident that those results are not just unique to one country, one region, or one set of political institutions.

Our questions appeared on ongoing collaborative surveys conducted by local survey houses in each country. In Argentina, we added our questions to the Argentine Panel Election Study (APES), a face-to-face, two-wave panel survey conducted in conjunction with the 2015 Argentine national elections (Lupu et al. 2015). Our questions were administered to 1,406 respondents in the post-election wave of the survey in November and December of 2015. In the US, we fielded questions through the Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES), a 50,000-person national stratified sample survey administered by YouGov/Polimetrix. Our questions were administered in November and December of 2016 to a random subset of 1,000 respondents. In Britain, we placed questions on a YouGov UK survey of a representative sample of 1,681 respondents from its opt-in online panel in August of 2016.[2]

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[2] In our analyses, we reweighted respondents using the weights provided by the survey. All question wordings are listed in the online appendix.

The precise wording of our questions varied slightly across countries, but they began, "Now we want to talk about the working class—people who do manual labor work (like factory or construction workers), service industry work (like custodians or restaurant servers), and clerical work (like receptionists)." Respondents were then asked three questions about the political representation of the working class. (To guard against question order effects, in all three surveys we randomized the order of the three questions.)

One of the three questions asked about the percentage of workers in *the general public*: "If you had to guess, what percentage of the population in [country] would you say belongs to the working class?" Another question asked about the percentage of workers among *political officeholders*: "If you had to guess, what percentage of [governing body] would you say come from the working class?" In Argentina and Britain, we asked about the national legislature; in the US we randomized the level of office so that respondents were asked about Congress, their state legislatures, or their city councils.

Our final question asked about the percentage of workers the respondent *would want* to hold political office: "In an ideal world, what percentage of [governing body] would you like to come from the working class?" Again, in Argentina and Britain, we asked about the national legislature, and in the US we randomized the level of office.

With these three questions, we were able to gauge how numerically underrepresented respondents believed the working class was, and how well-represented they would like workers to be. By randomizing the order of the questions, we helped to guard against question order effects; by randomizing the level of office in the US, we were also able to determine whether the patterns we observed were limited to national legislatures or were more general; and by using a mix of face-to-face and online surveys, we hoped to check that our results were not simply

driven by social desirability biases (e.g., Tourangeau and Yan 2008) or respondents looking up the answers.

To provide a point of comparison, in the Argentina and Britain surveys (but not the US survey, due to space constraints), we also included a block of questions that asked the same three items about the numerical representation of *women*: "If you had to guess, what percentage of the population in [country] would you say are women?", "If you had to guess, what percentage of [governing body] would you say are women?", and "In an ideal world, what percentage of [governing body] would you like to be women?" (To check for possible block order effects, in the British survey, the order of the gender and class blocks was randomized.) These additional questions provided us with a useful baseline for understanding how inaccurate voters' views about workers were. In Argentina (where party lists are subject to a well-known gender quota) and in Britain (where they are not) how do voters' views about the descriptive representation of working-class politicians compare to their views about the representation of women?

Do Voters Know How Underrepresented Workers (and Women) Are?

The left panels of Figure 1 begin answering these questions by plotting the actual percentage of working-class people in the labor force and the national legislature in each country (the pair of bars on the left in each panel) and the average answers survey respondents gave to questions asking them to estimate these quantities—and to weigh in on the ideal percentage of working-class people in the legislature (the trio of bars on the right in each panel).

Across all three countries, survey respondents generally understood that the percentage of workers in the labor force was high, and their estimates were often quite accurate: 50% in Britain

Figure 1: What Voters Think about the Descriptive Representation of Workers and Women

Argentina

Britain

US
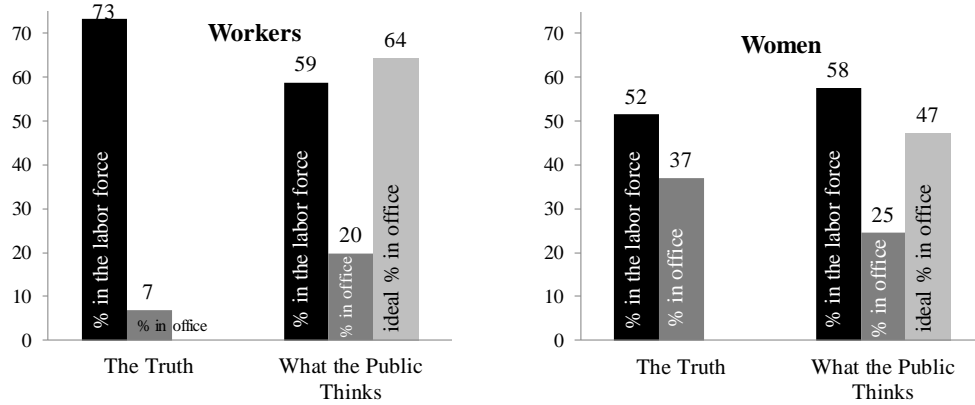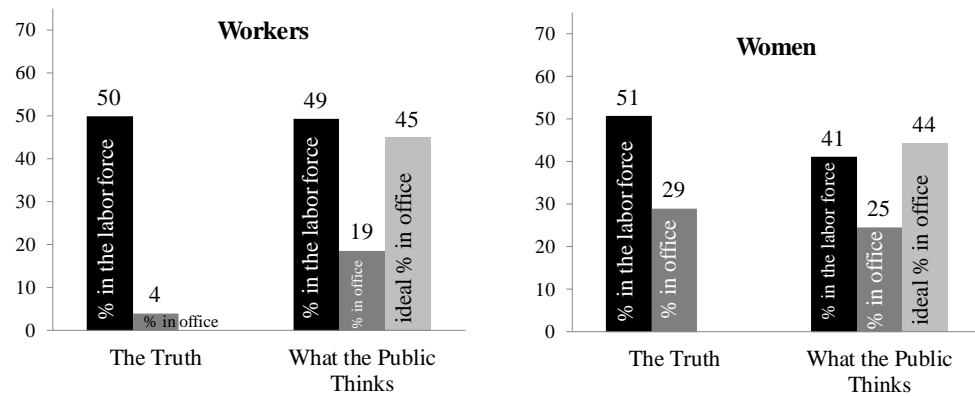
Sources: APES (2015), YouGov UK (2016), CCES (2016).

(exactly right), 58% in the US (close to the correct estimate of 54%), and 59% in Argentina (off by the most; the reality is 73%).

However, respondents in all three countries significantly overestimated the percentage of working-class people in public office. In Argentina, just 7% of the Chamber of Deputies is from the working class, but the average respondent thought that 20% were. In Britain, the gap was similar: just 4% 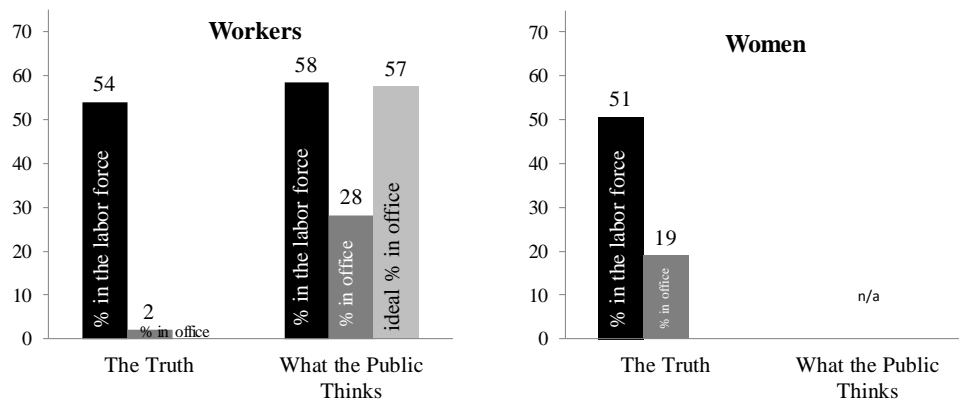of Members of Parliament are from the working class, but the average respondent thought that 19% were. The disparity was largest in the US: respondents thought that officeholders (either Congress, state legislatures, or city councils, assigned at random) were 28% working class. The reality is 2% in Congress, 3% in state legislatures, and 10% in city councils. In all three countries, workers make-up single-digit percentage of most political institutions, but citizens thought they made up between one fifth and one quarter of officeholders.

As a result, respondents tended to believe that working-class representation was far closer to their ideals than it really was. In all three countries, the typical respondent said that in an ideal world, working-class representation in office would be similar to the working-class share of the labor force. Because respondents believed that workers held more offices than they really do, however, citizens in all three nations tended to think working-class representation was far closer to their ideal than it really was. In Argentina, for instance, there was a 57 percentage point gap between worker representation in the average respondent's ideal legislature (64%) and in the actual Chamber of Deputies (7%). However, the typical citizen thought the gap was only 44 percentage points. In Britain, the gap between voters' ideal and the actual representation of workers was 41 percentage points, but the typical citizen thought that it was only 30 points. In the US, the perceptual errors were most stark: the gap between reality and voters' ideals was 55 percentage points, but citizens thought that it was only about half as large, 29 percentage points. Just as voters tend to recognize but underestimate inequalities in the distribution of wealth in

many countries, voters in Argentina, Britain, and the US know that workers are underrepresented, but underestimate how wide the gaps are.

In sharp contrast, voters in Argentina and Britain tended to *over*estimate the gender gap in officeholding. Whereas voters in Argentine thought workers made up 27 percentage points more of the national legislature than they really do, the average Argentine voter thought that women make up 12 percentage points less of the legislature than they really do (women hold 37% of the seats, but the average voter thought they made up just 25%). The same was true in Britain: the average voter over-estimated the share of workers in Parliament by 15 percentage points, but under-estimated the share of women in Parliament by 4 percentage points (believing that women made up 25% of MPs, when in fact women make up 29%).

Remarkably, the errors in how voters perceived working-class representation did not appear to be confined to any particular subgroup of the population. Figure 2 re-plots respondents' perceptions of workers' representation in the labor force, public office, and the ideal public office (the trio of bars on the right in each panel in Figure 1). In each row in Figure 2, we subset respondents by political knowledge,[3] occupation or income,[4] and partisanship.

The distribution of responses was essentially the same regardless of how we subset the data. In most cases, there were only single-digit differences between different groups' estimates: In Argentina, Front for Victory (*Frente para la Victoria*, FPV) partisans said that they believed

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[3] For details about political knowledge, see the "Survey Question Wording" section of the online appendix.

[4] The APES reported open-ended occupations, which we coded. The YouGov UK survey and CCES included household income.

Figure 2: Misperceptions about Working-Class Representation Are Widespread

Argentina

Britain

US
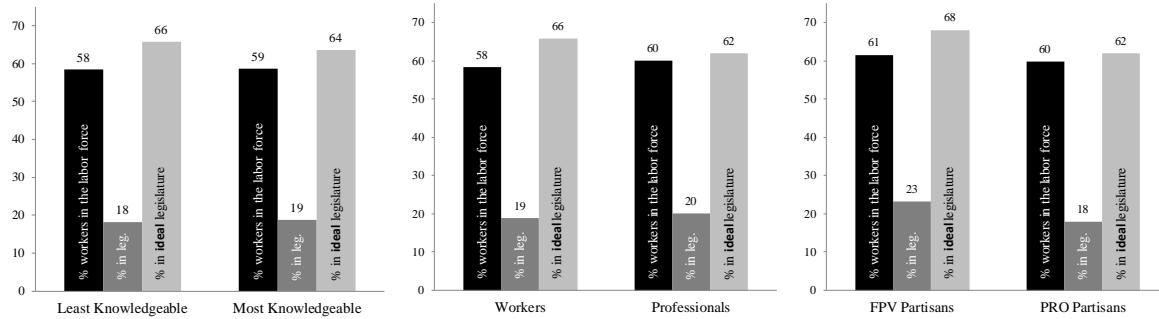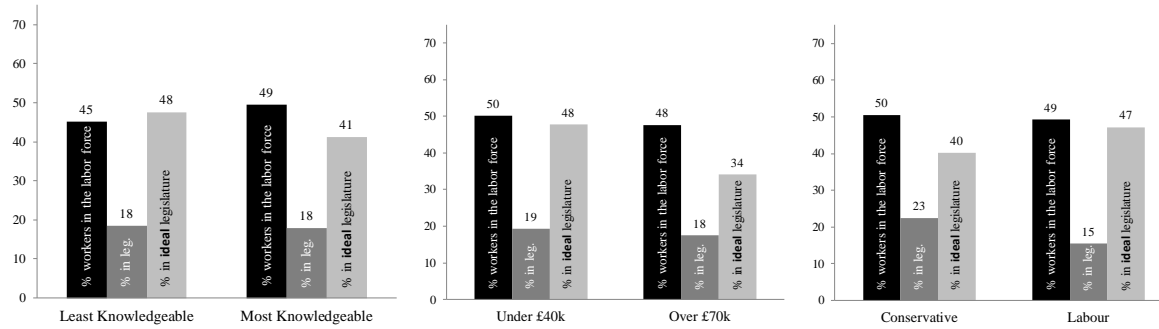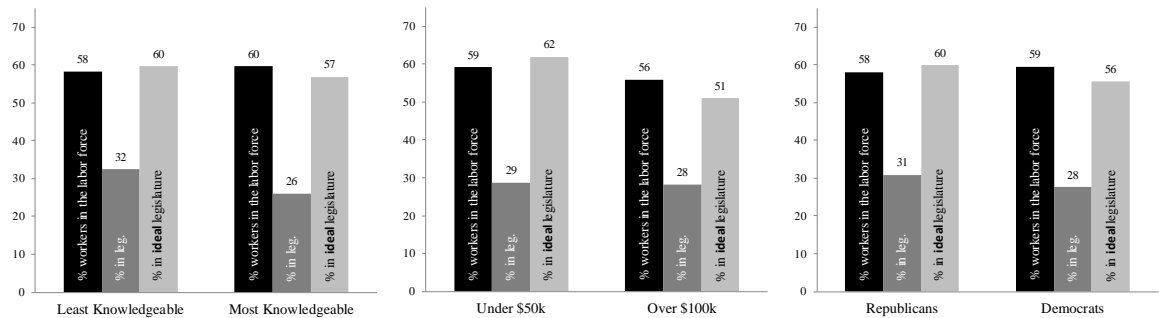
Sources: APES (2015), YouGov UK (2016), CCES (2016).

that there were 4 percentage points more workers in the actual legislature than Republican

Proposal (*Propuesta Republicana*, PRO) partisans; in Britain the most knowledgeable

respondents said that workers would hold 5 percentage points fewer seats in an ideal legislature.

The only substantively large gap was in the British sample, where the richest citizens reported wanting a 37% working-class Parliament and the poorest reported wanting 47%. Importantly, however, citizens' beliefs about how often workers held office never varied by more than a few percentage points—there was no subgroup of respondents who realized how badly underrepresented the working class really was in their country. In Argentina, Britain, and the US, citizens of all stripes—even the well-informed—significantly underestimated the extent to which they are governed by the privileged.

Simple robustness tests suggested that these patterns were not the result of the order in which we asked questions about the labor force, political institutions, and ideal political institutions,[5] or the order in which we asked about women as opposed to workers.[6] Our tests for level-of-office effects in the US yielded some substantively interesting findings: respondents rightly thought that workers were better represented in state legislatures and in city councils than in Congress, and citizens in the US reported wanting roughly the same share of workers in the ideal Congress, state legislature, or city council. But nothing in that robustness test changed our basic results: respondents in the US overestimated working-class representation (and therefore underestimated the shortage of workers) by 17 percentage points in Congress, 22 percentage points in state legislatures, and 13 percentage points in city councils.

Just as people tend to underestimate inequalities in distributional outcomes, regardless of how we looked at the data, citizens in Argentina, Britain, and the US seemed to significantly

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[5] See Tables A2-A5 in the online appendix.

[6] See Table A6 in the online appendix.

underestimate social class inequalities in officeholding, too. They are aware that workers are underrepresented in the national legislature, but they substantially underestimate that gap.

Do Voters Care?

The rare citizens who realized how underrepresented workers are, moreover, didn't seem to care all that much. In Figure 3, we subset respondents in each country based on the difference between the percentage of workers they believed was in the relevant political institution and the percentage they said they would ideally like to see. Of the 1,088 respondents who answered both questions in Argentina, for instance, 39 said that their ideal legislature included at least 10 percentage points fewer workers than what they believed the Chamber of Deputies currently had ("too many workers" in Figure 3), 111 said that their ideal was within 10 percentage points above or below what they believed the status quo was ("about enough workers"), and 911 respondents said that their ideal was more than 10 percentage points higher than the status quo ("too few workers").

Figure 3 plots how respondents in each group answered the questions about their political behavior that were available in the datasets, including items that asked about attending labor union or political meetings (all three countries), attending street protests (Argentina and Britain), doing work for a campaign (US), viewing government corruption as the most important problem facing the country (Argentina), disapproving of the way the national legislature is doing its job (US), voting for FPV candidate Daniel Scioli (Argentina), and voting for Republican candidate Donald Trump (US).

If voters actually care about the numerical underrepresentation of the working class, those who believe it is lower than their ideal should tend to think, vote, or otherwise behave

Figure 3: People Who Believe Workers Are Underrepresented Don't Behave Differently

Argentina

Britain

US
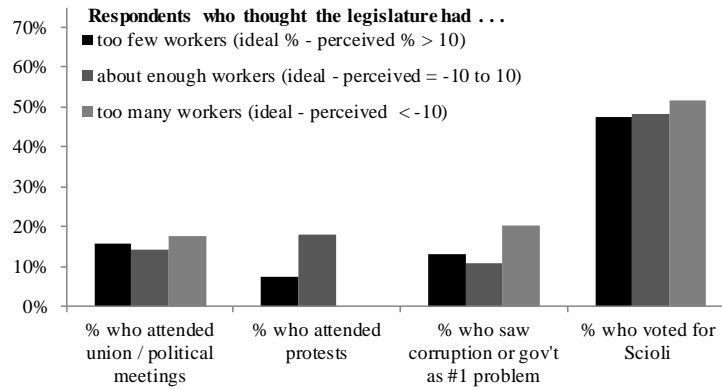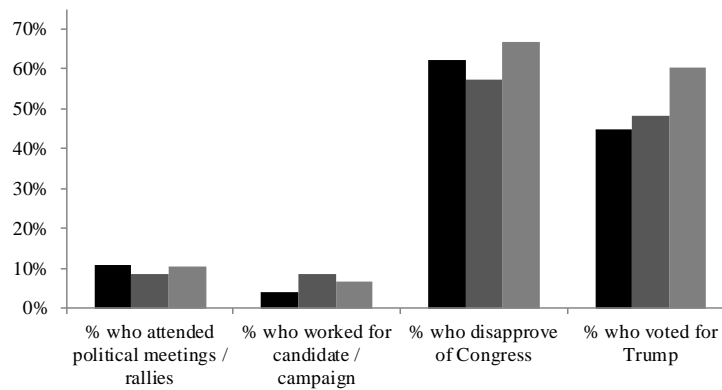
Sources: APES (2015), YouGov UK (2016), CCES (2016).
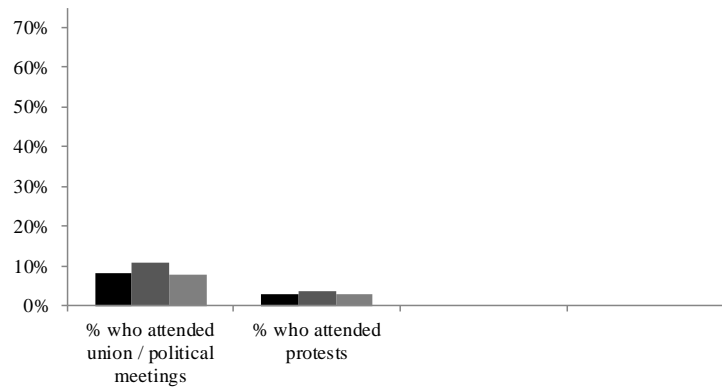
differently in some measureable way. In these three studies, however, they did not. In each country, respondents who thought there were too few workers were no more likely to attend union meetings and political rallies than who thought there were too many workers. They were no more likely to protest (Argentina, Britain) or work for a campaign or candidate (US). They were no more likely to say corruption was the most important problem facing the country (Argentina) or disapprove of Congress (US). Those who thought there were too few workers in office were no more likely to vote for Scioli (Argentina) and they were slightly *more* likely to vote for the billionaire Trump (US), although the difference was not statistically significant in follow-up regression models. Simply put, we did not find any evidence that the gap between respondents' views and ideals about the representation of the working class was associated with anything else respondents engaged in politically. Some voters may realize that workers are underrepresented among officeholders, but they do not seem to care enough to do anything about it.

Follow-up regression models reached the same basic conclusion. Table 1 reports ordinary least squares models that relate the outcome variables in Figure 3 (e.g., whether the respondent had attended a protest) to a continuous measure of the difference between the percentage of working-class people the respondent believed was in the legislature and the percentage they would like to be in an ideal Chamber of Deputies (with higher values signifying a desire for more workers than the perceived status quo). The models also controlled for ideology, political knowledge, household wealth/income, education, age, and gender.

The findings reported in Table 1 were the same as what we observed in Figure 3: even with a robust set of controls, we did not find any evidence of a relationship between reported demand for more working-class representation and political attitudes or behaviors. Citizens in

Table 1: The Relationship between Perceived Worker Underrepresentation and Political Behavior (from Regression Models with Controls)

Argentina	Political/union meeting attendance	Protest participation	Vote for Scioli	Corruption is top problem
	0.03 (0.04)	-0.06[+] (0.03)	0.07 (0.05)	0.02 (0.04)
Britain	Political/union meeting attendance	Protest participation		
	0.05 (0.03)	0.02 (0.01)		
US	Political meeting attendance	Work for campaign or candidate	Vote for Trump	Disapprove of Congress
	-0.01 (0.05)	0.02 (0.03)	0.04 (0.06)	0.01 (0.05)

Sources: APES (2015), YouGov UK (2016), CCES (2016).
Notes: Cells report estimates from least squares regressions (with robust standard errors) relating each listed variable to the difference between the proportion of workers the respondent said should ideally hold office and the proportion they said they believed held office (which had a range of -1 to 1) and to controls for ideology, knowledge, income/wealth, education, age, and gender. Tables A8-A10 in the online appendix list complete models.
[+]$p < 0.10$, two tailed.

Argentina, Britain, and the US consistently underestimate the shortage of workers in public office—though they realize that there is a substantial gap—and even those who want more workers to govern do not seem to be doing anything about it.

Blinded by Wealth?

In Argentina, Britain, and the US—three countries where politicians are vastly better off than ordinary citizens—voters significantly underestimate the economic gulf between themselves and their leaders. Of course, we cannot be sure how widespread this phenomenon really is without follow-up studies in other countries. Even so, it is quite striking that in the first data ever collected on public perceptions of the numerical representation of the working class, the same pattern emerges across three very different electoral democracies.

There are many potential reason why citizens might underestimate the extent of government by the privileged—general inattention, campaign narratives that exaggerate candidates' personal hardships, and so on—and why citizens do not seem concerned about it—other more pressing problems, confusion about policy solutions, and so on. These mechanisms are beyond the scope of this brief letter, but we hope future research will investigate them.

The findings reported here have important implications for the scholars who have recently taken a renewed interest in the numerical representation of the working class. They seem especially relevant to the scholars who are asking *why* elected representatives are so often more affluent than the voters they represent. Existing explanations include the decline of labor (e.g., Sojourner 2013), social class gaps in competence (e.g., Dal Bó et al. Forthcoming), voter biases against working-class candidates (e.g., Campbell and Cowley 2014; Carnes and Lupu 2016; Sadin 2012), or low salaries paid to officeholders (e.g., Carnes and Hansen 2016).

This letter suggests another possibility. If Argentina, Britain, and the US are any indication, voters simply may not realize or care how affluent their representatives really are. Even citizens who prefer a government that resembles the social class makeup of the people it

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represents—and who realize that workers currently hold office in far smaller numbers—don't

appear willing to do much about it.

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Online Appendix for "Blinded by Wealth? What Voters Think About the Descriptive Underrepresentation of the Working Class"

Note on the Definition of Working Class

We refer to a person as belonging to the working class (or as simply a worker) if he or she is employed in manual labor jobs (e.g., factory worker), service industry jobs (e.g., restaurant server), clerical jobs (e.g., receptionist), or union jobs (e.g., field organizer). Likewise, we define a person as having a white-collar job if she is not a part of the working class. Of course, there are other ways to disaggregate occupations (e.g., some people might not classify clerical jobs as working class), and other ways to measure class (e.g., education, income, wealth, family background, subjective perceptions, etc.). Most modern class analysts agree, however, that any measure of class should be rooted in occupational data, that is, information about how a person earns a living (e.g., Hout, Manza, and Brooks 1995; Weeden and Grusky 2005; Wright 1997). And the distinction between working-class jobs and white-collar jobs seems to be the major class-based dividing line in political institutions (Carnes 2013; Carnes and Lupu 2015). Lawmakers from working-class occupational backgrounds tend to vote differently than legislators from white-collar backgrounds; however, legislators with higher net worth, more formal education, or well-to-do parents tend not to behave as differently (Carnes 2013; Carnes and Sadin 2015). There are also important differences within the working-class and white-collar categories (e.g., between manual laborers and clerical workers), of course, but the major dividing line seems to be between workers, who tend to support more interventionist economic policies, and professionals, who tend to support more conservative economic policies.

Survey Question Wording

Argentina:

Preface: "We want to talk about the working class—people who do manual work or provide services, such as factory workers, maids, or servants."

Workers in the general public: "If you had to guess, what percentage of the population in Argentina would you say belongs to the working class?"

Workers in the legislature: "If you had to guess, what percentage of National Deputies would you say come from the working class?"

Ideal workers in the legislature: "In an ideal world, what percentage of National Deputies would you like to come from the working class?"

Women in the general public: "If you had to guess, what percentage of the population in Argentina would you say are women?"

Women in the legislature: "If you had to guess, what percentage of National Deputies would you say are women?"

Ideal women in the legislature: "In an ideal world, what percentage of National Deputies would you like to be women?"

Political knowledge: "(a) Do you remember which candidate came in second place in the general presidential election of 2011? (1) Ricardo Alfonsín; (2) Hermes Binner; (3) Eduardo Duhalde; (4) Alberto Rodríguez Saá. (b) Who is the current Secretary-General of the United Nations? (1) Kofi Annan; (2) Kurt Waldheim; (3) Ban Ki-Moon; (4) Boutros Boutros-Ghali. (c) Counting the City of Buenos Aires as a province, how many provinces are there in the Republic of Argentina? (1) 21; (2) 22; (3) 23; (4) 24. (d) Who is the country's Minister of the Economy? (1) Jorge Capitanich; (2) Axel Kicillof; (3) Héctor Timerman; (4) Florencio Randazzo. (e) Who is the current president of Brazil? (1) Lula Da Silva; (2) Dilma Rousseff; (3) Michelle Bachelet; (4) Fernando Henrique Cardoso." Factored index of correct responses.[8]

Occupation: "What is/was your primary occupation?"

Partisanship: "Independent of who you voted for in the last election or who you plan to vote for in the next one, in general, do you identify with a particular political party? With what party?" (1) Peronism; (2) Front for Victory (FPV); (3) Republican Proposal (PRO); (4) UNA Front; (5) Radicalism; (6) Progressives; (7) Other.

Attend union or political meetings: "Now I am going to read to you a list of groups and organizations. Please tell me whether you attend the meetings of these organizations at least once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year, or never." Binary variable coded (1) if

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[8] Cronbach's α = 0.68. Factor loadings are a=0.57, b=0.42, c=0.63, d=0.80, e=0.81.

respondent reported some attendance at "meetings of a labor union" or "meetings of a political party or movement" and (0) if respondent never attends either.

Attend protests: "During the last 12 months, have you participated in any of the following activities? Marches, demonstrations, or public protests." (1) Yes; (0) No.

Corruption as most important problem: "In your opinion, what is the most important problem facing the country?" Open-ended, enumerator coded.

Vote choice in 2015: "And who did you vote for in the presidential elections on October 25?" (1) Daniel Scioli; (2) Mauricio Macri; (3) Sergio Massa; (4) Margarita Stolbizer; (5) Adolfo Rodriguez Saá; (6) Nicolás Del Caño; (7) Other; (8) Blank/null; (9) Did not vote. Binary variable coded (1) for Daniel Scioli and (0) for all others.

Ideology: "In politics, people sometimes talk about 'left' and 'right.' Using a scale where 0 means left and 10 means right, where would you place yourself?"

Wealth: "Please tell me if you have the following items in your household: (a) Refrigerator with freezer, (b) Landline telephone, (c) Cellular telephone, (d) Car, (e) Washing machine, (f) Motorcycle, (g) Computer, (h) Internet, (i) Flat screen TV, (j) Plumbed gas." (0) No; (1) Yes. Factored index.[9]

Britain:

Preface: "Now we want to talk about the working class—people who do manual labour work (like factory or construction workers), service industry work (like custodians or restaurant servers), and clerical work (like receptionists)."

Workers in the general public: "If you had to guess, what percentage of the labour force in the UK would you estimate is employed in working-class jobs? (Please don't bother looking it up: we're just interested in your best guess.)"

Workers in the legislature: "If you had to guess, what percentage of Members of Parliament do you think come from the working class? (Please don't bother looking it up: we're just interested in your best guess.)"

Ideal workers in the legislature: "Some people think that more politicians should come from working-class jobs. Others think more should come from white-collar professions. In an ideal world, what percentage of Members of Parliament would you want to come from the working class?"

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[9] In constructing this index, we follow a common practice in household surveys of using the first principal component as an index of asset wealth (see Filmer and Pritchett 2001).

Women in the general public: "If you had to guess, what percentage of the labour force in the UK would you estimate are female? (Please don't bother looking it up: we're just interested in your best guess.)"

Women in the legislature: "If you had to guess, what percentage of Members of Parliament do you think are female? (Please don't bother looking it up: we're just interested in your best guess.)"

Ideal women in the legislature: "Some people think there should be more women in Parliament. Others think it does not matter how many Members of Parliament are women. In an ideal world, what percentage of Members of Parliament would you want to be women?"

Political knowledge: "Please tell me if you think that the following statements are true or false. If you don't know, just say so and we will skip to the next one. (a) Polling stations close at 10.00pm on election day. (b) No-one may stand for parliament unless they pay a deposit? (c) Only taxpayers are allowed to vote in a general election. (d) The Liberal Democrats favour a system of proportional representation for Westminster elections. (e) MPs from different parties are on parliamentary committees?" Factored index of correct responses.[10]

Partisanship: "Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as Labour, Conservative, Liberal Democrat or what?" (1) Conservative; (2) Labour; (3) Liberal Democrat; (4) Scottish National Party (SNP); (5) Plaid Cymru; (6) United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP); (7) Green Party; (8) British National Party (BNP); (9) Other party.

Attend union or political meetings: "Do you attend meetings of a political party or political organization at least once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year, or never? Do you attend meetings of a trade union at least once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year, or never?" Binary variable coded (1) if respondent reported some attendance at either and (0) if respondent never attends either.

Attend protests: "In the last 12 months, have you participated in a demonstration or protest march?"

Ideology: "In politics people sometimes talk of left and right. Where would you place yourself on the following scale?" (0-10 scale)

US:

Preface: "We want to talk about the working class—people who do manual labor work (like factory or construction workers), service industry work (like custodians or restaurant servers), and clerical work (like receptionists)."

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[10] Cronbach's α = 0.72. Factor loadings are a=0.56, b=0.73, c=0.63, d=0.77, e=0.73.

Workers in the general public: "If you had to guess, what percentage of the workforce in US would you estimate is employed in working-class jobs? (Please don't bother looking it up: we're just interested in your best guess.)"

Workers in the legislature: "If you had to guess, what percentage of [members of Congress / state legislators in your state / the people on your town's city council] do you think come from the working class? (Please don't bother looking it up: we're just interested in your best guess.)"

Ideal workers in the legislature: "Some people think that more politicians should come from working-class jobs. Others think more should come from white-collar professions. In an ideal world, what percentage of [members of Congress / state legislators in your state / the people on your town's city council] would you want to come from the working class?"

Political knowledge: "Which party has a majority of seats in the U.S. House of Representatives?" (1) Republicans; (2) Democrats; (3) Neither; (4) Not sure. "Which party has a majority of seats in the U.S. Senate?" (1) Republicans; (2) Democrats; (3) Neither; (4) Not sure. Coded (0) if both answers incorrect, (1) if one answer is correct, and (2) if both answers are correct.

Partisanship: "Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Democrat, Republican, Independent, or other?"

Attend political meetings: "During the past year, did you attend local political meetings (such as school board or city council)?" (1) Yes; (0) No.

Work for candidate/campaign: "During the past year, did you work for a candidate or campaign?" (1) Yes; (0) No.

Approval of Congress: "Do you approve of the way Congress is doing its job?" (1) Strongly approve, (2) Somewhat approve, (3) Somewhat disapprove, (4) Strongly disapprove. Binary variable coded (1) for "strongly approve" or somewhat approve" and (0) for "strongly disapprove" and "somewhat disapprove."

Vote choice: "For whom did you vote for President of the United States?" (1) Donald Trump (Republican); (2) Hillary Clinton (Democrat); (3) Gary Johnson (Libertarian); (4) Jill Stein (Green); (5) Other; (6) I didn't vote in this election; (7) I'm not sure; (8) Evan McMullin (Independent). Binary variable coded (1) Donald Trump and (0) all else.

Ideology: "How would you rate each of the following individuals? Yourself:" (1) Very liberal; (2) Liberal; (3) Somewhat liberal; (4) Middle of the road; (5) Somewhat conservative; (6) Conservative; (7) Very conservative.

Table A1: Class and Politics in Argentina, Britain, and the US

	Argentina	Britain	US
Worker representation			
Working-class proportion of adult population	73	50	54
Proportion of national legislators drawn from working class	5	4	2
Political variables			
Years of democracy (since 1800)	35	131	206
Political system	Presidential	Parliamentary	Presidential
Electoral system	Proportional	Majoritarian	Majoritarian
Average district magnitude, lower house	10.7	1	1
Legislative fractionalization	0.77	0.62	0.49
Candidate selection	Mixed[†]	Party	Open primary
Quotas for elected office	Women (30%)	None	None
Economic context			
Economic development (ranking)	51	23	11
Human Development Index (ranking)	40	14	8
Unionization rate	28.9	25.4	10.8

Sources: Audickas 2016; Carnes 2013; Carnes and Lupu 2015; Database of Political Institutions; International Labour Organization; Office of National Statistics 2012; OECD; Polity IV; United Nations Development Programme.

Notes: Years of democracy is measured as the total number of years with a Polity score greater than 5. Some of the figures for Britain refer to the entire United Kingdom.

[†] Since 2009, Argentina has held mandatory primary elections. Primary candidates for executive offices appear individually, but legislative primaries are contested by competing lists drawn up by party officials.

Question and Block Order Effects Tests

Table A2 lists the results of regression models that relate respondents' perceptions of workers' and women's representation in Argentina to the order that questions were asked (the block about workers was always asked first). There were no consistent patterns, point estimates were substantively small, and question order was significantly associated with perceptions just one time out of 15, about what we would expect by chance.

Tables A3 and A4 list the question order effects in Britain, first for the surveys that randomly asked about women's representation first, then for the surveys that randomly asked about worker's representation first. Again, there were no consistent patterns, effect sizes were small, and less than 5% of estimated effects were statistically significant.

Table A5 lists estimates of question order effects in the US. There, we found significant effects five times out of fifteen, but the effect sizes were substantively small, and we found nothing that altered our substantive conclusions.

Table A6 list models relating the randomly-assigned block order (gender first or workers first) in the Britain survey to voters' perceptions of women's and worker's representation. Estimated effects were small—around 1 percentage point—and only one in six was statistically significant.

Table A2: Models Relating Voter Estimates to Question Order (Argentina)

	Women Public	Women Leg.	Women Ideal	Workers Public	Workers Leg.	Workers Ideal
Question Order						
Public-Leg-Ideal	-0.30	5.06**	2.76	-0.17	2.16	4.64
	(1.24)	(1.58)	(1.96)	(2.31)	(2.02)	(2.82)
Public-Ideal-Leg	0.59	2.23	0.58	-2.10	0.34	-2.05
	(1.30)	(1.66)	(2.13)	(2.52)	(2.63)	(3.00)
Leg-Public-Ideal	0.37	2.52	0.46	-2.36	-0.13	4.09
	(1.46)	(1.65)	(2.12)	(2.64)	(2.22)	(3.09)
Leg-Ideal-Public	-0.26	2.44	-0.21	-3.17	-2.36	2.81
	(1.33)	(1.73)	(1.83)	(2.47)	(2.09)	(2.96)
Ideal-Public-Leg	-0.32	2.08	-1.24	-8.25**	3.80	-1.13
	(1.43)	(1.60)	(2.03)	(2.72)	(2.37)	(3.07)
Ideal-Leg-Public (omitted)	---	---	---	---	---	---
Intercept	57.56**	22.04**	46.99**	61.27**	19.27**	62.77**
	(0.97)	(1.14)	(1.60)	(1.76)	(1.40)	(1.94)
N	1,208	1,073	1,214	1,208	1,108	1,229
R^2	0.001	0.010	0.005	0.013	0.009	0.009

Source: APES (2015).
Notes: Cells report estimates from ordinary least squares regressions (with robust standard errors in parentheses). $^{*}p < 0.10$; $^{**}p < 0.05$; $^{***}p < 0.01$, two tailed.

Table A3: Models Relating Voter Estimates to Question Order (Britain, Women Block First)

	Women Public	Women Leg.	Women Ideal	Workers Public	Workers Leg.	Workers Ideal
Question Order						
pub-leg-ideal-imp	7.60*	2.00	-0.36	1.92	-0.97	-1.08
	(3.86)	(3.50)	(3.32)	(5.03)	(3.27)	(6.76)
leg-pub-ideal-imp	3.17	3.80	-2.69	-5.73	2.14	-4.15
	(4.82)	(3.57)	(4.12)	(5.65)	(4.91)	(6.54)
ideal-leg-imp-pub	7.91*	0.43	-2.48	-6.16	-1.35	-2.91
	(3.73)	(3.84)	(2.71)	(5.81)	(3.61)	(6.40)
ideal-pub-imp-leg	4.34	-0.14	-1.54	-15.04*	-3.36	-10.75
	(3.95)	(3.55)	(3.23)	(7.20)	(3.41)	(6.20)
pub-imp-ideal-leg	10.26**	2.37	-4.07	3.53	0.73	-5.08
	(3.21)	(3.44)	(2.84)	(5.38)	(3.79)	(6.27)
leg-imp-ideal-pub	9.76*	7.85*	-0.34	1.26	-0.51	-2.06
	(3.82)	(3.46)	(2.36)	(5.93)	(3.78)	(6.16)
pub-imp-leg-ideal	10.28**	0.24	-3.27	-0.43	-0.32	-5.71
	(3.49)	(3.35)	(2.66)	(5.36)	(4.10)	(6.79)
leg-imp-pub-ideal	2.29	7.85*	-3.68	-18.58**	0.94	-7.90
	(3.61)	(3.56)	(3.13)	(5.73)	(4.36)	(7.20)
ideal-imp-pub-leg	6.35	2.79	-1.37	-7.13	-0.10	-1.41
	(4.32)	(3.24)	(2.91)	(5.34)	(3.64)	(6.62)
ideal-imp-leg-pub	5.79	1.32	1.36	-2.66	8.10	-8.49
	(4.64)	(3.97)	(2.91)	(4.84)	(4.90)	(5.91)
imp-leg-ideal-pub	2.86	3.09	-1.35	-2.73	0.89	-3.02
	(4.20)	(3.41)	(2.70)	(5.04)	(3.44)	(5.83)
imp-pub-ideal-leg	6.43	3.86	-1.49	-19.37**	0.44	1.03
	(3.80)	(3.34)	(2.92)	(6.30)	(3.60)	(7.06)
pub-ideal-leg-imp	6.40	3.56	0.80	-1.85	1.35	0.63
	(4.13)	(4.17)	(3.44)	(4.68)	(4.35)	(5.84)
imp-ideal-leg-pub	1.18	-2.19	-6.87	Omitted	Omitted	Omitted

	(4.43)	(3.56)	(4.11)			
imp-ideal-pub-leg	7.39	4.69	-0.91	-6.71	3.88	-0.91
	(4.35)	(3.47)	(2.76)	(5.32)	(3.53)	(6.06)
imp-leg-pub-ideal	2.40	-0.92	-8.49*	2.41	-0.92	2.34
	(4.25)	(3.61)	(3.64)	(4.65)	(3.45)	(6.06)
imp-pub-leg-ideal	8.51*	5.70	-4.88	-15.36*	-4.11	-5.79
	(3.39)	(3.18)	(3.05)	(6.70)	(3.48)	(7.55)
leg-ideal-pub-imp	8.02*	2.32	-4.27	-1.15	2.82	0.82
	(3.63)	(3.52)	(3.01)	(4.90)	(3.44)	(6.22)
ideal-leg-pub-imp	Omitted	Omitted	Omitted	-14.71*	-2.76	-0.24
				(6.54)	(3.89)	(7.22)
ideal-pub-leg-imp	1.11	-5.00	-6.81	-11.39*	-3.53	-3.94
	(4.07)	(3.42)	(3.79)	(5.33)	(3.33)	(7.15)
pub-leg-imp-ideal	9.37**	6.98	-1.93	0.53	0.52	-5.57
	(3.53)	(3.76)	(2.71)	(5.39)	(3.85)	(6.32)
leg-pub-imp-ideal	7.62	6.54	-3.12	-0.53	-5.92	-1.44
	(4.25)	(3.53)	(3.06)	(7.08)	(3.46)	(6.53)
pub-ideal-imp-leg	8.44*	3.88	-2.82	1.51	-6.94*	5.54
	(3.75)	(3.37)	(2.50)	(6.14)	(3.35)	(7.02)
leg-ideal-imp-pub	6.84	5.74	2.82	-7.77	-1.57	-2.76
	(3.50)	(3.50)	(2.66)	(5.12)	(4.31)	(6.33)
Intercept	35.69***	22.14***	47.35***	53.72***	18.93***	47.15***
	(3.02)	(2.82)	(1.90)	(3.61)	(2.71)	(5.08)
N	775	777	751	770	772	763
R^2	0.049	0.067	0.039	0.087	0.050	0.028

Source: YouGov UK (2016).

Notes: Cells report estimates from ordinary least squares regressions (with robust standard errors in parentheses). *$p < 0.10$; **$p < 0.05$; ***$p < 0.01$, two tailed.

Table A4: Models Relating Voter Estimates to Question Order (Britain, Workers Block First)

	Women Public	Women Leg.	Women Ideal	Workers Public	Workers Leg.	Workers Ideal
Question Order						
pub-leg-ideal-imp	Omitted	Omitted	1.37 (4.53)	10.16 (6.40)	-3.76 (4.64)	0.93 (5.76)
leg-pub-ideal-imp	5.79 (4.14)	5.06 (4.06)	4.55 (4.12)	6.49 (6.66)	-1.37 (4.58)	0.98 (5.87)
ideal-leg-imp-pub	3.02 (3.78)	-0.77 (3.59)	-3.79 (4.30)	12.41 (7.19)	-5.65 (4.69)	6.74 (5.89)
ideal-pub-imp-leg	0.83 (4.39)	0.95 (3.67)	1.83 (3.89)	11.57 (7.66)	3.15 (5.85)	2.50 (7.17)
pub-imp-ideal-leg	3.03 (3.67)	-2.02 (3.43)	4.55 (3.98)	8.22 (7.07)	3.08 (5.70)	Omitted
leg-imp-ideal-pub	6.83 (4.19)	1.83 (3.62)	0.96 (4.21)	-1.02 (8.03)	-2.71 (4.98)	-6.65 (6.20)
pub-imp-leg-ideal	6.64 (4.31)	3.00 (3.60)	1.66 (4.05)	9.56 (6.66)	-2.97 (5.08)	-2.61 (5.30)
leg-imp-pub-ideal	5.67 (3.66)	1.85 (3.51)	-2.60 (4.69)	5.76 (6.96)	-2.01 (4.66)	-1.71 (5.80)
ideal-imp-pub-leg	3.46 (3.51)	2.55 (3.88)	0.84 (3.93)	Omitted	Omitted	-0.72 (6.69)
ideal-imp-leg-pub	5.26 (4.37)	1.25 (3.50)	0.32 (4.13)	5.55 (6.50)	-1.28 (5.33)	2.28 (5.57)
imp-leg-ideal-pub	1.46 (4.17)	-0.39 (3.48)	-1.87 (4.20)	10.36 (6.57)	4.79 (5.16)	1.81 (5.45)
imp-pub-ideal-leg	8.02* (3.74)	-0.51 (3.46)	0.02 (3.88)	4.45 (7.23)	-4.28 (4.76)	-5.02 (6.15)
pub-ideal-leg-imp	-2.81 (4.39)	-0.32 (3.71)	Omitted	11.49 (6.97)	0.92 (5.72)	4.40 (5.71)
imp-ideal-leg-pub	0.35	-4.83	-3.04	6.95	-0.02	2.70

	(4.35)	(3.46)	(4.56)	(7.25)	(5.23)	(6.46)
imp-ideal-pub-leg	8.90*	1.41	-0.47	0.89	-0.14	-0.51
	(3.88)	(3.74)	(4.04)	(8.01)	(6.65)	(6.35)
imp-leg-pub-ideal	4.20	-3.97	2.98	12.91	-1.13	-7.66
	(3.86)	(4.21)	(4.02)	(7.10)	(4.84)	(5.49)
imp-pub-leg-ideal	2.98	-1.28	-2.04	4.96	-5.50	-3.01
	(3.87)	(3.66)	(4.19)	(6.82)	(4.98)	(6.65)
leg-ideal-pub-imp	12.10**	-3.02	2.56	12.31	3.94	3.52
	(4.17)	(3.69)	(4.06)	(6.84)	(5.66)	(5.95)
ideal-leg-pub-imp	5.28	4.54	-0.78	9.22	-2.78	3.78
	(3.79)	(3.73)	(4.44)	(6.88)	(4.98)	(6.36)
ideal-pub-leg-imp	3.58	-1.83	1.14	7.22	-3.71	0.30
	(3.79)	(3.86)	(4.13)	(7.01)	(4.46)	(6.04)
pub-leg-imp-ideal	8.63*	7.57	2.74	10.55	-0.24	-3.02
	(4.35)	(5.20)	(4.40)	(6.56)	(5.10)	(5.49)
leg-pub-imp-ideal	7.12	-0.63	-3.58	12.26	3.79	4.11
	(3.79)	(4.06)	(4.76)	(6.42)	(6.36)	(6.28)
pub-ideal-imp-leg	6.13	-0.73	4.11	11.90	-1.90	0.25
	(4.03)	(3.51)	(3.74)	(6.66)	(5.06)	(6.15)
leg-ideal-imp-pub	2.12	1.99	-2.60	18.94**	2.00	-2.85
	(4.33)	(3.75)	(4.69)	(7.01)	(5.39)	(5.70)
Intercept	35.57***	23.52***	43.29***	41.32***	19.42***	45.19***
	(2.99)	(3.05)	(3.44)	(5.92)	(4.18)	(4.76)
N	829	837	822	840	841	838
R^2	0.044	0.053	0.033	0.043	0.031	0.031

Source: YouGov UK (2016).

Notes: Cells report estimates from ordinary least squares regressions (with robust standard errors in parentheses). *$p < 0.10$; **$p < 0.05$; ***$p < 0.01$, two tailed.

Table A5: Models Relating Voter Estimates to Question Order (US)

	Workers Public	Workers Leg.	Workers Ideal
Question Order			
Public-Leg-Ideal (omitted)	---	---	---
Public-Ideal-Leg	-3.95	-6.66	-5.96
	(2.29)	(3.48)	(3.22)
Leg-Public-Ideal	0.12	0.64	-1.54
	(2.91)	(4.13)	(3.94)
Leg-Ideal-Public	-0.65	-1.22	-0.19
	(2.63)	(4.16)	(3.36)
Ideal-Public-Leg	-5.99	-4.92	-1.36
	(3.64)	(3.87)	(3.82)
Ideal-Leg-Public	-5.63	-8.83*	-1.96
	(3.12)	(3.65)	(3.27)
Intercept	60.96***	31.66***	59.16***
	(1.60)	(2.61)	(2.26)
N	993	987	990
R²	0.015	0.019	0.006

Source: CCES (2016).
Notes: Cells report estimates from ordinary least squares regressions (with robust standard errors in parentheses). $^*p < 0.10$; $^{**}p < 0.05$; $^{***}p < 0.01$, two tailed.

Table A6: Models Relating Voter Estimates to Block Order (Britain)

	Women Public	Women Leg.	Women Ideal	Workers Public	Workers Leg.	Workers Ideal
Question Order						
Women Block First	1.10	-0.11	0.76	-1.36	-0.89	-1.42
	(1.21)	(0.87)	(1.13)	(0.78)	(0.66)	(0.74)
Worker Block First (omitted)	---	---	---	---	---	---
Intercept	48.73***	18.66***	44.50***	41.74***	25.06***	44.96***
	(0.93)	(0.58)	(0.84)	(0.54)	(0.47)	(0.52)
N	1,610	1,613	1,601	1,604	1,614	1,573
R^2	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.001	0.003

Source: YouGov UK (2016).

Notes: Cells report estimates from ordinary least squares regressions (with robust standard errors in parentheses). $^*p < 0.10$; $^{**}p < 0.05$; $^{***}p < 0.01$, two tailed.

Table A7: Models Relating Voter Estimates to Level of Office (US)

	Workers Public	Workers Leg.	Workers Ideal
Question Order			
Congress	---	---	---
State Legislature	-4.92*	4.85*	-3.99
	(2.49)	(2.47)	(2.66)
City Council	1.91	24.04***	1.23
	(1.92)	(2.70)	(2.63)
	59.47***	19.17***	58.41***
Intercept	(1.40)	(1.60)	(2.00)
N	993	987	990
R²	0.019	0.153	0.008

Source: CCES (2016).

Notes: Cells report estimates from ordinary least squares regressions (with robust standard errors in parentheses). $^*p < 0.10$; $^{**}p < 0.05$; $^{***}p < 0.01$, two tailed.

Table A8: Regression Models from Table 2, Relating Perceived Worker Underrepresentation and Political Behavior (Argentina)

Dependent variable	Perceived worker underrepresentation	Political/union meeting attendance	Protest participation	Vote for Scioli	Corruption is top problem
Perceived worker underrepresentation	--	0.03 (0.04)	-0.06* (0.03)	0.07 (0.05)	0.02 (0.04)
Ideology	-0.00 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.03*** (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)
Political knowledge	-0.00 (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.03)	0.02 (0.02)
Household wealth	-0.00 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	-0.04** (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
Education	-0.02** (0.01)	0.02* (0.01)	0.02** (0.01)	-0.03** (0.01)	0.02* (0.01)
Age	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00* (0.00)
Female	0.03 (0.02)	-0.05 (0.03)	0.01 (0.02)	0.06 (0.04)	-0.01 (0.03)
Intercept	0.56*** (0.06)	-0.02 (0.08)	-0.05 (0.07)	0.85*** (0.11)	-0.16* (0.07)
N	1,022	1,022	1,021	922	1,021
R^2	0.014	0.028	0.050	0.060	0.036

Source: APES (2015).

Notes: Cells report estimates from ordinary least squares regressions (with robust standard errors in parentheses). *$p < 0.10$; **$p < 0.05$; ***$p < 0.01$, two tailed.

Table A9: Regression Models from Table 2, Relating Perceived Worker Underrepresentation and Political Behavior (Britain)

Dependent variable	Perceived worker underrepresentation	Political/union meeting attendance	Protest participation
Perceived worker Underrepresentation	--	0.05 (0.03)	0.02 (0.01)
Ideology	-0.01* (0.00)	-0.02** (0.01)	-0.01*** (0.00)
Political knowledge	-0.04*** (0.01)	0.05*** (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
Household income	-0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
Education	-0.02*** (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.00)
Age	-0.00** (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00* (0.00)
Female	0.02 (0.01)	-0.04* (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)
Intercept	0.23*** (0.04)	0.12* (0.05)	0.12*** (0.03)
N	1415	1360	1376
R^2	0.046	0.050	0.041

Source: YouGov UK (2016).

Notes: Cells report estimates from ordinary least squares regressions (with robust standard errors in parentheses). *$p < 0.10$; **$p < 0.05$; ***$p < 0.01$, two tailed.

Table A10: Regression Models from Table 2, Relating Perceived Worker Underrepresentation and Political Behavior (US)

Dependent variable	Perceived worker under-rep	Political meeting attendance	Work for campaign or candidate	Vote for Trump	Disapprove of Congress
Perceived worker underrepresentation	--	-0.01 (0.05)	0.02 (0.03)	0.04 (0.06)	0.01 (0.05)
Ideology	0.01 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	0.15** (0.01)	-0.04** (0.01)
Political knowledge	-0.03 (0.03)	-0.00 (0.03)	-0.01 (0.03)	0.01 (0.06)	0.15** (0.05)
Household income	0.09 (0.07)	0.16** (0.06)	-0.00 (0.07)	0.11 (0.13)	0.12 (0.11)
Education	0.01 (0.07)	-0.02 (0.09)	0.04 (0.03)	0.02 (0.15)	-0.08 (0.11)
Birth year	-0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00** (0.00)	-0.01** (0.00)
Female	-0.03 (0.02)	-0.08** (0.02)	-0.01 (0.02)	-0.03 (0.03)	-0.08** (0.03)
Intercept	0.68 (1.06)	-1.35 (1.58)	0.11 (1.35)	5.84** (1.96)	13.49** (1.72)
N	931	779	779	745	930
R^2	0.042	0.070	0.051	0.362	0.220

Source: CCES (2016)

Notes: Cells report estimates from ordinary least squares regressions (with robust standard errors in parentheses). $^*p < 0.10$; $^{**}p < 0.05$; $^{***}p < 0.01$, two tailed.

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